

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – YEAR A

Is 42,1-4.6-7; Acts 10,34-38; Mt 3,13-17

Red thread: The discovery, affirmation, and lived expression of our identity as God's beloved children, revealed in the baptism of Jesus and renewed each day in our mission to bring His light to the world.

INTRODUCTION

Some years ago, a father told me about a moment he never forgot.

His little daughter had just been learning to swim. She stood nervously at the edge of the pool, too scared to move. Then her father slipped into the water, held out his arms, and simply said: *“I am here. Trust me.”*

Something changed in her face. Not because she became suddenly brave, but because she heard her father's voice and knew she was safe. She jumped — and the adventure began. Today we celebrate a moment just like that. Jesus steps into the Jordan River, and the heavens open. The Father stretches out His voice and says:

“You are my beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”

From that moment, Jesus' public mission begins — not alone, not uncertain, but held in the Father's love.

At our baptism, God spoke the same truth over each of us: **You are mine. You are loved. You are called.**

PENITENTIAL ACT

The baptism of Jesus reminds us that grace is always a new beginning. Let us turn to the Lord who washes us clean and restores our hearts.

Lord Jesus, You stepped into the waters of Jordan to stand with us in our need: *Lord, have mercy.*

Christ Jesus, You reveal the Father's love to those who feel lost or unworthy: *Christ, have mercy.*

Lord Jesus, You send us forth as witnesses of compassion and truth: *Lord, have mercy.*

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who called us through the waters of baptism wash away our sins, renew our hearts in His mercy, and lead us into the freedom of His children. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Having acknowledged our need for God's mercy and rejoicing in the love revealed at the Jordan, let us now give glory to the Father who claims us as His own, to the Son who stands with us, and to the Spirit who renews our hearts.

With gratitude and joy, let us sing:

Glory to God in the highest...

COLLECT *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of new beginnings,
at the Jordan River You revealed Your beloved Son
and poured out Your Spirit upon Him.

Through the grace of our own baptism
You have called us by name, claimed us as Your own,
and entrusted us with a share in Christ's mission.

Awaken in us the joy of being Your children
and strengthen us to walk in the way of Your love.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,

who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Homily: "He Descended...that We Might Ascend."

Some years ago, a parishioner told me a story about his granddaughter. For her fifth birthday they bought her a small globe of the world. She spun it round and round, her little finger tracing oceans and mountains she would one day dream of visiting. Then she stopped, pointed at Australia and said, "Grandpa, is this where I came from?" "Not exactly," he replied with a smile. "You came from God—and God has great plans for you."

She thought for a moment, hugged the globe, and said, "Then God must be everywhere... even inside this ball." Out of the mouths of children!

The Baptism of the Lord invites us to look at where Jesus came from—and why He went where He went.

1. The Descent into the Jordan

A pilgrim once described visiting the Jordan River in winter. She expected something majestic—broad waters,

sweeping vistas. Instead, she found a narrow, muddy stretch, reeds tangled at the edges, and a trickle of current hardly worth photographing. “I travelled halfway across the world for this?” she muttered. Then her guide whispered, “And this is where Heaven bent down.”

Sometimes God chooses the humblest place to reveal the greatest grace.

The Gospel says: “At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.”

The Jordan River—its name possibly meaning “the descending river”—drops almost a thousand meters from Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea. Jesus descends to this descending river. And this descent is not merely geographical—it is theological.

The whole life of Jesus is a downward movement:

- from the glory of God into the frailty of a manger,
- from divinity into hunger and tiredness,
- from Heaven into Nazareth,
- and now, from Galilee’s hills downward into the muddy waters where sinners stand in line.

St Paul says He “emptied Himself... taking the form of a servant.”

Christ is still descending, still bending low, still becoming small.

As an old monk said, *“Always watch where Jesus is going. He always goes downward—and wherever He goes, grace flows downward.”*

At the Jordan, grace flows downward into the water—so that later it can flow upward again into resurrection.

2. Why Was Jesus Baptized? Three Insights

A primary school once held a “line-up day,” where all children queued according to height. One tall boy stood awkwardly at the back with the teachers until a staff member whispered, “You can skip the line and stand with us.” He shook his head.

“No. My friends are there. I want to stand with them.”

The teacher later said, “That day, I learned more about friendship than in all my education courses.”

Jesus, too, stands where we stand.

John the Baptist is shocked. “I need to be baptized by You,

and You come to me?"

And we often share his bewilderment.

A. Jesus steps into our line

Luke says, "When all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized."

He gets in line with the sinners.

B. Jesus shows His life program: obedience to the Father

"Let it be so now. It is fitting to fulfill all righteousness."

This is His lifelong blueprint.

C. Jesus reveals God's heart

Heaven opens.

The Spirit descends.

The Father speaks: "This is my beloved Son."

An epiphany of divine tenderness.

As one child said in class:

"If Jesus is God's Son, then His baptism must be God saying, 'That's Him! That's the One!'"

Exactly.

3. Our Baptism: Where God Says the Same Thing to Us

A grandmother once showed me a shoebox where she kept all her grandchildren's baptism candles. "They don't remember their days," she said, "so I remember for them." Then she added, "Every candle is a story: the day each child became God's delight."

If only we remembered our own baptism day with such affection.

Most of us don't. But the saints insist: our baptism day is the most important day of our lives.

Because that was the day when God said:

"You are my beloved daughter. You are my beloved son. I delight in you."

Many Christians struggle to hear this voice.

Conditional love—reward-based approval—drowns it out.

We internalize these voices:

"Be good and you'll be loved."

"Do well and you'll be accepted."

Soon we stop living as originals.

"Everyone is born an original, but most die copies."

But our baptism shouts a different truth.

God delights in you as you are.

To hear that voice again, St Ignatius proposed three paths of grace:

1. Direct experience,
2. Daily devotion,
3. Calm discernment.

Only in the inner Jordan does God's voice become audible again.

4. The Jordan as Boundary: Life, Death, and Passing Over

A chaplain told me of a dying man who whispered, "I'm standing at the riverbank." His family thought he was confused, but he wasn't. "I can hear the water," he said. "But I'm not afraid. Someone's already crossed it for me." He died peacefully that night, smiling.

The Jordan has always symbolized crossing.

Israel crossed it into promise.

Moses saw the land from across it.

We still say of the dead: "*He has gone across the Jordan.*"

When Jesus steps into the Jordan, He is already

prefiguring His death and resurrection.

He descends into humanity, sin, suffering, death—so that none of those places will ever again be God-forsaken.

The descent ends in a tomb.

But it ends in the Father's arms.

5. Called to Live as Beloved Sons and Daughters

A painting teacher once told his students, "Before you pick up your brush, remember one thing: paint from the inside out—not from fear, not from pressure, but from who you truly are." One student said later, "That advice changed not only how I paint, but how I live."

The Christian life is exactly this: living from the inside out—from belovedness.

Every baptized child has its ears touched: "Effata—be opened."

Be opened to love.

Be opened to mission.

We must allow our hearts to be opened again:

- to silence old accusations,

- to stop measuring our worth,
- to trust the Father's delight.

A spiritual director put it well:

"The Christian life is learning to believe every day that you are loved before you do anything to deserve it."

This is what true obedience looks like:

not rule-following, but resting in God's unconditional love.

6. A Final Story: Crossing the Jordan Today

A man once told me about his grandfather, a quiet farmer with a gentle smile. When he died, they found a note in his prayer book:

"One day I will have to cross the river. I hope I won't be afraid.

*But I believe Someone went into the water before me.
If He is there, I will not sink."*

That is what the Baptism of the Lord promises.

