

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

The Litany

Leader: I affirm the victorious life extolled in the Christian gospel. I have experienced days of overcoming, of surprises that made my face light up – when I thought: “too good to be true” and drawing happy faces in my notes; and of triumphs that involved “goodness and mercy following me.” But there are also days on my journey that I feel tired, worn, weary and defeated. When I am burdened

People: The love of Christ encourages me.

Leader: When I acknowledged that Christ was Lord and declared “I am saved,” and “I am called,” I felt whole, affirmed, connected, reconciled, re-born and liberated. It was a mountain-top experience! Back in the valley, it took me a while to learn that my liberty was not a license to yield to my base desires, to do as I pleased. The almost daily challenges are still many – deep-seated anger and my inability to forgive, the gross and sometimes obscene accumulation of things (sometimes more than I can afford), a fight against laziness, of thinking of myself more highly than I ought, of the proclivity to look for love in all the wrong places, and the excessive consumption of food and drink. Thank GOD for grace. When I am tempted and yielding

People: The love of Christ constrains me.

Leader: I’ve been known to sing and hum “I won’t Complain” as I consider that my good days really do outweigh my bad days. But when I’m having a bad day, it’s *really* bad. When I am preparing to throw in the towel

People: The love of Christ reminds me that God’s grace is sufficient.

Leader: Oil gushing from the bottom of the Gulf’s floor a mile deep, siphoning crude belonging to another age, goop slapping against the beach and shoreline, leaving in its wake an overwhelmed ecosystem – birds that no longer fly, fish and crustaceans and mollusks unfit for consumption, pristine beauty faded, jobs lost and people suffer. In sundry places around the globe (including right here at home), children are hungry and cry for bread, and others are throwing bread away. When I am filled with righteous indignation

People: The love of Christ causes me to care and to act.

Leader: Earthquakes by the baker’s dozen, tornadoes swirl and neighborhoods vanish; flash floods ravage, ethnic violence stuns, terrorists are still lurking – all of these come with a death toll; sables rattling, war drums beating, flag-draped caskets; drunk drivers driving – in too much of a stupor to be fazed; text-messengers messaging while driving, sending a note that just couldn’t wait, and somebody’s loved one pays the price in pain, suffering and death. When I am distressed

People: The love of Christ lifts, comforts, and reminds me there is something I can do.

Leader: When I am lost, sick, confused, or discouraged

People: The love of Christ saves me, heals me, sustains me and calls me to prayer.

(A litany by Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr.)