

Advent Devotional December 6, 2019

Scripture

Psalm 148

1 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

2 Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his host!

3 Praise him, sun and moon;

praise him, all you shining stars!

4 Praise him, you highest heavens,

and you waters above the heavens!

*5 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.*

*6 He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.*

7 Praise the Lord from the earth,

you sea monsters and all deeps,

*8 fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!*

9 Mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars!

*10 Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!*

*11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!*

*12 Young men and women alike,
old and young together!*

*13 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.*

*14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!*

Devotional

The Rev. Larry P. Homitsky

I don't feel like getting ready for Christmas at all!!!! Both my mother and my mother-in-law are in the final stages of life with severe memory loss and day-to-day needs that we continue to drop everything to attend to. My workload seems so over extended that every week I am physically worn out and not even able to squeeze in the "together time" my family so richly deserves. And at 6:00 p.m. today—the day I'm writing this Advent devotional—we will put our beloved rescue dog to sleep, because cancer and a stroke have already taken away her spirit. I feel like I should be writing on a text from Job! Have you ever felt like that?

But I'm writing from Psalm 148—one of the lectionary text for today. And it's placed in the midst of a whole section of writings that specifically celebrates the vast glory of God manifested in the world—all

around, in everything we see and are nurtured by, and everything within that can provide meaning and purpose for life itself. I believe these writings exist just for these Job moments—writings to assist us in keeping perspective and faith!

I carry a beach stone in my pocket all the time—a stone found during one of my many beach walks. When I hold it up really close to my eyes, it throws everything else out of focus. But when I pull it away to where it belongs, everything else immediately comes back into proper perspective. I have so much to be thankful for. In fact, the loss I feel so close to right now is only because of the many years of great gain I have been blessed with. Psalm 148, thanks for reminding me. Merry Christmas!!!

Prayer

Oh Lord, hear our prayers of gratitude for all the glorious gifts we receive daily. Then help us keep life's many challenges in the appropriate perspective necessary for true health of body, mind, and spirit. And when the burdens of life coming knocking at our door, may the room they enter always be large enough to place them in the corners, where they truly belong, thus enabling our faith-filled celebrations to hold center place among all our experiences now and forever. Amen.