

# OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

904 Bluff Street Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

*A traditional, liturgical, Biblical congregation in the heart of Cedar Falls ministering to sinners with the forgiving presence of Christ.*

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### The 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost September 3, 2023

**TO OUR VISITORS** We rejoice that you have joined us this morning to hear the Word of God, receive His gifts of life and salvation, and to respond to His faithfulness with “Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” *Ephesians 5:19*

- ✘ *Please take the time to fill out the Communion Registration/Visitors’ Cards which are in the small card holders on the pew.*
- ✘ *Please read the announcement below regarding Communion.*
- ✘ *Guests who will not be communing may place the Visitor’s card in the Offering plate..*
- ✘ *Guests who intend to commune are asked to announce this intention to the Elder and give the card to the Usher as they come forward to receive communion.*
- ✘ *Following the Service, a member of the Board of Communication and Outreach has a small gift for you.*

#### **OUR REDEEMER PRACTICES CLOSED COMMUNION**

The Sacrament of the Altar is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine for us Christians to eat and drink, instituted by Christ Himself. As we receive this Sacrament, the oneness of fellowship at the Altar (I Corinthians 10:17) presupposes a oneness in doctrine with the Apostles (Acts 2:42). For this reason the congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have agreed to follow the Biblical and historical practice of Closed Communion. If you desire to receive the Lord's Supper and are not a communicant member of Our Redeemer or a sister congregation in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we respectfully ask that you not commune this morning. Rather, we would invite you to speak with Pastor Knox, Pastor Saunders, or Vicar Baker about Holy Communion and about becoming a communicant member of this congregation.



#### ***THOSE SERVING GOD’S PEOPLE THIS WEEK***

**Elder:** Tom Strub **Service Assistant:** Steven Dekutoski

**Organist:** Roxann List **Ushers:** Al Nissen, Dean Garms

**Tellers:** Chris Fink, James Mishler **Shut-Ins:** Jim Bunkofske



**TODAY IS THE 14<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST** The Gospel appointed for this day in the Church year is from the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew’s Gospel. Earlier in this same chapter, you heard Peter’s great confession that Jesus is “*the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” Jesus called Peter “blessed” because he had received this truth from his heavenly Father.

How quickly things change. Today Peter completely changes course by rebuking Jesus. As Jesus declares that He must suffer, be killed, and be raised on the third day Peter thinks he has a better plan. In Peter’s mind, this was not the way to establish the kingdom that Jesus had been preaching about these past three years. Although Peter had good intentions, Satan used those intentions for evil, as he so often does with you.

Peter pressed Jesus to follow the road of glory and this was not the first time that such a temptation had been set before Jesus. Recall that shortly after His baptism, He had heard the same lies from Satan in the wilderness and so, once again, “for us and for our salvation,” Jesus overcomes the father of lies, “***Get behind me Satan!***”

Jesus set His eyes on the cross, and bore that cross for you, so that you could be free of Satan once and for all. Jesus would take up His cross to give you, His disciples, life and salvation. Jesus also tells you that you must take up your cross and follow Him. This is not easy for you as a child of God. Peter wasn’t just thinking of Jesus when he said, “***Never, Lord, this shall never happen to you!***” Peter was thinking of himself. Peter knew full well that as it was for Jesus, so it would be for those who were His disciples.

Jesus bore the cross of Calvary and died the sinner’s death to redeem you from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil. The cross you are now called to bear does not redeem you, for that has already been accomplished by Christ your Lord. The cross you now bear reveals you as one who has been redeemed by Christ, for you were marked with the cross of Christ in Holy Baptism. It is Christ who now lives in you. Today Jesus strengthens you to carry your cross by reminding you of your baptism, by the preaching of His Word, and by giving you His body and blood. Even as you bear the cross, Jesus’ words still ring loud and clear, “***Blessed are you.***”