He descended so we could ascend.

He entered the water so we would not be alone when we face our own crossing.

And because He went down, we will rise up.

Conclusion

Today the Father points to Jesus and says: "This is my Beloved."

Today, in your baptism, He says the same of you.

Let us step into the river with Christ—

into His humility,

His obedience,

His belovedness—

and cross with Him toward the Promised Land

where the Father waits for His sons and daughters.

Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREED

Strengthened by God's Word

and renewed in the grace of our baptism,

let us profess the faith that unites us,

the faith into which we were baptized,

the faith that guides our lives and mission.

Together, let us proclaim: **I believe in one God...**

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we prepare these gifts of bread and wine,
let us also lay upon the altar our desire
to live more deeply our baptismal calling.

OFFERTORY PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of life and tenderness,
You revealed Your love for Your Son
as He rose from the waters of the Jordan.

Receive these gifts, the fruit of the earth and of our labour,
and make them signs of our gratitude
for the grace we have received in baptism.

May this holy offering strengthen us
to live as Your beloved daughters and sons,
radiating Your light to the world.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PREFACE – The Baptism of the Lord *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give You thanks,
holy Father, source of all blessing.

At the River Jordan

You manifested the glory of Your beloved Son.
The heavens were opened,
Your Spirit descended in gentleness,
and Your voice proclaimed Him the Eternal Word
who came to dwell among us. In His humility He shared
our humanity;
in His obedience He embraced our mission;
in His compassion He revealed Your heart.
Through His baptism the waters of creation were made
holy, and every seeker of grace found a path to new life.
And so, with angels and archangels,
and with all who stand before Your face,
we join in their hymn of praise:
Holy, Holy, Holy...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER III

You are indeed Holy, O Lord,
and all you have created rightly gives you praise,
for through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
by the power and working of the Holy Spirit,
you give life to all things and make them holy,
and you never cease to gather a people to yourself,
so that from the rising of the sun to its setting
a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

*Lord, as we remember the baptism of Your Son,
renew in us the grace of our own calling.
Open our hearts to the voice You spoke by the river:
that we, too, are beloved, forgiven, and sent forth.
May the Spirit who came down upon Jesus
descend now upon these gifts and upon Your Church,
that we may be transformed into the image of Him
in whom You are well pleased).*

*Therefore, O Lord, we humbly implore you:
by the same Spirit graciously make holy these gifts
we have brought to you for consecration, that they
may become the Body and + Blood of your Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ,*

at whose command we celebrate these mysteries.

*For on the night he was betrayed,
he himself took bread, and giving you thanks,
he said the blessing,
broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying:*

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice, and giving you thanks,
he said the blessing,
and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT, FOR
THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, THE BLOOD OF
THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT, WHICH WILL**

BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

*As we proclaim His death and resurrection,
look kindly upon the people reborn in the waters of baptism.*

*Make us faithful to the mission entrusted to us:
to bring light where there is darkness,
to speak peace where hearts are wounded,
and to witness to Your love in all we do.*

*May our lives become a living proclamation
of Your beloved Son,
who came to serve and save all.*

Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church and, recognising the sacrificial Victim by whose death you willed to reconcile us to yourself, grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son

and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ.

May he make of us an eternal offering to you, so that we may obtain an inheritance with your elect, especially with the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, with your blessed Apostles and glorious Martyrs and with all the Saints, on whose constant intercession in your presence we rely for unfailing help.

May this Sacrifice of our reconciliation, we pray, O Lord, advance the peace and salvation of all the world.

Be pleased to confirm in faith and charity your pilgrim Church on earth, with your servant Leo, our Pope, and Timothy, our Archbishop, the Order of Bishops, all the clergy, and the entire people you have gained for your own.

Listen graciously to the prayers of this family, whom you have summoned before you: in your compassion, O merciful Father, gather to yourself all your children

scattered throughout the world.

To our departed brothers and sisters
and to all who were pleasing to you
at their passing from this life,
give kind admittance to your kingdom.

There we hope to enjoy for ever the fullness of your glory
through Christ our Lord,

through whom you bestow on the world all that is good.

Through him, and with him, and in him... Amen.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S PRAYER

With hearts made new by God's mercy,
and remembering that we are His beloved children,
let us pray in the words Jesus gave us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every shadow
that dims the light of our baptismal dignity.
Calm the storms that trouble our hearts,
lift us when courage falters,
and renew in us the hope that comes from Your Spirit.

May we never doubt Your voice that calls us "beloved,"
but walk with joy toward the coming of our Saviour,
Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You stood among sinners at the Jordan
and brought peace to wounded hearts.
Do not look on our sins
but on the faith You Yourself have planted within us.
Grant Your Church the unity of the Spirit,
the calm of Your presence,
and the peace that flows from Your Father's love.
You who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who entered the waters of Jordan
to sanctify all creation
and to lead us into newness of life.
Blessed are we who are called
to the supper of the Lamb.

MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,
You stood in the Jordan for our sake;
now You stand within our hearts.
Let the grace we have received
renew our identity as God's beloved,
strengthen our steps in Your service,
and deepen our desire to walk the path of holiness.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

Renewed by these sacred gifts, O Lord,
we give You thanks for calling us Your children.
May the Spirit who rested upon Your Son
at His baptism in the Jordan
guide our lives in wisdom and courage.
Make us faithful witnesses of Your love,
eager to serve, ready to forgive,
and joyful in the mission You entrust to us.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who opened the heavens over His beloved Son open your hearts to His grace. **Amen.**
May the Spirit who descended in gentleness rest upon you and guide your steps in peace. **Amen.**
May Christ, the Light of the Nations, strengthen you to live your baptismal calling with joy.
Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son,  and the Holy Spirit,
come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, as beloved sons and daughters of God,
to bring His light into the world.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

At your baptism, God spoke a truth that has never changed: "You are my beloved."
Live this week so that others may hear that same truth through you.

Monday of the First Week in Ord. Time, Year II (2026)

Readings: *1 Samuel 1:1–8; Mark 1:14–20*

Theme: “God Calls Us in the Ordinary”

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a teacher who once asked her students to write down the names of the people who had shaped their lives. Most wrote the names of famous figures — athletes, actors, scientists, saints. But one boy wrote the name of his mother. When the teacher asked him why, he replied, “Because she calls me by my name, even when she is angry.” Those who love us most call us most personally.

Today’s readings remind us that God also calls us by name — sometimes in our tears like Hannah, sometimes in our tired routines like the fishermen at their nets. Ordinary days can hide extraordinary invitations. As we begin the first Monday of Ordinary Time, let us open our hearts to the God who enters our routines and speaks our names with hope, patience, and purpose.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you enter the ordinary moments of our days and call us to trust — Lord, have mercy.

You speak our names and invite us to follow you into deeper life — Christ, have mercy.

You strengthen us when we feel barren like Hannah and discouraged like John’s disciples — Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who knows our struggles, hears our cries, and calls us by name pour mercy into our hearts, free us from our sins, and lead us into the joy of everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT (*Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only*)

God of new beginnings,
you called Hannah in her sorrow and the fishermen in their daily labour. Call us again today with the voice of your Son. Give us hearts ready to trust, courage to leave behind what is empty, and hope to walk the path you open before us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son... Amen.

HOMILY

A traveller once stopped by an old monastery where monks were carving stones for a new chapel. He asked one monk, “What are you doing?” “I’m cutting a stone,” the monk replied bluntly. He asked a second, “What are you doing?” “I’m earning my bread,” said the monk politely. Finally, he asked a third monk the same question. The monk smiled and said, “I am building a house where people will meet God.” Same work — different vision.

