



COD LENTEN NEWSLETTER NO. 5.

Dear Reader,

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak (Is. 40:29).

May indeed this be your experience from the hand of the Everlasting God. With some two weeks to go, the destination is in sight. Persevere in prayer (read section 1) Do not be distracted (section 2), but live from the power of the Holy Spirit at your disposal.


Special greetings and mercy to you as we continue on our Lenten walk

1. WHAT'S YO TAKE?

Lent is, amongst others, a time of prayer. How are we doing? Let's hear what our spiritual mentor is saying:

If I should neglect prayer but a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith
(Martin Luther)

What were the experiences of our great Reformer (in/with prayer) that he could hold such an opinion? What spiritual benefits and daily grace did he encounter, for him to cling to his daily communion with God?



We do not need to guess, but only look upon his life to realize that he daily lived from the Source. This Source sustained him amidst all his trials and temptations and guided him in all decisions. Was he perfect? Not at all, but he knew where to turn to rekindle the flame in his heart.

Oh, that we can look upon prayer like that! Oh, that we can have a communion that we will never neglect, postpone, sacrifice for nothing in the world. Why wish? Wishing is one thing, action another.

Let us fix a time and place and meet with our Creator, Redeemer and Comforter, if you have not done so yet. Let's start around the ELCSA Almanac (See Newsletter 1.) or search the Internet on the theme how to start a prayer life. Try!!


Shall we lose that Lenten "fire of faith," or shall we kindle it through prayer?

Let us start to build the prayer connection. At first it might be as weak as the fiber of a spider's web, but it can turn into reinforced steel with perseverance. With God it is the true intentions and action that are rewarded and He will bestow upon us His Holy Spirit to help us on our way.

2. CHRIST'S CHURCH DURING LENT

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you (Jesus). Peace. Oh, what a mere conjecture this seems to be in our day and age. Indeed, if we focus on visible signs in the world we can become very discouraged with the wars and strife going on (read James 4). In our quest to fathom the reason for this we need to ask: Who is in charge of this world? The West? The United Nations, Europe?

Nature for one, show that it can not be bridled and will bring havoc to human plans and securities. So our vulnerability causes me to realize that humans are not in charge irrespective of how we try to display our power and might by displacing and destroying one another. So I still hook up my flag and say God is in charge and despite the hopelessness that we feel, He does and will bring the peace that passes all understanding.



When we thus reflect on the conditions in our world, we cannot do otherwise than to pray to the God of Peace to indeed bring about true peace to so many countries of the world. To pray for protection to the vulnerable, to women and children who are really at the brunt of atrocities as if they are reason for the wars.

May His kingdom be established speedily, this is our prayer.

3. PRAYER/HYMN

Jesus. Dear Name! The rock on which I build, my shield and hiding- place; my never-failing treasury filled with boundless stores of grace.

Weak is the efforts of my heart and cold my warmest thought, but when I see You as You are, I'll praise You as I ought.

4. WHOSE WILL IS SUPREME?

Hallowed be your Name we pray so many times a day/ week. Does this petition really influence our daily lives? How come it is used in vain so many times?

Let me make one example: I urge you to consider this temptation this Lenten period. Is it possible that you want to make a *name for yourself* with all your efforts, instead of hallowing/honoring the King of Calvary, who died on your behalf? This might sound absurd but think about it. The temptation is always there to be seen, to be given credit for your holiness, to rise up the ladder of spiritual achievers. Not a chance?

If what I am writing angers you, you might definitely have a problem that you honestly need to attend to with the help of your pastor/ spiritual confidant.