**AS YOU WAIT FOR THE SERVICE TO BEGIN**, turn in your bulletin to the Hymn of the Day - "Oh, Love, How Deep" #544. As you read the verses of this hymn, take note of the author's repeated use of the phrase "for us." The Hymn writer reminds you that Jesus' entire life, including His overcoming the temptation of Satan, is done "for us" and for our salvation. This morning we will sing 2 additional verses of this hymn. They will be sung as verses 7 and 8. Written by one of our members, Sara Lair, these verses remind us that Jesus "for us" is present in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## I. THE PREPARATION

### Hymn of Invocation

*"Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus" LSB #531*



1 Hail, Thou once de - spis - ed Je - sus! Hail, Thou Gal - i -  
 2 Pas - chal Lamb, by God ap - point - ed, All our sins on  
 3 Je - sus, hail! En - throned in glo - ry, There for - ev - er  
 4 Wor - ship, hon - or, pow'r, and bless - ing Thou art wor - thy



le - an King! Thou didst suf - fer to re - lease us; Thou didst  
 Thee were laid; By al - might - y love a - noint - ed, Thou hast  
 to a - bide; All the heav'n - ly hosts a - dore Thee, Seat - ed  
 to re - ceive; High - est prais - es, with - out ceas - ing, Right it



free sal - va - tion bring. Hail, Thou u - ni - ver - sal Sav - ior,  
 full a - tone - ment made. All Thy peo - ple are for - giv - en  
 at Thy Fa - ther's side. There for sin - ners Thou art plead - ing;  
 is for us to give. Help, ye bright an - gel - ic spir - its,



Bear - er of our sin and shame! By Thy mer - it  
 Through the vir - tue of Thy blood; O - pened is the  
 There Thou dost our place pre - pare, Ev - er for us  
 All your no - blest an - thems raise; Help to sing our



we find fa - vor: Life is giv - en through Thy name.  
 gate of heav - en, Rec - on - ciled are we with God.  
 in - ter - ced - ing Till in glo - ry we ap - pear.  
 Sav - ior's mer - its, Help to chant Im - man - uel's praise!

Text and tune: Public domain

### ***Stand/Remain Standing***

### Invocation

P/V: In the name of the Father and of the (✠) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]*

**C: Amen.**

### The Confession of Sin

P/V: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*

P/V: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C: who made heaven and earth.**

*Psalms 124:8*

P/V: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**C: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

*Psalms 32:5*

P/V: Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**C: O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen**

P/V: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to be the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

**C: Amen.**

*Mark 16:16; John 1:12*

## II. THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

### Introit\*



Cantor: Delight yourself | in the Lord,\*  
and He will give you the desires | of your heart.

Cong: **Commit your way | to the Lord;\***  
**trust in Him, and | He will act.**

**He will bring forth your righteousness | as the light,\***  
**and your justice as the | noonday.**

**Be still before the Lord and wait patiently | for Him;\***

**fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil de- | vices!**

Cantor: Delight yourself | in the Lord,\*  
and He will give you the desires | of your heart.

*(Ps. 37:5-7; antiphon: Ps. 37:4)*

### Gloria Patri

☐ Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost;  
as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and ev-er shall be, world with-out end. A-men.

### Kyrie

*Mark 10:47*

☐ Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -  
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

### Gloria in Excelsis

*Luke 2:14; John 1:29*

☐ Glory be to God on high: ☐ and on earth peace, good - will toward  
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,  
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.  
O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.  
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.

Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-  
on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost,  
art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

**The Salutation**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And with thy spir - it.

*II Timothy 4:22*

**The Collect of the Day**

**P:** Let us pray: Almighty God, Your Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption. Grant us courage to take up our cross daily and follow Him wherever He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** A - men.

*Be seated*

**The Old Testament**

Jeremiah 15:15-21

**P:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God

**The Gradual**

*"Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word" LSB #655*

1 Lord, keep us stead-fast in Your Word; Curb those who  
2 Lord Je-sus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For You are  
3 O Com-fort-er of price-less worth, Send peace and

by de- ceit or sword Would wrest the king-dom from Your  
Lord of lords a-lone; De-fend Your ho-ly Church that  
u-ni-ty on earth; Sup-port us in our fi-nal

Son And bring to naught all He has done.  
we May sing Your praise e-ter-nal-ly.  
strife And lead us out of death to life.