Hannah and the Hidden Pain

In our first reading, Hannah is surrounded by family yet deeply alone. Her pain is silent, misunderstood even by those who love her. Her husband means well, but his question — “Am I not more to you than ten sons?” — shows he does not grasp the depth of her wound. Hannah teaches us that God hears prayers born of tears, even when others fail to understand us.

Her cry becomes the seed of Samuel, the prophet who will guide the future of Israel.

The Fishermen and the Ordinary Day

In the Gospel, Jesus calls four fishermen on an ordinary morning, while they are doing what they do every day — casting and mending nets.

He enters their routine, stands on their familiar shore, and pronounces a new possibility: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.”

The extraordinary often hides in the ordinary.

We may feel like Hannah — waiting, hurting, misunderstood. Or like the fishermen — tired, just doing the usual tasks.

But Christ still walks into our daily life and speaks the same words: “Follow me.”

He does not ask us first to be extraordinary.

He asks us to trust him where we are.

What Following Means Today

Following Jesus today might mean:

- letting go of a resentment we have carried for years
- speaking hope to someone who is discouraged
- offering time, attention, or forgiveness
- daring to believe that our ordinary life matters to God
- trusting that God can still bring new life from old disappointments

Ending Story

A father once asked his little daughter what she wanted to become when she grew up.

She thought for a moment and replied,

“I want to become the person God calls me to be — but I don’t know what that is yet.”

That is the journey of every disciple.

Today, Hannah, Simon, Andrew, James, and John stand beside us and whisper the same truth:

God is calling your name — today.

Answer with trust.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we prepare the altar,
we bring more than bread and wine — we bring our tears
like Hannah and our nets like the fishermen.

Let us pray that God may receive them and transform them
into grace. May they be acceptable to God the Father
almighty.

OFFERTORY PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of faithfulness, receive these gifts
and the hopes we place upon your altar.
As you turned Hannah’s sorrow into joy
and called the fishermen into new purpose,
bless our offerings and make us ready to follow your Son
with trusting hearts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

It is truly right and just to give you thanks,
Father of mercy and God of all seasons.

When our days feel empty like Hannah's,
you listen to our hidden cries.

When life becomes routine like the fishermen's work,
you enter our ordinary tasks and call us to deeper purpose.
Your voice shapes our lives, your grace renews our
courage, and your Spirit leads us beyond fear.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with all who have heard your call —
prophets, saints, and disciples of every age —
we join in their unending hymn of praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

*Lord, as we prepare to call down your Spirit upon these
gifts, we remember that your call first touched ordinary
people: a grieving woman in the temple,
four fishermen by the sea,
and each of us in the pattern of our days.*

*Make our hearts ready for the same Spirit
who empowered them to trust and to follow).*

**Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the
dewfall, so that they may become for us
the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

At the time he was betrayed
and entered willingly into his Passion,
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks,
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,**

**WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR
MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.**

The mystery of faith.

Therefore, as we celebrate
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,
we offer you, Lord,
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,
giving thanks that you have held us worthy
to be in your presence and minister to you.

*(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for
personal meditation only:*

*Lord, as we remember your Son's Death and Resurrection,
we also remember the faith of Hannah
and the courage of the first disciples.*

Let their trust become ours.

*Shape us into a people who recognise your call
and respond with generous hearts).*

Humbly we pray
that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,

we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.
Remember, Lord, your Church,
spread throughout the world,
and bring her to the fullness of charity,
together with N. our Pope
and N. our Bishop, [and his assistant Bishops]
and all the clergy.

Remember also our brothers and sisters
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,
and all who have died in your mercy:
welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray,
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse
with the blessed Apostles,
and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the
ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,
and may praise and glorify you
through your Son, Jesus Christ.
Through him, and with him, and in him...Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With the trust of Hannah
and the readiness of the first disciples,
let us pray with Jesus
to the Father who knows our needs before we speak them:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil;
free our hearts from fear, our memories from bitterness,
and our steps from all that leads us away from you.
Grant peace in our days,
that through your mercy we may be strengthened
in every trial and temptation.
Keep us always looking toward the coming of our Saviour,
so that, amid the turbulence of this world,
we may walk with calm hearts,
trusting in your promise and your protection,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles:
“Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.”
Look not on our sins
but on the faith that brings us here today—
the faith that longs for your healing, your reconciliation,
your peace stronger than worry or division.
Grant your Church the unity only your Spirit can give,
heal families wounded by silence or misunderstanding,
and breathe your peace into every restless heart.
Make us instruments of your gentleness
in our homes, communities, and world,
so that your peace may begin in us
and flow through us to others.
You who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God
who enters our ordinary days and calls us by name.
Blessed are we who are invited to the supper of the Lamb.

MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,
as we rest after receiving you,
we remember Hannah,
who once stood in your Father's house
with tears, hope, and an open heart.

In this Eucharist,
her longing meets its fulfilment in you.
Not in earthly time, but in the mystery we share,
her faith encounters its Redeemer.
The God who heard her cry
now comes to us in bread and wine.

Jesus, as you answered Hannah's prayer,
receive the hopes and burdens we bring today.
Heal our sorrows, strengthen our trust,
and remain within us with your gentle peace. Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

Loving Father,
you have fed us with the Bread of Strength.
As you restored hope to Hannah
and gave purpose to the fishermen,
renew our courage
and make us faithful followers of your Son.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

May the God who heard Hannah's cry
bless you with hope. Amen.
May the Christ who called the fishermen
bless you with courage. Amen.
May the Spirit who leads disciples
bless you with strength for the journey. Amen.

**And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go forth and follow the Lord
in the ordinary moments of your day.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God often calls us quietly —
in our routines, our tears, and our responsibilities.
Listen for your name today.

Tuesday of the First Week in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 1:9–20; Gospel: Mark 1:21–28

INTRODUCTION

Let me share a story. Imagine a woman, Hannah, who had longed for a child for many years. Each year, she went to the temple, silent and heavy-hearted, pouring out her deepest sorrow to God. She had endured ridicule and the pain of longing unfulfilled, yet she refused to despair. She trusted that God saw her suffering and could bring life from what seemed impossible.

In today's Gospel, we find Jesus teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum. The people gather, listening intently. And something extraordinary happens: Jesus speaks, not like anyone else, but with authority. His words strike the heart, heal the broken, and bring freedom. Like Hannah, the people encounter a God who sees them, a God whose power transforms lives.

As we gather here today, let us bring our burdens, our hopes, and our longings before God, trusting that he continues to speak words of life and healing to each of us.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you come to heal the broken and lift up the lowly. Lord, have mercy.

You speak words that liberate and give courage, yet we sometimes resist your call and cling to our fears.

Christ, have mercy.

You give life to the weary and hope to the despairing, yet we forget to trust in your saving power. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God, who raises the lowly and hears the prayers of the faithful, forgive us our sins, free us from all that binds us, and strengthen us to live in the light of his Word. Amen.

COLLECT *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

O Lord, you hear the cries of those who long for your presence and respond with mercy. Open our hearts to your Word, strengthen our faith, and grant us the courage to share your life-giving love with others. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

HOMILY

Think for a moment of those first astronauts in the 1960s, venturing into the unknown. They gazed at the Earth from space and were filled with awe, amazed at the beauty and fragility of our world. They had experienced something that most humans will never witness—a new perspective that filled them with wonder.

In the synagogue of Capernaum, the people witnessed a similar miracle of awe. Jesus spoke with authority, teaching a Word that could not be ignored. His words healed and liberated a man tormented by an unclean spirit. The crowd was astonished and asked, “What is this? A new teaching—indeed, with authority!”

