

turned to find one lost person and all Heaven breaks into song and shouts of praise over the return of the lost. No cost is spared to find the one whom was lost. God has been persistent, following His pursuit of the lost all the way to Calvary. God Loves everyone and has given even His Only Begotten Son, in His searching until He finds them. Then begins the rejoicing. {All numbers can be made from the digits, 0 through 9. This makes 10 the decimal, the whole and complete number. Jesus used the number 10 and the number 100 (10 times 10) to say that God goes to great lengths to bring all the elect into His kingdom.}

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© O God the Father Almighty, in the mystery of Your eternal Love, You ordained Your Son to be the Sacrifice for our sin. You laid on Him the punishment for our sin, and gave us the gift of His death which has become for us life through faith in Him.

Through the fruit of The Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil and the disobedience of Adam and Eve we were cast into the everlasting pit of despair and hopelessness. Through the Fruit of the tree of the cross, the obedience of Your Son our Savior, we have been taken out of the pit and set into Your eternal kingdom. When we look at the cross, the symbol of the death of Jesus we see the symbol of our salvation. For this we are grateful in measure beyond words.

Grant us a lively faith in Jesus, that we may understand both the infallible proofs of His death and the inerrant testimonies of His Resurrection. And as You have declared that if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in our heart that You raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved, fill us with a full measure of Your Holy Spirit that we are able to accomplish what You ordained and grant for our salvation.

Draw us to the cross and give us the desire to hold fast to the eternal truths as You present them in Your Word. For all of our trouble, care, sorrow, joy, peace, and love, we ask that You would quicken us in the knowledge and work of Your Sovereign authority and power.

Bestow on the nations of the Earth such knowledge of Your glory, that they may turn to You, the only God, and Your Son Jesus Christ and find salvation. Grant your favor on this land, that multitudes within her borders may turn from evil and come to faith and be filled with all Your fullness.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (Time of silent prayer.)

We pray in the blessings we have obtained through the life given us by Jesus.

© Amen.

PROPER NINETEEN

Chant Tone



ENTRANCE PRAYER: With all that is within us, O Lord, we bless Your Holy name. You forgive all our iniquities and heal our diseases. You redeem our life from destruction and crown us with loving kindness and tender mercies. For all these blessings, O Lord, we give You thanks. By Your Spirit help us to reflect Your mercy toward others. Make us confident that You will take our mistakes and turn them into blessings. Be with the lonely, comfort the sick and bring the assurance of Your forgiveness to the penitent. This we ask in the name and for the sake of Him who taught us how to follow You, even Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

SOME OF THE MOST INTERESTING EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF JESUS INVOLVE FOOD. Two weeks ago we found Jesus in the house of one of the rulers among the Pharisees. Today we find him eating with people whom the Pharisees considered "sinners." It is without a doubt the most beautiful pronouncement ever made, that: "Jesus receives sinners and eats with them," for though Paul states himself to be the "chief of sinners," we are certainly not far behind. Jesus receives us at the altar of His sacrifice and becomes not only the host, but the meal. This truth is almost more than we are able to bear. In our joy, we resolve to throw off the sin that separates us from Jesus and live in the righteousness put on us by God, granted through the work of Jesus.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Jesus Finds and Keeps Us

INTROIT—(Antiphon, Psalm 30:11a, 12b;) Psalm 30:2-5

We previously only used Psalm 30 during Easter. It is a Psalm of thanksgiving as David rededicated his house (his personal residence) to God after the death of Absalom. This was especially important for two reasons. Absalom, David's son, had rebelled against him. Absalom made sure to do incestuous, abominable things in his father's house, just to prove he could. The king's house in Jerusalem was the only thing David was allowed to build (he was not allowed to build the temple.) It was significantly important to David that the king's house be pure, as it would be the house of the true king, the Messiah. Plus, David recognized that he had been returned, by God, to his rightful place.

COLLECT

While it is not, "Good Shepherd Sunday," we do have "shepherds" in the mix. We ask that our "Good Shepherd" would guard and keep us.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Ezekiel 34:11-24

This is a completely new use of Ezekiel in our reading schedule. The previous lesson wasn't as tied to the theme of the day as this substitution. God had grown weary of the shepherds (the priests) giving out poor and misleading information, causing them to be lost. God proclaims that He, Himself will be the Shepherd, seeking His chosen to come (back) to Him.

GRADUAL—Psalm 34:9, 19 alternative

For a time David pretended to be insane. It allowed him to hide out in a foreign king's court while Saul was attempting to kill him. David came to his senses (pun intended.) He realized that he was avoiding God's will and had wandered away. When he realized that God was (figuratively) searching for him, he turned and became bold again in his faith.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 Timothy 1:5-17

God went to great lengths to save Paul. Paul was actively involved in the persecution of the church established by Jesus Christ. Jesus, Himself came to Paul and changed his heart. Paul never forget that he was lost and now was found. The world often thinks that at least they are better than some other. It gives them the idea that they deserve Heaven. Our salvation depends on faith in Jesus, what we believe, teach and confess, and not that we aren't as bad as someone else. Paul makes it very clear that everyone can be brought to the knowledge of salvation in Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL LESSON—Luke 15:1-10

Two parables focus on God's Love for the lost. In the parable of the lost sheep and in the parable of the lost coin, all of heaven's energies are