The Epistle  
Romans 12:9-21

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

The Alleluia/Verse



☐ Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Cantor: Whoever would save his life will | lose it,\*  
but whoever loses his life for My sake will | find it.

*Matthew 16:25*



☐ Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 16:21-28

P: The Holy Gospel according to the Evangelist Matthew, the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter.



☐ Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.



☐ Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,  
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life (✕) of the world to come. Amen

## The Hymn of The Day

“O Love, How Deep” #544



1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high,  
2 He sent no an - gel to our race,  
3 For us bap - tized, for us He bore  
4 For us He prayed; for us He taught;

Be - yond all thought and fan - ta - sy,  
Of high - er or of low - er place,  
His ho - ly fast and hun - gered sore;  
For us His dai - ly works He wrought,

That God, the Son of God, should take  
But wore the robe of hu - man frame,  
For us temp - ta - tion sharp He knew;  
By words and signs and ac - tions thus

Our mor - tal form for mor - tals' sake!  
And to this world Him - self He came.  
For us the tempt - er o - ver - threw.  
Still seek - ing not Him - self but us.

5. For us by wickedness betrayed,  
For us, in crown of thorns arrayed,  
He bore the shameful cross and death;  
For us He gave His dying breath.
6. For us He rose from death again;  
For us He went on high to reign;  
For us He sent His Spirit here  
To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.
- (7.) *For us with water and the word  
His Bap-tism pro-mise now is heard  
A new life un-to us is giv'n  
From sin and death to Him in heav'n.*
- (8.) *For us the Ho-ly Supper here  
Our Lord with body and blood draws near  
Forgive-ness, life, salvation brings  
Christ is the hope to which we cling.*
- △ 9. All glory to our Lord and God  
For love so deep, so high, so broad;  
The Trinity whom we adore  
Forever and forevermore.

Text: Public domain  
Verses 7 and 8 – Sara Lair

## The Sermon

*Following the Sermon, please rise to sing the Offertory*

**The Offertory**


Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

**The Prayers**

*Various Petitions are prayed. Each petition will conclude with the response:*

**P:** Lord, in Your mercy.

**C:** Hear our prayer.

*The Congregation, gathered for worship in person, will now be receiving the Sacrament of the Altar. This most significant portion of the Divine Service, when our Lord Jesus Christ draws near to His people with His flesh and blood, will not be streamed. Members desiring to receive the Sacrament who are unable to be present in the Church will be visited by one of our pastors to bring them the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.*

*Those who have joined us online for the Service of the Word are now encouraged to pray 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from (☒) evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**May the Lord bless and keep you.**

**Please call Pastor Knox (319/231-9761) if you would like to receive a Pastoral visit.**

## ✠ OUR WEEK TOGETHER IN THE BODY OF CHRIST ✠

<b>Sun. 9/3</b>	9:00 a.m.	Divine Service at Our Redeemer
	10:30 a.m.	Sunday School and Bible Class
<b>Wed. 9/6</b>	10:00 a.m.	Book Club
	11:00 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class (Weekly Readings)
	5:25 p.m.	Adult Choir
<b>Sat. 9/9</b>	6:00 p.m.	Bible Class at Peace – Shell Rock
	7:00 p.m.	Divine Service at Peace – Shell Rock

### HYMNS/READINGS

**Sunday, September 10 The 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 18)**

Readings: Ezekiel 33:7-9; Romans 13:1-10; Matthew 18:1-20

Invocation: Only-Begotten, Word Of God Eternal..... 916

Gradual: Baptismal Waters Cover Me..... 616

Hymn of the Day: O Christ, Our Hope, Our Hearts' Desire ..... 553

Distribution: Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord ..... 637

Distribution: "As Surely as I Live," God Said..... 614

Distribution: My Soul, Now Praise Your Maker ..... 820

### BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

**THE SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS** meets from 10:30 – 11:15 each Sunday. Today Pastor Knox will conclude the study of Burial practices and the Christian funeral. Starting on September 10, Pastor Knox will begin a study of Revelation.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** normally meets from 10:30 – 11:15 each Sunday. There is no Sunday School today. On the Sunday, September 10, there will be a Sunday School celebration to mark the beginning of the School Year.