Like Hannah, who trusted God in the quiet of the temple, we are invited to approach the Lord with faith. He meets us where we are—our struggles, our doubts, our unfulfilled longings—and speaks words of hope and restoration.

Yet, like the people of Capernaum, we can grow numb. Our hearts can harden. Our faith can become routine. The

challenge of today's Gospel is to awaken again to the authority and wonder of Christ's Word. Sit in stillness, reflect, and allow God to speak with power into your life. Jesus' authoritative word frees us from our "demons"—fear, despair, bitterness, and discouragement. He restores our true self, just as he restored the man in the synagogue. And the work does not end with us. We are called to speak words that heal, act with courage, and bring hope to others. Our words, like Jesus', carry life or death. Let us choose life, healing, and love.

As the Responsorial Psalm reminds us: "*O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.*"

Think of a gardener tending a neglected plot of land. Each day he carefully removes weeds, waters the soil, and nurtures the tiny seedlings that struggle to grow. At first, nothing seems to happen. But over time, the once barren plot begins to flourish, and flowers bloom where there was once only dust.

In the same way, God's word works quietly in our hearts. Like Hannah in the temple or the man freed from the

unclean spirit, we may not notice immediate changes, but God is at work. Every prayer, every act of trust, every attempt to speak a word of kindness is a seed planted in the fertile soil of life. And just as the gardener marvels at the first buds of spring, we too can marvel at the work of God within us and around us.

Let us go forth astonished and grateful, ready to share this divine authority and life-giving Word with others, trusting that God is transforming lives in ways we may not yet see.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we bring our gifts to the altar, let us place before the Lord not only bread and wine but also our prayers, our intentions, and our desire to live as Christ's disciples. May these offerings become a sign of our surrender and trust in his saving power.

OFFERTORY PRAYER (Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Lord, accept these gifts we offer. May they be transformed into signs of your life-giving Word. As you healed the man

in Capernaum, heal our hearts. As you restored Hannah's hope, restore our faith. And may we leave this place renewed, ready to bring your healing and peace to the world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE (*Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only*)

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You have sent your Word to heal, restore, and liberate, bringing life where there was despair, hope where there was desolation.

In the wonders of creation, we see your majesty; in the prayers of the faithful, your care; in the obedience of the humble, your glory.

Today, we recall Hannah, who poured out her heart in faith, and the man in Capernaum, freed by your Son's authority. You show us that even the smallest acts of trust can open the way for miracles.

Through all generations, your Word continues to act among us.

You teach, guide, and heal, and you call us to witness your love in our lives. Therefore, with angels and saints, with all who proclaim your marvels, we join in joyful praise, saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,
(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:
a true source of life and healing. As your Word freed the oppressed in Capernaum, may your Spirit free us from all

that diminishes our hearts, strengthen our faith, and empower us to act with courage and love).

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion, he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,
WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR
MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.**

The mystery of faith.

Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

Remembering Your Son, who healed the sick, guided the lost, and prayed for all, we ask that You help us become attentive like Samuel, and persistent in prayer like Jesus Himself. May we always bring Your light to others, guided by Your Spirit).

Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit. Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the world, and bring her to the fullness of charity,

together with N. our Pope, N. our Bishop, all the clergy, and who serve your people.

Remember also our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection, and all who have died in your mercy:

welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,

with blessed Joseph, her Spouse

with the blessed Apostles,

and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ. **Through him, and with him, and in him... Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Filled with confidence that God hears our prayers, let us turn to him with trust and hope. United as one family of faith, let us pray with the words Jesus gave us:

Our Father, who art in heaven...

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

Lord, as we speak these words, let us remember that we are called to trust completely, to rely not on our own strength, but on God's loving care. Let each word remind us that we are children of a Father who sees, listens, and responds to our every need. Let us also carry this trust into our daily lives, speaking and acting with the assurance that God is always near).

EMBOLISM

Lord, hear the prayers we offer through Christ your Son. Pour out your Spirit upon us, that we may be strengthened in faith, renewed in hope, and set ablaze with love. As Jesus healed the broken and restored freedom to the oppressed, may we also be instruments of healing and reconciliation in the world. Guide our words, actions, and thoughts so that we may always bear witness to your authority and love. Free us from fear, indifference, and the powers that diminish our hearts, and make us channels of

your mercy and peace, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, you calm storms, restore hope, and bring order to chaos. We pray for your peace in our hearts, in our families, and in our communities. Heal the divisions that separate us, reconcile the conflicts that wound us, and guide the leaders of nations to act with wisdom and justice. May your Spirit move in every heart, nurturing understanding, forgiveness, and love. Let your peace flow from our lives into the world, bringing light to darkness, courage to the fearful, and hope to the despairing. You live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. He is present not only on this altar but in our hearts, in our homes, and in the lives of all who seek him. Blessed are those called to this holy supper, where life, hope, and freedom are renewed.

MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

As Jesus met Hannah in the temple through her quiet and faithful prayer, so he meets us here in this Eucharist. He lifts the burdens we carry, frees us from what oppresses our hearts, and restores hope where despair once reigned. Let this communion be more than a ritual: let it be a moment of transformation. As we leave this place, may we carry the Word of life into our homes, workplaces, and communities. May our actions reflect Christ's healing power, our words bring encouragement, and our presence radiate peace. In every encounter, may we be instruments of God's love and mercy, just as Christ was for Hannah, the man in Capernaum, and for each of us today.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

Lord, may the sacrament we have received strengthen our faith, awaken our wonder, and inspire us to bring your healing and peace to all we meet. Teach us to trust in your authority, to act with courage, and to speak words that uplift and

restore. May the work of your Spirit in us continue long after this Mass, shaping our lives and our world according to your will. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May God, who lifts up the lowly, heals the broken, and speaks words of life, bless you and keep you steadfast in faith.

May he strengthen your courage, awaken your wonder, and send you forth to speak words of hope, healing, and love to all you meet.

**And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord by proclaiming his Word and living as witnesses of his life-giving love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Be amazed, be astonished, be renewed. God's Word continues to act in our lives—let it transform you, heal you, and guide your words and actions to bring hope into the world.

WEDNESDAY OF THE 1st WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Samuel 3:1–10, 19–20; Mark 1:29–39

Theme: “Speak, Lord... and help me to listen.”

INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, a schoolteacher told the story of a student named Arun. He was clever, curious, and full of energy. But he had one struggle: he never listened. When instructions were given, he was already thinking of something else. When his parents spoke, his mind wandered. One day, while running in the corridor, he collided with an elderly janitor carrying a bucket. The janitor gently touched his shoulder and said, “Arun, life will go much better if you pause long enough to hear the voice speaking to you.”

That simple sentence changed him. He learned that listening is not something we do with our ears alone—but with our heart. He later said that the janitor’s words were the moment his life started to align with God’s purpose.

Today our readings invite us to become “listeners”—like Samuel who heard God’s call in the quiet of the night, and like Jesus who withdrew before dawn to listen to the Father in prayer. At the beginning of this Mass, we ask for the grace to listen—to God, to one another, and to the deepest truth within ourselves.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus,

You call us gently in the silence of our hearts, yet we often fill our lives with noise. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus,

You touch us, as You touched Peter’s mother-in-law, lifting us from what weakens us. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus,

You invite us to walk with You, serving others with compassion and joy. **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who speaks to every searching heart pour His mercy upon us. May He quiet the storms within us, open our ears to His voice, and lead us from confusion into peace. May He forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

COLLECT *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of light and quiet whispers,

You called Samuel by name,

and You drew Jesus into the silence of prayer before sending Him to serve the world.

