

Prayers for Sunday Aug 11 and Wednesday Aug 14, 2024

One in communion with the saints and in the power of the Holy Spirit we join our voices in prayer.

Dear God, in this world it is easier to ignore and keep our distance from anyone who is different than ourselves. We too often **choose not to “see” those** who are in need. Please help us to be kinder and helpful toward others.

Leader-Merciful God

Congregation: Receive our Prayer

When we are ill or in distress, we often fear the unknown. We do not know what the future holds. We take comfort in knowing what is familiar. What we need to remember and understand is that in all good things it is You working in the world: weaving the threads of comfort, concern, and connecting others with our lives to create a tapestry of love, hope and healing. Today we especially pray for Brayden, Brianna, Darla, Denise, Jackie, James O., Jerry, Jerry, Kristy, Larry, Lee, Lori, Nancy, Nathan, Oliver, Pat, Rachel, Tracy, Scott, Will and all those we hold in our hearts.

Leader- Merciful God

Congregation: Receive our prayer

Jesus, you demonstrated that making room in our lives for others is now we make room for You. Give us the faith and courage to take the steps to a fuller life with You as our guide.

Leader- Merciful God

Congregation: Receive our prayer

Dear God, how blessed we are to have had someone tell us the stories of your love and grace. For all those saints who have gone home to you we are thankful for their time, their support, and their commitment to help St John's legacy live on. May we continue that legacy with the determination that your story will be told and lived.

Leader- Merciful God

Congregation: Receive our Prayer

Dear God, help us find ways to use the talents and gifts you have blessed us with in service to those less fortunate.

Leader- Merciful God

Congregation: Receive our Prayer

God of Love, we ask you to remind us when frustrated with life that faith does not get us around trouble, it gets us through it! Thank you, God, for always being by our side.

Leader- Merciful God

Congregation: Receive our Prayer

With everlasting thanks and joy for your love and forgiveness we ask you to be with us till we meet again. This week help us to take every opportunity to be thankful for the blessings of each day. Help us to pay attention to how best we can be a gift to others. May we approach each day with SOUL – serving others, uplifting lives! We ask all in the name of Your Dear Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN.

August 11, 2024 -You Are Good

"You are good Lord." Psalm 25:7

As I boarded a plane last week, the pilot called my name. He was standing in the cockpit entrance, greeting passengers. "Well, hello, Max." I looked up. It was my friend Joe. My *old* friend. He is the Methuselah of the airways. He's been flying forever. He flew transports in Vietnam and has logged a bookful of hours as a commercial pilot. He's faced every flight crisis from electrical storms to empty fuel tanks. He is a good pilot.

And he is a friend, a *good* friend. He's not my neighbor, but if he were, our property value would increase. If I were in the hospital, he'd keep a bedside vigil. If I were on vacation, he'd keep my dog. If I offended him, he'd keep his cool until we could talk it through. He could no more tell a lie than a mosquito could sing the national anthem. He never swears, gets drunk, cheats, or swindles. He is that good.

He is good – good in skill and good in heart.

We chatted for a few minutes, and I went to my seat with a sense of assurance. *What more could I request? I thought. The pilot is experienced and proven. Even more, he is my tried-and-true friend. I am in good hands.*

The knowledge came in handy. An hour into the flight we hit a wall of winds. People gasped, dentures rattled, and the attendant told us to check our seat belts and rosary beads. I've had smoother roller coaster rides. Unlike the other passengers, however, I stayed calm. I didn't have a death wish, but I had an advantage. I knew the pilot. I knew Joe. I knew his heart and trusted his skill. *Joe can handle, this I told myself.* The storm was bad, but the pilot was good. So as much as one can relax in a squall, I did.

Friend, it's a stormy world out there. Every day brings turbulence. Moody economy. Aging bodies. Declining job market. Increasing street violence. The question during these troubling times is this: Do we have a good pilot? The resounding response of the Bible is yes! May I make a suggestion? Before you face the world, face your Father.

Father, you are good. Good enough to love me, care for me, and come for me. You are good! An arch of your eyebrows and a million angels will pivot and salute. Every throne is a footstool to yours. Every crown is papier-mache to yours. You hve no questions, second thoughts, or backward glances. You consult no clock. You keep no calendar. You report to no one. You are good!

Is our world different because you prayed? In one sense, no. Wars still rage, traffic still clogs, and heartbreakers still roam the planet. But you are different. You have peace. You've spent time with the Pilot. And the Pilot is up to the task.

My friend Joe, as it turns out, got us through the storm just fine. He landed the plane and stood in his cockpit door as we exited the flight.

"Got a bit choppy there, Joe," I commented.

"Yeah, he agreed. "were you scared?"

"Not really," I replied. "Everything changes when you *know* the pilot."

A reflection by: Max Lucado