**WEEKLY READINGS/HYMNS STUDY** This class meets each Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. to study the weekly readings, hymns, and propers for the upcoming Sunday. It is a way to prepare for the coming week's Divine Service.

**THE VICAR'S BIBLE STUDY** This Fall Vicar Baker will begin a study of the use of agricultural images and themes in the Bible. This class will resume on Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. The class will also be held on Tuesday, at 6:00 p.m. at Peace in Shell Rock. See the note in the bulletin describing how Vicar plans to organize this class.

**YOUTH BIBLE STUDY** During the School Year the Jr. High/Sr. High Youth meet for Bible Study with our Vicar on Sunday mornings from 10:30-11:15 and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. Sunday morning study will resume on September 10<sup>th</sup> and the Wednesday evening class will start on on September 13<sup>th</sup>. On Sunday mornings the youth will be studying 1 Corinthians, comparing the experience of the Christians in largely pagan Corinth with our circumstances today. On Wednesdays for the youth will choose topics to discuss.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**THE LATEST EDITION OF THE REPORTER** is available following the Service this morning.

**IT IS ALMOST CHOIR SEASON AGAIN.** We want to encourage ANYONE who loves to sing, regardless of the ability to read music, to join the Adult Choir. We meet every Wednesday, from 5:25-6:25 starting September 6<sup>th</sup> and finish up in late May. If you cannot commit to the full year, that is fine. Join us in the Fall or join in January. We are a fun, friendly group and would LOVE to see new faces and hear new voices. If you have ANY questions, talk to Roxann or Sheryl.

**MEN'S CHOIR** Vicar Baker, with the endorsement of Mrs. Dekutoski and Mrs. List, is attempting to assemble a Men's Choir to add to the musical offerings of Our Redeemer. This group will likely sing a simple arrangement of a hymn or liturgical music for the Divine Service once a season and will rehearse as needed. No previous musical experience is required, and the commitment to participate will be minimal. Please speak with Vicar Baker if you have questions or are interested in joining.

 **MEN'S  
CHOIR**

**OUR REDEEMER BOOK CLUB** After the summer break, the Our Redeemer Book Club will resume on Wednesday, September 6, at 10:00 a.m. (prior to the weekly Pericopes study). We hope that you will plan to join us as we read and discuss "God's Word: A Guide to Holy Scripture" by John Kleinig. (For a synopsis of the book, please see the "What We're Reading" review by Gerry Peterson on page 9 of the July-August **REPORTER**.) Books will be ordered soon (cost approximately \$20) – to reserve a copy, please see Sara Lair or Greg Gerjerts.

**HELP CELEBRATE THE START OF SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR** by attending a potluck after Sunday School and Bible Class on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Spaghetti and garlic bread will be provided as well as some games. Please sign up to bring a side dish/dessert, or to help in the kitchen. The sign up sheet is located in the Parish Hall. Contact Michaela Knox with any questions.



**VOLUNTEER HELP IN THE CHURCH OFFICE** Do you have a little time to help in the Church office? Since the beginning of the year, we have not had a secretary working in the Office. Currently Pastor Knox prepares the bulletins, opens the mail, and does other office related work. The work is not time-consuming and can likely be accomplished in a couple of hours per week. The schedule can be flexible. While the bulletins need to be printed later in the week, the other things can be done earlier in the week or even from a home computer. Qualifications would include: working knowledge of Microsoft Office and familiarity with computers and office equipment. Please speak with Pastor Knox if you would be willing and able to help.