Open our hearts to recognize Your voice in the midst of our routines.

Lift us, as Jesus lifted the suffering, and strengthen us to walk in Your purpose.

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son... **Amen.**

HOMILY

A young woman once described her life as “a radio with too many stations playing at the same time.” She wanted clarity—about her career, faith, relationships—but she could not hear anything clearly because everything inside her was noise. One evening, frustrated and anxious, she walked into a quiet chapel. She told herself, “If God has anything to say, this is His chance.”

She later said, “For the first time in years, I wasn’t talking. I was listening. And peace came like a soft wind.”

Our readings today teach that God still speaks. The question is: *Are we free enough, quiet enough, and humble enough to listen?*

1. Samuel: The young seeker who needed guidance

Samuel hears a voice but does not recognize it.

He runs to Eli three times. Here is the first lesson:

No one learns to listen to God alone.

Even Samuel—gifted, dedicated, special—needed Eli’s wisdom to interpret what was happening.

Eli, despite his age and failing eyes, teaches Samuel the most important prayer of the Old Testament:
“Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”

This is how discernment works:

- God whispers
- Someone helps us recognize it
- We learn to respond

We can be Samuel at times—confused, searching. And we can be Eli—guiding someone else, even if our own path is dim.

2. Jesus: Healing hands rooted in prayer

In the Gospel, Jesus heals Peter’s mother-in-law with a simple touch. She rises and begins to serve—a sign that healing leads to discipleship.

Later, the whole village crowds around the door—everyone wants something from Jesus.

But what does Jesus do the next morning?

Before the sun rises,
before people wake,

before the demands begin,

He goes to a quiet place to pray.

This is the second great lesson:

Authentic service must grow out of prayer.

The disciples don't understand.

"Everyone is looking for you!" they complain.

But Jesus refuses to be controlled by expectations.

He says, "Let us go elsewhere."

Healing is His work, yes—but guided by the Father, not by popular demand.

3. We are called to mediate—like Eli, like the people of Capernaum

In the Gospel, people bring the sick to Jesus.

They stand in the gap.

They become bridges between need and grace.

This is our calling too:

to bring others to Jesus and to bring Jesus to others.

Every day we can be "mediators of grace":

- a word of encouragement

- a prayer for someone struggling
- a quiet act of compassion
- leading someone to deeper faith

The Lord wants to work **through** us, not only **for** us.

4. Listening, Serving, Yielding

All four reflections unite into a single truth:

We are called to listen like Samuel,

to pray like Jesus,

to guide like Eli,

and to serve like Peter's mother-in-law.

We are not in control of God's work—

we allow ourselves to be led.

Prayer keeps us aligned. Service keeps us humble.

Listening keeps us attentive. And community keeps us growing.

A man once visited a craftsman famous for carving wooden violins.

The craftsman said, "The secret of a good violin is the wood. Some pieces vibrate beautifully. Others never sing,

no matter how hard you try."

"How do you know which piece to choose?" the man asked.

The craftsman smiled.

"I tap the wood and I listen.

The wood always tells me the truth—if I am patient enough

to hear." Brothers and sisters,

God taps on the wood of our hearts every day.

He speaks—not always loudly, but always lovingly.

May we become people who listen deeply

and respond with courage:

"Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Amen.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Brothers and sisters,

like Samuel placing his life before God,

and like Peter's mother-in-law rising to serve,

let us now place our gifts—and our hearts—upon the altar.

May the Lord receive what we offer

and shape us according to His purpose.

OFFERTORY PRAYER (Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Lord God, receive these gifts,

signs of our desire to listen to Your voice

and to serve Your people with generous hearts.

As You transformed the life of Samuel

and renewed the strength of the sick in Capernaum,

transform us into instruments of Your compassion.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PREFACE (Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

It is truly right and just,

our duty and our salvation,

always and everywhere to give You thanks,

holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You speak to us in the quiet moments of life
and call each of us by name.

You guide the young with hope,

strengthen the searching with courage,

and steady the aged with wisdom.

In Your Son Jesus,

You show us a heart rooted in prayer

and hands stretched out in service.

When we lose our way,

You awaken us as You awakened Samuel.

When our strength fails,

You touch us as Jesus touched the suffering.

And when our purpose becomes cloudy,

You invite us again to walk with You.

And so, with angels and saints,

we lift our voices in wonder and praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

*As You called Samuel in the night
and strengthened Jesus in the silence of dawn,
so now call us through this holy mystery.*

*Open our hearts to the whisper of Your Spirit
that we may recognize Your voice
and respond with generous faith).*

**Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the
dewfall, so that they may become for us
the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

At the time he was betrayed
and entered willingly into his Passion,
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice
and, once more giving thanks,
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,**

**THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,
WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR
MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.**

The mystery of faith.

Therefore, as we celebrate
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,
we offer you, Lord,
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,
giving thanks that you have held us worthy
to be in your presence and minister to you.

*(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for
personal meditation only:*

***Father, as we remember the saving work of Your Son,
make us faithful servants of the Gospel.***

***May we, like the people of Capernaum,
bring the needy to Jesus, and like Peter's mother-in-law,
rise from our weakness to serve with joy.***

***Let our lives proclaim
that Jesus continues His work through us.***

Humbly we pray
that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,
we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.
Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the
world, and bring her to the fullness of charity,
together with N. our Pope, N. our Bishop, all the clergy,
and all who serve your people.

Remember also our brothers and sisters
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,
and all who have died in your mercy:
welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray,
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse
with the blessed Apostles,
and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the
ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,
and may praise and glorify you
through your Son, Jesus Christ.
Through him, and with him, and in him... Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With the confidence of Samuel
who said, “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening,”
and with the trust of Jesus who prayed before dawn,
let us turn to the Father
who knows what we need before we ask

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every noise that distracts the heart.
Grant peace to our days
that we may hear Your guiding voice
and follow the path You set before us.
Keep us free from fear and confusion
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, You withdrew to pray
and returned with peace to give the world.
Look not on our sins but on the faith of Your Church,
and grant her the peace that flows from listening hearts—
the peace only You can give. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
whose touch lifts us as it lifted the sick in Capernaum,
whose word calls us as it called Samuel.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, in this Eucharist
You have spoken again to our hearts.
Help us to carry Your presence into our homes,
our work, and the quiet corners of our lives.
May we listen more deeply,
serve more generously,
and trust more boldly in the days ahead. Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

Lord our God,
You have nourished us with the Bread of Life.
As Samuel grew strong in Your word
and Jesus drew strength from prayer,

so strengthen us in our vocation.
Keep our ears open, our hearts willing,
and our steps faithful. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING (based on the readings)

May the God who called Samuel
speak clearly to your heart. **Amen.**

May the Lord who healed the sick
lift you from all that burdens you. **Amen.**

May the Jesus who rose early to pray
guide your days and keep you close to the Father. **Amen.**

**And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go forth and listen—
for God is speaking to you in every moment.
Go in peace.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“God speaks softly—but to listening hearts He speaks
clearly.”

Thursday of the 1st Week in Ordinary Time

1 Sam 4:1b–11; Mk 1:40–45

INTRODUCTION

Once, a small village had a well that everyone relied on. One day, it dried up. The villagers were anxious, unsure what to do. Then, a stranger appeared, offered to dig a new well, and asked only for their trust. Some hesitated, but one brave child said, “If you want, you can do it—I trust you!” With that simple act of faith, a new source of water sprang forth, sustaining the village.

