

December, 2009e-St. Marker

CONVERTS TO CHRIST

Fellow Pilgrims:

Last month, I gave you an African creed, which has been used in worship. We belong to the worldwide Anglican Communion. These Anglicans are our brothers and sisters in Christ who accept Jesus Christ as their risen Lord and Savior. Scripture says, in Galatians 3: 27-28, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave, nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” I believe they, and we, are part of the same Christian family with no distinctions of ethnicity, race, economic status, or gender. They have an enthusiasm for Jesus, which invites others to examine the claims of Jesus Christ. They do not bury their heart’s longing within a lot of words but get to the point in sincerity, love, and simplicity.

Prayer of a Muslim Convert: “O God, I am Mustafah, the tailor, and I work at the shop of Muhammed Ali. The whole day long I sit and pull the needle and the thread through the cloth. O God, You are the needle and I am the thread. I am attached to You and I follow You. When the thread tries to slip away from the needle it becomes tangled up and must be cut so that it can be put back in the right place. O God, help me to follow you wherever You may lead me. For I am really only Mustafah, the tailor and I work at the shop of Muhammed Ali on the great square.” O Lord, be my needle and help me be the thread You sew into the fabric of my life. Amen.

Prayer of an African Girl: O great Chief, light a candle within my heart that I may see what is therein and sweep the rubbish from Your dwelling place.” O Lord, be the light, which illuminates my heart. With the help of the Holy Spirit, may I find the courage to clean out everything that does not belong to You. Amen.

A Chinese Woman’s Prayer (after learning to read): “We are going home to many who cannot read. So, Lord, make us to be Bibles so that who cannot read the Book can read it in us.” Lord, give me the Holy Spirit so that I may live out the Biblical life so that those who cannot or will not read the Bible, will read the Bible through me. Amen.

Chandran Devanesen (India): “O Tree of Calvary send your roots deep down into my heart. Gather together the soil of my heart, the sands of my fickleness, the stones of my stubbornness, the mud of my desires, bind them all together, O Tree of Calvary, interlace them with your strong roots, entwine them with the network of your love.” O Lord, send the Holy Spirit to cleanse me of all that gets between You and me. Empower me to be who You would have me be in my life and in my relationships with others. Amen.

Prayer of a Xhosa Christian (South Africa): “You are the great God—He who is in heaven. You are the creator of life, You make the regions above. You are the hunter who hunts for souls. You are the leader who goes before us. You are He whose hands are with

wounds. You are He whose feet are with wounds. You are He whose blood is a trickling stream. You are He whose blood was spilled for us.” O Lord, let us remember the full cost of being able to have the Body of Christ, the bread of heaven and the Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. Don’t let us take salvation for granted. Let our lives be a witness of the grace You freely offer to all who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their risen Lord and Savior. Amen.

I want to leave you with this prayer from Soren Kierkegaard on faith: “Teach me, O God, not to torture myself, not to make a martyr out of myself through stifling reflection, but rather teach me to breathe deeply in faith.”

In Christ’s love,
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