

NOVEMBER 5, 2023  
TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST



*Faith is nurtured through trusted relationships.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 23:1-12	Humble yourselves
Monday	Micah 3:5-12	Wicked rulers and prophets
Tuesday	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13	Leading a life worthy of God
Wednesday	Psalms 25:1-10	Prayer for guidance and help
Thursday	Micah 5:6-8	What God requires
Friday	Ephesians 4:1-16	Unity in the body of Christ
Saturday	Psalms 43	A prayer for protection
Sunday	Matthew 25:1-13	A parable of the ten bridesmaids

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*"[T]herefore, do whatever they [scribes and Pharisees] teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach."* **Matthew 23:3 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### A Prayer for the Week:

Holy God, help us to live lives that reflect your goodness and mercy that others may be strengthened by faith in you through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this food and pray for the feeding and wellbeing of all for the sake of Jesus Christ, the one who came to love us always. Amen.

#### A Blessing to Give:

May God give you courage to live in peace through Christ our Lord.



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*When the Poor Ones*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What are the personal qualities that lead you to trust someone?
- How is faith nurtured through trusted relationships?

### DEVOTIONS



*Read:* 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13.

The reading this week from 1 Thessalonians 2 fits nicely with Matthew 23. Jesus points out that the hypocritical authority of the scribes and Pharisees is seen by the fact that they do not practice what they preach (Matthew 23:3). Paul and his missionary partners (Silvanus and Timothy) do practice what they preach. Paul writes that the people see it for themselves. What do they see? Missionaries who *"deal with each one like a father with his children"* (1 Thessalonians 2:11). Reaching others with the gospel is about intimate care for the lives of people, not the status or financial gain of the leaders. It speaks to the good news itself that is about authentic lives humbly pointing to God's grace and mercy. Paul describes their message as the word of God, the very word that is active in the lives of believers to *"lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory"* (v. 12).

*Discuss:* How can you tell if a Christian leader practices what they preach?

*Pray:* **Almighty God, you call us to lives of service; give us faith and compassion to care for others with the word of God, the message of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you reach out to someone with humility to share the love of Christ?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Go on a night walk outside or inside your house with all the lights turned off using a flashlight to guide you. Afterward, think or talk about what it means to be dependent on light to see your way clearly and to guide your path safely. Reflect on how God leads and guides us every day. Read Psalm 43:3-4 as a prayer: ***"O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God."*** Amen.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)