

From the Pews, Brian Donlan

It is easy to get caught up in our daily life of work and home, with our hectic schedules and list of commitments. We have three children that lately have us going in three different directions. Distractions and busyness seem to be part of normal life. Monday starts and it's Friday before we exhale. Time becomes a costly commodity. Are we regularly fitting in time to focus on our spiritual health? Is it only on Sunday that we come back to focusing on Jesus? Distractions can cause us to lose our spiritual sight. I know I can fall into a trap of going throughout the course of a week spiritually blind and I can/need to do a better job of looking to Jesus to guide me in my daily life.

There's a wonderful story in the bible about a man that was born blind and Jesus restored his sight (John 9:1-41). In the story the disciples initially question if the man was blind because of his sins or his parents' sin, and Jesus's answer was neither. God does not try to punish us but is there to help us. However, in the story the Pharisees were blind to the miracle that Jesus performed. Proudful and thinking they knew better, they were sure that Jesus was a sinner for doing work on the Sabbath. The Pharisees couldn't see the evidence of God's transforming love and were blind to his light. We all have our blindspots, but if we are willing to humbly confess our blindness and sins, God will open our eyes and show us the way everyday.



Preparation for **Worship**

"This is the rule of most perfect Christianity, its most exact definition, its highest point, namely, the seeking of the common good...for nothing can so make a person an imitator of Christ as caring for neighbors."

John Chrysostom, 4th century, Bishop of Constantinople

Gathering and Preparing for **God's Word**

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Solo "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" Grotenhuis

Opening Sentences

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, we confess to you and to one another —
those in the room with us,
those virtually connected to us in this time of worship,
and those bound to us by the power of the Holy Spirit —
that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart,
and mind, and strength.
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

Save us, O Lord. **Have mercy on us.**

We have taken safe homes, with plenty of space, for granted.
We have lost patience with loved ones and those closest to us.
We have grumbled and complained,
rather than giving thanks for our blessings.

Save us, O Lord. **Have mercy on us.**

We have allowed fear to take root in our hearts.
We have worried about ourselves first,
instead of those in deepest need.
We have wallowed in negativity.

Save us, O Lord. **Have mercy on us.**

We have not listened to your call to serve as Christ served us.
We have not been true to the mind of Christ.
We have grieved the Holy Spirit.

Save us, O Lord. **Have mercy on us. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Hearing **God's Word**

Minute for Children

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Lesson, *Matthew 7:24-27*

Old Testament Lesson, *Psalms 23*

Homily, "Stuck at Home"

Responding to **God's Word**

Affirmation of Faith, *The Confession of 1967 (excerpts)*

Life is a gift to be received with gratitude
and a task to be pursued with courage.

Each member is the church...
endowed by the Spirit with some gift of ministry
and is responsible for the integrity of his or her witness
in each particular situation.

The church calls all people to use their abilities, their possessions,
and the fruits of technology as gifts entrusted to them by God
for the maintenance of their families
and the advancement of the common welfare.

Prayers of Thanksgiving & Intercession

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Solo "Nothing to Fear"

Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Assad