Today, we hear a similar story. A leper approaches Jesus with the words, “*If you want, you can make me clean.*” In these few words, we see trust, courage, and openness. As we gather, let us bring our own hearts, ready to be touched and healed by the Lord.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you see the truth of our hearts:
You know where we are broken, lost, or afraid.
Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you reach out to those whom others avoid:
Heal our coldness, our selfishness, our fear of reaching
out. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you bring life and hope where there is despair:
Forgive us when we turn away from your healing touch.
Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God, who heals the broken and restores
hope, forgive your sins and strengthen you in body, mind,
and spirit, so that you may serve others joyfully. **Amen.**

COLLECT *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of mercy and light,
You unite your people and invite us into trust and hope.
Grant that, strengthened by your Spirit, we may love what
you command and seek what you promise.
In the challenges of life, let our hearts remain anchored in
true joy. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

HOMILY

A young woman once volunteered at a hospital, terrified of touching the patients because she was afraid of getting sick. One day, she met a patient whose illness isolated him from everyone. Summoning courage, she touched his hand. His eyes brightened, and in that moment, she realized her fear had been overcome, and life had flowed through her small act of courage.

The leper in today's gospel dared to approach Jesus, someone whom others avoided. He could not presume Jesus would heal him; he only asked with faith: "*If you want, you can make me clean.*" Jesus responded, not just with words, but with touch—breaking social taboos and showing that no one is beyond God's healing.

God desires to touch our lives too, in every area we consider untouchable or broken. But this healing often comes with challenges. Like Jesus, sometimes we must carry the cost of bringing life and hope to others, even

when it is inconvenient or misunderstood. True discipleship requires courage, openness, and trust in God's wisdom.

Returning to our village story: the child's simple trust opened a new well. So, when we approach Christ with our own trusting hearts, we allow God to bring new life and healing, not only for ourselves but for those around us. Let us pray for the courage to trust Him in everything.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Dear brothers and sisters,
as the leper approached Jesus with trust and openness,
so now we approach this altar with gifts that represent our lives— our hopes, our wounds, our longing for healing.
Let us bring these offerings with the same faith that said,
“Lord, if You want, You can make me clean,”
trusting that God will transform what we place before Him.
May they be acceptable to God the Father almighty...

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of compassion and healing,

receive these gifts that we place upon your altar.

Just as your Son stretched out His hand to touch the leper, stretch out Your mercy over our lives and transform our offerings into signs of hope, unity, and renewal.
May this sacrifice cleanse our hearts, kindle our courage, and prepare us to share Your healing love with all whom we meet. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

It is truly right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give You thanks,
Lord God, holy Father, almighty and eternal.

For in every age You reveal Yourself
as the God who is not afraid to draw close to the wounded.
You invite us, like the leper in the Gospel,
to come before You with the simple courage to say:
“If You wish, You can make me clean.”
And in Your tenderness, You stretch out Your hand,

touching the places in us that we hide,
restoring dignity where it has been lost,
and bringing life where fear once ruled.

You teach us that no one is untouchable,
no heart too broken,
no life too distant for the reach of Your mercy.

And as Your Son carried the cost of healing others,
so You call us to overcome our fears,
to cross boundaries with love,
and to become signs of hope and compassion in our world.

And so, gathered around this table of healing and grace,
we lift our voices with the angels and all the saints,
giving You glory without end:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

Lord, we ask you to send your Spirit upon these gifts, that

they may become for us the body and blood of Christ. Just as the leper approached Jesus with faith, trusting in His will and compassion, may we approach this altar with hearts open to your healing and transformative power. May your Spirit bless and sanctify us, that we may be renewed in courage, hope, and love, ready to serve others as Christ served us).

**Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the
dewfall, so that they may become for us
the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

At the time he was betrayed
and entered willingly into his Passion,
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks,

he gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,
WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR
MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

Therefore, as we celebrate
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,
we offer you, Lord,
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,
giving thanks that you have held us worthy
to be in your presence and minister to you.

*(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for
personal meditation only:*

*As we recall Christ's life-giving acts—his touch that healed,
his word that restored, his love that reached beyond
boundaries—we remember that he often did so at great
personal cost. May our participation in this sacrifice inspire*

*us to imitate Him: to reach out to those in need, to speak
hope into despair, and to serve selflessly. May this
Eucharist strengthen us to bring life, healing, and light
wherever darkness or brokenness resides).*

Humbly we pray
that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,
we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.
Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the
world, and bring her to the fullness of charity,
together with N. our Pope, N. our Bishop, all the clergy
and all who serve your people.

Remember also our brothers and sisters
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,
and all who have died in your mercy:
welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray,
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse
with the blessed Apostles,

and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ. **Through him, and with him, and in him... Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S PRAYER

Trusting in the love of the Father and the care of Christ, let us now pray together the prayer Jesus taught us, confident that He hears every word and knows every need:

EMBOLISM

Lord Jesus Christ,
You touched the leper and restored him to life;
touch our hearts now and free us from every evil.
Deliver us from fear, from sin that isolates,
and from anything that keeps us from trusting in Your love.
Grant peace in our days—
a peace that gives courage to love, strength to serve,
and hope to all who feel forgotten or alone.
As we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord of all, grant your peace to each of us:
peace in our hearts that fears no evil,
peace in our families that binds in love,
peace in our communities that strengthens in unity.
Where there is conflict, may your reconciliation prevail.
Where there is division, may your Spirit restore harmony.
May your healing touch flow through us,
that we may be instruments of peace, consolation,
and love to a world in need.
You live and reign for ever and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are we who are called to His table,
invited not because of our worthiness,
but because of His mercy and love.

Lord, I am not worthy...

MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Just as God met Hannah in the temple through her prayer, so Jesus meets each of us here in this Eucharist. He comes into the hidden places of our hearts, the corners of our lives we keep isolated or ashamed. Nothing is beyond His reach. Let us receive Him with trust, allowing His presence to heal, restore, and strengthen us. In this encounter, may we find courage to approach others with the same compassion and openness He offers to us.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of mercy and light, You touch our lives in ways beyond understanding. Through this holy meal, you remind us that no one is beyond your care, no place too broken for your healing touch. Strengthen us to carry this presence into the world: to speak hope where there is despair, to reach out to the isolated, and to act with courage and love in every circumstance. May the life we have received here bear fruit in our words, our actions, and our hearts.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May God, who heals and restores, bless you with courage to approach the Lord with trust, patience in carrying His work of love, and joy in serving others.

May His Spirit guide your steps, strengthen your hands, and inspire your heart to be a channel of His mercy and healing in the world. **Amen.**

May almighty God bless you Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, to serve the Lord and bring His healing and hope to every person you meet.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“If you want, you can make me clean.”

Come to Christ with courage and trust, let Him touch your life, and allow that touch to flow through you to others. Even the smallest act of faith or kindness can bring healing and hope to the world.

Friday of the First Week in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 8:4–7, 10–22a; Mark 2:1–12

INTRODUCTION

Some years ago, a teacher told his class a simple story. A young boy was carrying a heavy stone up a hill. The boy slipped again and again, growing frustrated. Someone watching said, “Use all your strength!”

The child replied, “I **am** using all my strength!”

The man answered gently, “No, you are not. You have not yet asked **me** to help you.”

That small exchange reveals a deep truth: we often try to carry our burdens alone, forgetting that real strength is found in shared faith and in the quiet mercy of God.

And on this feast of **St. Antony, the Abbot**, we are reminded of this even more deeply. In our restless and hectic world, we all need moments of quiet—oases where our scattered thoughts can settle and our troubled hearts

can breathe again. St. Antony sought such silence in the Egyptian desert, leaving behind the noise of the world in order to live entirely for God. We do not need to flee into a desert to find God; today He comes close to us in His Word and in this holy Eucharist. This Mass can become for us the same oasis of peace that the desert became for Antony—a place where God restores, strengthens, and renews us.