**THE LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION** of the Dubuque zone invite you to join them for the LWML Iowa East District Fall Retreat at Camp Iodiseca on September 8 & 9, 2023. The theme is “Christ Above All” Colossians 1 15-17. More information and a schedule of activities is posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Information brochures are in the Narthex and the Parish Hall. Any questions please talk with Judy Fink.



**ADULT BIBLE STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION** Next Sunday, September 10, Pastor Knox will begin a study of the Book of Revelation. It has been more than 20 years since a study of this unique book of the Bible has been offered at Our Redeemer. The study of Revelation will include a study of parts of the book of Daniel from the Old Testament, a book which has similarities with Revelation. Both of these forward looking books of prophecy give the believer confidence as God reveals the glory of His eternal kingdom and the final victory to be enjoyed by all who trust in Christ.

**VICAR'S BIBLE STUDY THIS YEAR** There's no denying many of us today have a much different relationship with soil and plants than people typically have had throughout most of history. Some of us get our hands dirty in the garden and enjoy the “fruit of our labors,” but gardening is more a hobby than a necessity. On the other hand, farmers' livelihoods do depend on the productivity of their cropland, yet much of their work is done with computers, machinery, and other technology only available within the last 130 years or so. Given the populace's more intimate familiarity with the land during Biblical times, it's not surprising that we can find agricultural descriptions, both literal and figurative, in every section of the Scriptures.

This series doesn't propose to be an exhaustive examination of all these passages. For instance, more attention will be paid to horticulture and botany in general than to animal husbandry. Over the course of 17 sessions, from September to May, we'll discuss texts from Genesis to Revelation, some very familiar and others sometimes overlooked. We'll read selections in which plants play the leading role and discover new insights hidden “in the weeds.” The goal is to gain a better understanding of how plant imagery is used in specific contexts as well as being a linking theme throughout the Scriptures.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY** – Stop by the Neighborhood Library (curbside on Bluff Street) and “Read. Return. Repeat.” Selections vary and are updated from time to time.

Do you have good “Lutheran” books to donate to the cause? We can especially use children's books. See Sara Lair for information.

**THERE ARE SOME OLD “LUTHERAN WORSHIP” HYMNALS** on the table in the Parish Hall. If you would like one, please take as many as you would like. They will be disposed of in the near future.

**SMALL CATECHISM FOR THE WEEK**  
**Second Article of The Apostles Creed & Meaning**

*What is the second article of the Creed?*

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord,  
who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,  
even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

**An excerpt from *Celebrating the Saints* by Rev. William Weedon. This book is available in the Church Library.**

The festival of Saints Peter and Paul is one of the very oldest saints' days in the Church's calendar. Christians have remembered these two on June 29 since at least AD 250. A very old tradition holds that both apostles were martyred the same day under orders from emperor Nero in AD 68.

Peter, of course, during Christ's Passion had denied his Lord three times out of fear. When Christ restored Peter in John 21, he asked him if he loved him three times. Three times Peter confessed that he loved Christ like a brother. He apparently hesitated to use the word for love (*agape*) that entails willingness to lay down one's life. Christ charged him to feed his lambs and tend his flock. The Lord Jesus, however, did go on to tell Peter that the day would come when he *will* stretch out his hands, have another dress him, and lead him where he does not want to go. "This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God" (John 21:19), and added the invitation: "Follow me." Peter was thus given the promise that he would die a martyr for his Master.

When that time came, Peter was in Rome (called by the code name "Babylon," 1 Peter 5:13). He had witnessed Christ's resurrection to Jews and Gentiles for many years, confessing to one and all, "We believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 15:11). He was arrested and sentenced to death by crucifixion. He reportedly begged only the favor of being crucified upside down. He did not feel worthy to die in the exact same manner as the One he had once denied.

The remains of Peter and Paul are said to be interred beneath the original St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Together they await the joyous resurrection that they fearlessly proclaimed.

*Merciful and eternal God, Your holy apostles Peter and Paul received grace and strength to lay down their lives for the sake of Your Son. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit that we may confess Your truth and at all times be ready to lay down our lives for Him who laid down His life for us, even Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*