

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 14)
 Year of the Lord 2019
 Luke 12

**“Holy Spirit, Light Divine, shine upon this heart of mine;
 Chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day!”
 “Let me see my Savior’s face; let me all HIS beauties trace!
 Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to
 Thee!”**

Luke 12:22–34 And he said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! *And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest?* Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

“Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

In the Name of Jesus.

The Lord teaches His Church to pray: ‘Give us this day bread—for you, Father, have given this day to us. THIS day!’

He teaches His Church this day! “But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!”

O! Dear ones! Lift up your heads at that badge of honor! Do NOT hang down your petals and leaves when your Friend calls you THAT!

Jesus is not going to fill us with anxiety—by pressing on us an anxiety-free heart!

And Jesus is NOT going to—in our moment of TRIUMPH!—Your Friend, the Friend of sinners, DOES...NOT...KNOW...HOW.....

To speak to you about you and your anxiety and your faith—and your FATHER!.....

And then leave you hanging your head in sad resignation: ‘Oh! If only I had MORE of this BELIEVING thing going on inside of me!’

Consider the ravens and crows! THEY never say such a thing!

Consider the field blooms, which today are alive and tomorrow are thrown into the oven! Can such true and pretty faces be covering a heart of frustration and unfulfilled longing?

So we—the Church!—shall wear the badge ‘ye of little faith’ with joy abounding! For where our treasure is, there the Church’s Savior pledges our heart will be also! In the little! The little ones, the little of this world, so many, so small, so remarkably unremarkable—that the BIG EYES of this world can scan them over and never take a second look!

A look, a ‘considering,’ of the flock that He calls ‘little!’ And which He raises from the anxiety of idolatry to our faith in the little: HIM!

The Church boasts of a cleansing, a Baptism—at the authority of a King Who died crowned with thorns, with only one man begging for a memorial in His Kingdom: a man SO awful, even the Romans had to get rid of him!

As they roared in laughter at This King while He suffered like the lowest of the low, He breathed the breath given Him that day until He breathed His last, PRAYING—WITHOUT A DOUBT, WITHOUT ANXIETY, though in real pain. His First Prayer That Day; His Last Breath That Day: ‘FATHER!’

‘I shall rule MY KINGDOM—NOT based on WHO is FOR ME! No! I shall rule MY KINGDOM, based on THOSE...I...AM...FORRRRR! And I SAY that you will overlook anything lacking in these four men surrounding me. Do NOT consider THEM with an eye to vengeance; just because they have CRUCIFIED YOUR SON!’

Teaching us to live, to pray, to give away and thus grow rich—in things this world calls little; but which Our Father speaks of as ‘treasure.’

Then, He teaches us to die. ‘FATHER!’ That’s God-for-certain!

The spirit you give me to live in this world, I give it into your hands. Haha! (The spirit HE GIVES—WE will do something with IT? God is our Father for certain! He LOVES prayers like that!)

“For the Holy Spirit you give me considers little ‘ol ME, as the most fit place to hover, to live, to make of this field--just soil in which to BEGIN my Growth! To begin My Life.

There is Calvary and Easter: His, and ours! Given us as often as we eat His Body and drink His Blood. The little things this world cannot pause to consider, any more than a bird that falls from the sky or the grass of the field which lasts but a day!

Along the way in Catechism class, the great ones learn that there are sixty-six books in our English Holy Bible. Trivia worth knowing.

At Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, the Elders have in their possession a quasi-canonical sixty-SEVENTH book. It is called the 'Book of Chuck!'

A dear saint of blessed memory, Charles Travis, pulled together, for years, all the little things that need to be done altar-wise and service-wise in the sanctuary: candles, banners, setting up the Holy Communion, und so weiter. So when special times arrive for the church calendar and we're not so sure where things go, or are stored, we all resort to the Book of Chuck.

I do not remember if I read it in that Holy Tome, or in another, lesser book about Altar Things. But somewhere an authority told me that to glorify our Crucified and Risen Savior, and His Holy Gifts, the Church has NOT historically used potted plants and flowers and such. Instead, it is MOST appropriate that we use FRESH flowers—lilies of the field; fresh; and CUT!

Oh, they're in water; and they live! But they thrive for just about a day.

Even the flowers in your Church, little flock, are singing you God's favorite song!

Your life is God's Treasure. He has placed His heart among you; GIVEN His Heart, His Treasure, as One of You. And HE has shown the way, led the way, and will not fail. He has risen.

We are born IN this world; but we do NOT belong TO this world. Not now! Not after He raised His scarred hands, blessed His Church, and ascended to pour out to us ALL that the Father promised: A Spirit Who abides with us below the sun; and Who gives us Life to the sun and beyond!

You are cut flowers, my dear ones! So says the Spirit!

When the anxious world tells you news to get you all riled up: go outside; tell that news to a backyard bloom; notice how sweaty and twitchy that flower becomes; and do likewise!

When the devil pulls out of his dingy bag the only tool he has: guilty fidgeting; take a drive along a Louisiana road! Within five miles I assume you'll meet a smeared roadkill. Pull over safely; and watch the crows and ravens pick away at it; their daily bread. And remember the One Who died for you saying, 'You are worth SEVERAL of these filthy scavengers!' (Jesus the Great Comedian!)

And even when your old wicked inside-self—we're saddled with him until OUR last breath, my dear ones! Thank God that His Spirit has already cut us off from this world, and watered us different!

When your insides DARE make a judgment about whether or not YOU are fit for the Kingdom of God...

Go LITTLE! Check again with the most insignificant Man this world would ever consider a KING! And you, C...O...N...S...I...D...E...R: just Him!

Then all you'll need to assure yourself that YOU are befriended by the Friend of Sinners is this: 'Am I a sinner still?' Then at least you worth the consideration of the That King, His Father, and the Spirit Who lives in you—

Consider just one of the cut flowers, adorning the Altar of your God today. More is given in one of these little flowers. Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like even one of these! Meaning, without anxiety!

Was ever flower more beautiful?

You too! How much more YOU, than the grass of the field and the birds of the air, O—SMILE!—O, You of little faith!

In the Name of Jesus! Amen.