In today’s Gospel, a man who could not move was carried by his friends into the presence of Jesus. Their faith became his strength. Their courage became his path to healing. And the first gift he receives is not mobility—but forgiveness, the tender mercy of the One who alone can release the human heart from its deepest paralysis.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us acknowledge our own burdens, our need for God, and the many ways others have carried us along the way. Let us step into Christ’s healing presence, trusting in His power to forgive, to renew, and to make us whole again.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, You see our hearts more clearly than we do, and You know the wounds that keep us from walking in freedom. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You forgive our sins and lift us from the weight of our failures. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You call us to rise and walk in newness of life. **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who is rich in mercy look upon us with compassion. May He break every chain that binds our hearts, calm every fear that troubles our spirit, and restore us to the freedom of His beloved children.

May He strengthen us to walk again with steady steps in the way of Christ. **Amen.**

COLLECT *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of mercy and strength,
You sent Your Son to lift up the fallen

and to free us from the heaviness of sin.

As we listen to Your Word today, open our hearts to Your wisdom, that we may choose Your will above our own desires and discover the true freedom that comes from following You. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

HOMILY

A well-known mountaineer once recounted how he survived a dangerous climb. At one point he slipped, hung by a rope, and could not pull himself up. He thought the end had come. But then he felt a steady pull from above—his companions had anchored themselves and were lifting him inch by inch.

Afterward he said, “I lived because someone else’s strength became mine.”

That is the Gospel in a picture.

A paralytic lies helpless; his friends will not give up; Jesus sees their faith; and the first words spoken are words of divine healing: **“Your sins are forgiven.”**

Jesus always begins with the deepest wound. Forgiveness is not a soft, sentimental gesture. It is God breaking the inner paralysis caused by pride, guilt, fear, or shame. Forgiveness restores freedom. It gives us back to ourselves.

And often, like the paralytic, we can only reach Jesus because someone else carries us—parents, friends, a spouse, a priest, a community. Even St. Antony, the Abbot, whose feast we celebrate today, knew the importance of being carried by God. In the solitude of the desert, he surrendered his own strength completely, trusting that God alone would uphold him. His life shows us that true freedom and healing come when we let God carry us, even when we feel most alone.

The first reading shows the opposite movement. Israel wants a king “like the other nations.” They want control, recognition, security on their own terms. They forget the One who carried them out of Egypt. They choose desire over trust—and God lets them taste the consequences.

When we crown our own desires as king, they soon become our captors. We lose freedom. We lose direction. We lose God.

But Christ comes to restore what we lose:

—He forgives.

—He heals.

—He lifts.

—He calls us to rise and walk again.

And He still works through the faith of others: your family, your community, your friends, your Church. A nurse once told me about a patient who had been bedridden for years. One day his family surrounded him and prayed aloud: “Lord, give him peace.” Suddenly the patient whispered, “I feel carried.” He had not moved physically—but something within him stood up.

That is what the Lord wants for us today:

to feel carried, forgiven, strengthened, restored.

To hear Christ say, “**Rise. Walk. Your sins are forgiven.**”

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Brothers and sisters,
as we bring bread and wine to the altar,
let us also bring the people who have carried us in faith,
and the people Christ calls us to carry.
Let us entrust all our burdens and all our hopes
to the mercy of God.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

Lord our God,
receive these gifts that symbolize our struggles,
our hopes, and our desire to walk again in Your light.
Just as Your Son raised the paralytic to new life,
may this offering raise our hearts
from fear to trust,
from selfishness to generosity,
from paralysis to faithful action.

Transform our lives as You transform this bread and wine.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

PREFACE *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give You praise,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You are the true King who leads Your people with mercy.
When we wander after our own desires
and lose the path of freedom,
Your voice calls us back.
You sent Your Son to share our weakness,
to forgive our sins,
and to lift us when we cannot rise on our own.

In Him, we learn that faith shared becomes strength
multiplied, that love carried by others becomes healing for
all, and that Your mercy always goes deeper than our
wounds.

And so, with the angels and the saints,
and with every heart that longs for Your healing,
we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

Father, as we prepare to call down Your Spirit upon these gifts, we remember the friends who carried the paralytic to Your Son. Strengthen our faith with that same boldness, that we may bring one another before You and experience the healing only You can give).

**Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the
dewfall, so that they may become for us
the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

At the time he was betrayed
and entered willingly into his Passion,
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice
and, once more giving thanks,
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,
WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR
MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.**

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

Therefore, as we celebrate
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,
we offer you, Lord,
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,
giving thanks that you have held us worthy
to be in your presence and minister to you.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

*Lord, as we proclaim the mystery of faith
and remember the death and resurrection of Your Son,*

*we ask You to heal every form of paralysis within us—
the paralysis of fear, resentment, pride, or sin.*

*Make us a people who rise at Your word
and walk together in the freedom of the Gospel).*

Humbly we pray

that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,
we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church,
spread throughout the world,
and bring her to the fullness of charity,
together with N. our Pope, N. our Bishop, all the clergy,
and all who serve your people.

Remember also our brothers and sisters
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,
and all who have died in your mercy:

welcome them into the light of your face.

Have mercy on us all, we pray,
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse
with the blessed Apostles,

and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages,
we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,
and may praise and glorify you
through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, and with him, and in him... Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With trust in the God who carries us,
and with gratitude for the mercy that forgives and heals,
let us pray in the words Jesus gave us—
words that lift our hearts,
unite our faith,
and remind us that we are God's beloved children:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil—
from the desires that mislead us,
from the fears that paralyse us,
and from the sins that weigh us down.

Grant peace in our day, that, restored by Your mercy,

we may walk in freedom, serve You with joy,
and extend Your compassion to all, as we await the
blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You turn our brokenness into blessing
and our weakness into channels of grace.
Make us instruments of Your peace:
where there is doubt, let us sow trust;
where there is fear, bring courage;
where there is despair, kindle hope;
where there is woundedness, bring Your healing touch.
Guide our steps, strengthen our hearts,
and keep us always in Your peace.
You live and reign for ever and ever.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold Jesus, the Lamb of God
who speaks the liberating words: "Your sins are forgiven."
Blessed are we who are called to His table,
where healing begins and grace restores our strength.

MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,
as You met the paralytic through the faith of his friends,
so You have met us in this Eucharist.
Here You have touched our hidden wounds
and breathed peace into our restless hearts.
Carry us now with Your grace,
that we may rise renewed
and help carry others to Your healing love.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER (*Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only*)

Merciful God,
You have nourished us with the Sacrament of unity and
healing.
May the forgiveness we have received
flow through our lives to others.
Strengthen our faith, deepen our compassion,
and guide us to walk together
as a people restored by Your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

May God, who alone is King of our hearts,
free you from every false desire
and guide your steps in His wisdom. Amen.

May Christ, who forgives our sins and heals our wounds,
lift you from every paralysis and fill you with peace. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens the weak and unites the faithful,
make you bearers of hope to all you meet. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go now in the peace of Christ. Carry one another in faith,
and bring His healing to the world.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Your faith can carry someone who cannot walk today—
and someone's faith will carry you when you cannot walk
tomorrow.

Let Christ be the one who says to both:
“Rise... your sins are forgiven.”

Saturday of the First Week in Ordinary Time

1 Sam 9:1–4, 17–19; 10:1; Mk 2:13–17

INTRODUCTION

Some years ago, a young man brought his mother to a medical clinic. She had been unwell for months, yet she kept delaying the visit.

