

WEDNESDAY PRAYER

16th June, 2021

Psalm 26

The Lord is my light and my help; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; before whom shall I shrink?
Though an army encamp against me my heart would not fear.
Though war break out against me, even then would I trust.
There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long,
To live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord, to behold his temple.
For there he keeps me safe in his tent on the day of evil.
He hides me in the shelter of his tent, on a rock he sets me safe.
And now my head shall be raised above my foes who surround me
and I shall offer within his tent a sacrifice of joy.
I will sing and make music for the Lord.
I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart. Hope in the Lord!

LITANY OF PRAISE:

Lord, you are my light and my help!

SCRIPTURE READING: Philippians 4:4-9

Always be joyful, then, in the Lord; I repeat, be joyful. Let your good sense be obvious to everybody. The Lord is near. Never worry about anything; but tell God all your desires of every kind, in prayer and petition shot through with gratitude, and the peace of God which is beyond our understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, let your minds be filled with everything that is true, everything that is honourable, everything that is upright and pure, everything that we love and admire - with whatever is good and praiseworthy. Keep doing everything you learnt from me and were told by me and have heard or seen me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.
The word of the Lord

REFLECTION: (Henri Nouwen)

The immense difference between hope and wishfulness comes out in the remarks of a student who wrote: "I see hope as an attitude where everything stays open before me. Not that I don't think of my future in those moments, but I think of it in an entirely different way. Daring to stay open to whatever will come to me today, tomorrow, two months from now or a year from now – that is hope. To go fearlessly into things without knowing how they'll turn out, to keep on going, even when something doesn't work the first time, to have trust in whatever you're doing – that is living with hope."

When we live with hope we do not get tangled up with concerns for how our wishes will be fulfilled. So, too, our prayers are not directed toward the gift, but toward the one who gives it. Our prayers might still contain just as many desires, but ultimately it is not a question of having a wish come true but expressing an unlimited faith in the giver of all good things. You wish that . . . but you hope in . . .

In the prayer of hope, there are no guarantees asked, no conditions posed and no proofs demanded. You expect everything from the other without binding the other in any way. Hope is based on the premise that the other gives only what is good. Hope includes an openness by which you wait for the promise to come through, even though you never know when, where or how this might happen.

Only if you pray with hope can you break through the barriers of death. For no longer do you want to know what it will be like after you die, what heaven will look like exactly or how you will be eternal. You don't let yourself be distracted by daydreams in which all your conflicting desires are satisfied in a wish-come-true hereafter. When you pray with hope, you turn yourself towards God, trusting fully that God is faithful and makes all promises real.

INTERCESSIONS: Lord, in your mercy . . . Hear our prayer

CLOSING PRAYER: Lord, I am full of wishes, full of desires, full of expectations. Some of them may be realised, many may not, but in the midst of all my satisfactions and disappointments, I hope in you. I know that you will never leave me alone and will fulfil your divine promises. O Lord, strengthen my hope, especially when my many wishes are not fulfilled. Let me never forget that your name is Love. Amen.

