



**ENTRANCE PRAYER:** Dear God, in You I live if I am to be alive. I confess I am filled with sadness. I have lost the sense of joy. I have become sick of today, and I do not care about tomorrow. I feel the hours drag on. God, my Father, release me from this emptiness. In the midst of this oppressive weakness, restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Remind me of the cross on which Your Son bore the guilt of my sin. Remind me of the empty tomb by which He gained for me the freedom to live. Help me live in the joy of my freedom and prepare me to meet every new day, every new task and even the terrors of this world with joy and confidence. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

**A FORMER EMPLOYER WAS DRIVING A GROUP OF US HOME FROM A DISTANT JOB SITE.** The conversation rolled around to the state lottery which was at some millions of dollars mark. Several of the men in the truck asked him to stop and let them buy lottery tickets. The "boss" asked them what they would do with the money. After hearing their litany of material goods, he refused to stop, stating that their desires were all selfish. He too would be selfish and serve his needs. (If they won the money he would lose a worker.) The seeking of vengeance, the rejection of strangers is a selfishness that could keep someone from the true knowledge of Jesus, selfishness on our part could prevent someone from hearing the wonderful Word of salvation. May we give up our selfish desires and our every vengeance to promote the Gospel in the world. We thank everyone, this day, who has gathered with us in the name and for the sake of Jesus our Savior.

**THEME OF THE DAY:**

Love Your Enemies

**INTROIT**—(Antiphon: Psalm 37:7a, b;) Psalm 37:1-5

Written by David. Psalm 37 reminds us not to be envious of the success of evil people. It can appear that the way to become successful is to be as evil as possible, however, you the guarantee of Heaven, they have nothing to live for beyond this life.

**COLLECT**

This Collect was written in 2006. It contains the second part of the historic Collect for Sexagesima Sunday. (Epiphany Seven was created in the first edition of a three year cycle of readings.) We have a problem because, as with the Introit, we see sinners being more successful than those trying to live out God's commands. We ask for God's mercy as the power to overcome all adversity. We ask God's mercy as we attempt to keep ourselves from being envious or hating the enemies of faith.

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**—Genesis 45:3-15

A popular "myth," to explain suffering goes something along the lines of the life of Joseph. (If something bad happens in your life it might be a part of God's plan to put you somewhere special.) This was certainly true in the life of Joseph. Everything bad that happened in his life brought him to the moment of our Old Testament Lesson. He attempted to explain those circumstances to his brothers although they may not have been listening. This may not be true for your life, but it certainly was true in the life of Christ. All the bad things that happened to Him were caused by God, just-so-that you would become a permanent heir of Heaven.

**GRADUAL**—Psalm 117:1-2a, 96:8

God showers us with great love (grace) which is given to the believers and the unbelievers every morning. Verse 2 of Psalm 117 expresses the Love of God that shows forth in His faithfulness. By God's grace, we know that He will never vary from any part of His promises.

**EPISTLE LESSON**—1 Corinthians 15:21-26, 30-42

For Epiphany 6,7 and 8, we simply cut up 1 Corinthians 15 and read it. These sections stand rather independent of the theme for the day. The only connection today is in the fact that Paul basically reminding us (v. 33) that participating in bad acts will corrupt us. The Resurrection of Christ is a historical fact, your resurrection from the dead will become true as it is a guarantee from God. Hang in there against evil.

**GOSPEL LESSON**—Luke 6:27-38

Jesus is speaking of our true fulfillment of the Law, which is, in fact, not our fulfillment at all. Jesus fulfilled the Law of God in our place. He was