When the doctor gently asked why she had waited so long, the mother lowered her eyes and whispered, “I was embarrassed. I didn’t follow your instructions last time, and I thought you might be disappointed in me.”

The doctor smiled with compassion and said, “My job is not to judge you, but to help you. You come to me especially when you feel unwell—not when everything is perfect.”

That simple exchange opens a window into the Gospel today. Jesus is the true Physician of our souls.

He does not wait for us to arrive spotless or strong. He does not tell us to fix ourselves first. Instead, He seeks out those who feel unworthy, those who have made mistakes,

those who sit at tables of regret, confusion, or shame. Like Levi the tax collector, we may feel trapped in old routines, old habits, old labels others have placed on us. But Jesus walks into the middle of our everyday life and speaks a word strong enough to lift us up and make us new: “**Follow Me.**” As we come to worship today, we come like patients entering the clinic of God’s mercy. We come with wounds, stories, disappointments, and also hopes for healing and renewal. Let us begin by admitting our need for the Lord and placing ourselves honestly before Him, trusting that His mercy always meets us right where we are.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, You search for the lost and the forgotten.
Lord, have mercy.
You look upon us not with judgment, but with mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
You sit at our table and invite us into communion.
Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who created us in love restore our hearts with His kindness.
May Jesus Christ, the divine Physician, touch the wounds our sins have caused.
May the Holy Spirit renew in us the courage to begin again.
May God forgive us our sins and lead us into the fullness of life. Amen.

COLLECT *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of compassion,
Your Son Jesus welcomed the sinner, healed the broken, and called the unlikely.
Free us from the pride that blinds us, from the rigidity that closes our hearts, and from the fear that keeps us from following Your voice.
Make us ready for Your call, that, like Levi, we may rise and walk in the newness of life.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

HOMILY

A teacher once asked her students to draw God. Most children drew bright colours—sunlight, rainbows, smiling faces. But one child drew a man sitting at a small table with another man who looked sad. When she explained her drawing, she said, “This is God sitting with the person nobody wants to sit with.”

That is today’s Gospel.

Jesus sees Levi, a man others avoided.

Tax collectors were considered corrupt, impure, and morally untrustworthy. No rabbi would call such a man into discipleship. But Jesus looks past His reputation and sees **a heart ready for grace**. With two simple words—“*Follow me*”—Jesus transforms his life.

Mark tells us Levi “got up.”

In Greek, the word can also mean **to rise**, almost like resurrection language.

The moment Jesus speaks, something rises in Levi—courage, hope, a new beginning.

And then, Jesus sits at Levi’s table.

In that culture, to share a meal meant **friendship, acceptance, belonging**. It was a sign of communion.

The religious experts are shocked.

“How can He eat with sinners?”

Jesus replies with one of the most comforting truths in Scripture: **“The sick need a doctor.”**

In other words:

“I have come for those who know they need Me.”

This connects beautifully with the first reading.

Samuel anoints Saul—an ordinary man, searching for lost donkeys, unaware that God is searching for him. God often finds us in the simple, lost, confused parts of our lives.

Levi was busy collecting taxes.

Saul was busy looking for donkeys.

We are often busy with worries, failures, questions.

But God is busy **looking for us**.

The mercy of Jesus is not cosmetic.

It goes deep. It transforms. It calls. It raises us up.

Three invitations for today:

1. Let Jesus meet you where you are—not where you think you “should” be.”

We do not need to clean ourselves first.

Grace comes before self-improvement.

2. Let Jesus sit at your table.

In your real life—your struggles, your weakness, your story.

3. Let Jesus call you again.

The most unlikely disciples can become great saints.

There is a story told of a painter who created two portraits. One showed the human face bruised, weary, and ashamed. The other showed the same face healed, bright, and transformed. When asked why he painted both, he said, “Because God always sees both—the one we are, and the one we can become.”

Today, Jesus sees both in us.

He meets us in our wounds, and He calls us into our healing. May we rise, like Levi, and follow Him.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Brothers and sisters, as Levi once opened his home for Jesus, let us now open our hearts as we bring our gifts to the altar. May what we offer today express our desire for healing, renewal, and deeper discipleship and be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

OFFERTORY PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

Merciful Father,
receive these gifts that represent our hopes, our burdens, and our longing to be made whole.
Transform what we bring into signs of Your compassion, and make our hearts ready for the call of Your Son, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

PREFACE *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give You thanks, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You never tire of seeking Your children
when they wander or lose their way.

You call the unlikely, heal the wounded,
and open Your table to sinners longing for mercy.
In Christ, the Divine Physician,
You reveal a love that does not wait for worthiness
but creates new life in those who trust in You.

And so, with saints and angels,
who rejoice whenever the lost are found,
we praise You without end:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for personal meditation only:

*Before Your Spirit comes upon these gifts, Father,
we remember how Your Son sat at table with the sinner
Levi, turning a moment of shame into a moment of grace.
As You transformed his life by a simple call,*

*transform us now, that we may rise from our burdens
and follow Christ with renewed hearts).*

**Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the
dewfall, so that they may become for us
the Body and + Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

At the time he was betrayed
and entered willingly into his Passion,
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,**

WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks,
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,**

**WHICH WILL BE POURED OUT FOR YOU AND FOR
MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.**

The mystery of faith.

Therefore, as we celebrate
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,
we offer you, Lord,
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,
giving thanks that you have held us worthy
to be in your presence and minister to you.

*(Optional thematic insertion based on the readings of the day for
personal meditation only:*

*As we recall His Death and Resurrection,
we remember, too, the many ways Jesus sought the lost,
healed the weak, and welcomed the forgotten.*

*May this Sacrament strengthen in us
the same compassion He showed at Levi's table,
so that our lives may become places
where others taste the nearness of Your Kingdom).*

Humbly we pray

that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,
we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.
Remember, Lord, your Church,
spread throughout the world,
and bring her to the fullness of charity,
together with N. our Pope, N. our Bishop, all the clergy,
and all who serve your people.
Remember also our brothers and sisters
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,
and all who have died in your mercy:
welcome them into the light of your face.
Have mercy on us all, we pray,
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse
with the blessed Apostles,
and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the
ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,
and may praise and glorify you
through your Son, Jesus Christ.
Through him, and with him, and in him...Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Gathered as children who are loved despite our weakness, and strengthened by the mercy Christ has shown to sinners like us, we dare to pray:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil
and from the pride that blinds the heart.
Grant peace to our days, healing to our wounds,
and freedom from anything that keeps us far from You.
As we wait in hope for the coming of our Savior,
Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You sat at table with sinners and offered them peace.
Look not on our failings but on the faith You inspire within us. Make us instruments of reconciliation, gentleness, and mercy in our families and our world.

Grant us Your peace now and always.
You live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God who sits at the table of sinners and calls us into communion with Him.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,
as You sat with Levi and touched his heart,
You have now entered our lives through this Holy Meal.
Stay with us in the ordinary moments of our day,
heal what is wounded,
and lead us to follow You with the courage of a renewed heart. Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER *(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)*

God of all consolation,
through this Sacrament You have drawn near to us in mercy. Heal the broken places within us,

strengthen our desire to follow Your Son,
and send us out as witnesses of Your compassion.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

May the God who sought Saul in the fields

and found Levi at his tax table

find you today wherever you are. Amen.

May Christ the Physician

heal your wounds and lift your heart. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit guide you

to rise and follow God's call with courage. Amen.

And may Almighty God bless you,

the Father, and the Son  and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace,

healed by Christ and sent to bring His mercy to others.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Jesus sees more in you than you see in yourself.

Let Him sit at your table and call you again today.