

a bit disconcerting in that we read the result of speaking up for God. Even though Herod, "gladly" heard John, he still caved to the pressures of the world and murdered him. We will be hated and perhaps murdered for our faith. But the people who fight against the One True God, even killing His messengers, will find themselves baffled by the lack of results. The nation of Iran continually kills Christians, especially Pastors, on the assumption that they can kill off the faith. Yet in the 40 years of murdering Pastors (eight known, many others simply disappeared,) Christianity continues to grow. In 2021, 115 Christians were arrested in Iran for their faith, yet it is estimated there are between 800,000 and 1.5 million Christians in Iran.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© O Holy and Immortal God, You cover Yourself with light as a garment, and stretch out the heavens like a curtain. You make the clouds Your dwelling and walk on the wings of the wind. In humility of soul we give You thanks and praise for Your manifold kindness.

We thank You that You have given the world its daily bread. You provide the Earth with its wonders. You give the seed, whose power unfolds in their varieties of plants, the light and the air, the dew and the rain. You have established that these all together with the efforts of the farmers abound in a fruitful and abundant harvest.

O Lord, we hunger for spiritual knowledge: give us faith. Our soul yearns for truth: lead us to Your Holy Word, there to find Your sublime doctrines. We cry for forgiveness and pardon: turn us to Jesus as the one who will make us clean. We crave for life: feed us with the very body and blood of Christ that we are made one in the power of His Resurrection, that we will have life eternal. Establish the prosperity of the Gospel in all lands and nations, and see that it is proclaimed with boldness.

We acknowledge Your loving kindness to our country, and we thank You for the good You have given us. Give strength to all the forces of righteousness in our midst, overthrow all the powers of evil and be the Helper of all families. Implant Your Word in the hearts of our children and Your Love in parents. Free the afflicted from their troubles and bring them ever closer to You.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

O God, You see us as we are, which is not the way we want to be, and yet You continue to Love and care for us. In deep humility, we ask that You would send us forth from this place with such faith, that it is obvious to everyone that we are Your children. In the name of Jesus.

© Amen.

PROPER TEN

Chant Tone



Introit

For Your name's sake, O Lord, pre | serve my life!*

In Your righteousness bring my soul out of — trouble!

Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for — mercy!*

In Your faithfulness answer me, in Your | righteousness!

Enter not into judgment with Your — servant,*
for no one living is righteous be — fore You.

Let me hear in the morning of Your | steadfast love,*
for in | You I trust.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

For Your name's sake, O Lord, pre | serve my life!*

In Your righteousness bring my soul out of — trouble!

(Antiphon, Psalm 143:1;
Psalm 143:1-2, 8a)

Collect of the Day

O Lord, You granted Your prophets strength to resist the temptations of the devil and courage to proclaim repentance. Give us pure hearts and minds to follow Your Son faithfully even into suffering and death; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and know | ledge of God!*

How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscruta | ble His ways!
For from Him and through Him and to Him | are all things.*

To Him be glory forever. — Amen.

(Romans 11:33, 36)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Heavenly Father, Almighty God, Eternal sovereign ruler of our life, we come to You in adoration and praise. For calling us before the foundation of the world to be a part of Your kingdom, we give You thanks. For the riches of Your grace through Your Son Jesus Christ, we praise Your most Holy name. For revealing to us the mystery of Your will, we are grateful. Send us Your promised Holy Spirit that we may be inspired to hear Your Word of truth and live according to it and do Your Holy will. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

IN 1775, BENEDICT ARNOLD WAS A STUDENT AT YALE. He convinced a Connecticut legislator, to give him an army of the State Militia. On May 10, his army took the British Fort Ticonderoga, without a battle. In 1780, as commander of Fort West Point, he offered to surrender the fort to the British for £20,000. When discovered, he fled to England. He received a commission as a Brigadier General and an award of £6,000. Judas (and the other eleven Apostles) was sent with power and authority to declare Jesus to the world. Judas was able to do miracles in the name of Jesus, but 40 pieces of silver was his undoing. Our prayer is that we would remain faithful and never waver.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Faithful In Persecution

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 143:11;) Psalm 143:1-2, 8a
Psalm 143 was written by David. Saul (the first king of Israel) was trying to have him killed because he realized that David was going to take over as king. David asked for God's kindness and for relief from his affliction. David mainly prayed for deliverance from his weakness of doubt and fear.

COLLECT

Our religious liberties are constantly under attack. We ask God to keep us faithful to Christ even in the face of suffering and death.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Amos 7:7-15

Amos was driven by a higher purpose, a higher calling. God took Amos; from his occupation as keeper of an orchard, changed his vocation, moved his location, and made him a prophet. In fact Amos was a shepherd trying to advance himself to keeper of fig trees. In the form of Christ, Amos was sent to tell the, "People of God," what was to come. Amos found many misunderstandings about God and even about his work, his message. Amos argued with Amaziah that the message he was speaking did not come from his heart but from the heart of God. Pastors, teachers and missionaries do not speak from their heart, but from the Word and wonder of God.

GRADUAL—Romans 11:33, 36

In Romans 11, Paul lamented the fact that the Jews rejected Jesus and therefore salvation. These verses sing praise to God. Even while we were lost in unbelief, we were chosen by God's grace to believe in the victory of righteousness won by our Savior.

EPISTLE LESSON—Ephesians 1:3-14

Before the creation of the world, God chose us to believe in Him. God did this work through the proclamation of His Word. The Word is the message of the Gospel. The Gospel is the message of Jesus Christ Who lived, died and rose again for us. God established, before the creation of the world, that we would hear and respond to the Word. God established, before the creation of the world, that He would call, and send those who would proclaim the Word to the people of the world, just so that the Holy Spirit would work His act of conversion, bringing those God had ordained into His kingdom.

GOSPEL LESSON—Mark 6:14-29

Prior to our latest reading schedule, we (the church) had never before used the account of Herod, Herodias' daughter and the beheading of John the Baptist in our series of Sunday morning lessons. This lesson is