

### 3. Sunday of the Ordinary Time (Year A)

*Is 8,23-9,3; 1 Cor 1,10-13.17; Mt 4,12-23*

*“The Call of Christ: Stepping From Darkness Into Light, Together.”*

#### INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, a young circus boy prepared for the biggest leap of his life. He had trained for months, but on the day of the performance, fear gripped him. The moment he released his hands from the trapeze, he realized he wouldn't reach the next bar. The crowd gasped. But beneath him was a net—strong, steady, and ready. It held him. It saved him.

In today's Gospel, Jesus calls fishermen to take a leap—leaving behind boats, nets, and familiar routines. They step into the unknown, trusting that God's net—His presence, His guidance, His love—would sustain them.

Today, the Lord stands before us again, inviting us to follow His light, to leave behind the darkness that clings to us, and to trust the saving net of His grace.

Let us prepare to listen to His call.

#### PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus,

You step into our darkness with the light of your word:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus,

You call us to walk beside you and to be builders of your Kingdom: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus,

You unite us when our hearts are divided and lead us back to the way of peace: **Lord, have mercy.**

#### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who sends light into every shadow fill us with forgiveness, restore our courage, and lead us into the freedom of His peace, so that we may walk joyfully in His presence both now and always. **Amen.**

## COLLECT

God of new beginnings,  
when Your Son walked along the Sea of Galilee,  
He saw ordinary people and called them to extraordinary  
tasks.  
Speak to us again today.  
Shine Your light on the places where we hesitate,  
strengthen our willingness to follow,  
and make our lives instruments of Your hope.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

With hearts awakened by God's call  
and with gratitude for the light that banishes every  
darkness,  
let us give glory to God in the highest  
and rejoice in the salvation He offers.

## HOMILY: "Following the Light – Being Called to the Journey Together"

A few years ago, I read a story about a young circus boy, the son of a long line of performers. He wanted to become a trapeze artist like his ancestors. From an early age, his father took him onto the trapeze, teaching him to swing safely while holding his older brother's hands. But on the day of his first solo jump, his eyes were covered, and he had no harness—only his brother waiting to catch him. When he jumped, he reached only halfway. Panic swept over the audience. He could have fallen, but at the last moment, his father stretched a safety net beneath him. He was saved.

Human life is a lot like that jump. We take risks, step out into the unknown, and sometimes feel like we are falling. But God, in His providence, has provided a net—a safety and a support through Jesus Christ and through the Church, which can catch us when we falter.

## 1. Being on the Journey Together

The question “How do I start?” is one we all ask ourselves at different points in life. How we begin something matters greatly. A wrong beginning can make the journey difficult or even impossible. Remember the gas levy that was decided last year and quickly overturned? Starting without care can derail everything. As someone once said: “The beginning carries you along.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus is at the start of His public mission. He begins not in the centres of power, but in Galilee, among ordinary people—fishermen, men who understood the realities of life. Jesus seeks disciples who know life, who have their feet on the ground, who can share joys and burdens with others. The Second Vatican Council expressed it beautifully: “The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of people today... are also the joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of the disciples of Christ. And there is nothing genuinely human that does not find an echo in their hearts.”

Jesus also chooses team players. Fishing is a collaborative task; so is building His Church. He calls those ready to journey together, to argue and negotiate without losing focus. This is the essence of *synodality*—being “on the way together” (syn + odos). The Church is designed to journey collectively, and this beginning reminds us that no Christian is meant to walk alone.

## 2. Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is Near

Jesus’ message is simple yet profound: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!” He constantly points to this Kingdom, through parables, teachings, and by sending His disciples to proclaim it.

But what does “Kingdom of Heaven” really mean? Literally, it means God’s kingship—God’s reign. When Jesus says the Kingdom is near, He is declaring: “God’s reign has begun!” God is truly in charge, bringing life, obedience, miracles, and care into the world.

For the people of Israel, this was revolutionary. For centuries, they had experienced exile, occupation, and

loss. God's reign had seemed distant. And yet, in Jesus, it became tangible: absolute obedience to the Father, miraculous healings, and the restoration of hope and life. Christian life, rooted in God's Kingdom, is never boring—it is thrilling. Repentance, then, is not just confessing sins—it is turning from self-centeredness to God-centered living.

### 3. Salvation for a Troubled Land

Isaiah spoke of Zebulun and Naphtali, lands “sitting in darkness,” and promised a bright light. Centuries later, Jesus begins His ministry in this very region. He starts where people are struggling, where life is dark and hope seems lost. He brings light, life, and salvation, just as the star guided the Magi to the newborn Christ.

Repentance flows naturally from encountering this salvation. Jesus doesn't require penance as John did; He requires faith and a willingness to follow Him. His presence transforms despair into hope, fear into courage, and sin into forgiveness.

The calling of the first disciples—Peter, Andrew, James, and John—demonstrates this principle. Their lives changed immediately. They left their nets, their daily routines, and followed Jesus. Their response teaches us that discipleship requires promptness, commitment, and trust.

### 4. Paul's Urgent Reminder to the Church

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, reminds us of a vital truth: Christ cannot be divided. Quarrels and factions arose when his passionate influence was absent. Today, too, human nature and organizational challenges can divide us. Yet Paul emphasizes that our standard must always be Jesus Christ and His message, not personal prestige or ambition.

Even in conflict, dialogue, and negotiation, the focus must remain on God's reign, not on human disagreements. Discipleship is always rooted in fidelity to Christ, not in human schemes.

## 5. The Power of a Beginning

Hermann Hesse once wrote: “And every beginning holds a magic that protects us and helps us live...”

Jesus’ public ministry begins with relationship, not with doctrine. He calls ordinary fishermen, trusting their skills and their hearts. He says: “You can do something. You are not alone.” The calling of the disciples reminds us that faith begins in relationships—trusting Jesus and trusting those called to walk the journey with us.

Being connected, like the net that holds the fish, is essential. A Christian life apart from community is incomplete. We are stronger and more effective together, passing on God’s light to others.

## 6. Casting Nets

Like the circus boy who leapt into the unknown, we are called to step out in faith. Jesus calls ordinary people to extraordinary work—to form a net that saves lives, both spiritually and practically. He doesn’t ask us to go alone.

Following Him, the Church becomes the net that catches those who might otherwise fall into despair.

Our nets—our communities, our parishes, our support for one another—save lives. Every act of faith, kindness, or prayer is a strand in that net.

## 7. Zebulun and Naphtali: Lessons for Today

Success in life often seems to demand leaving the peripheries for the centres of power. Yet Jesus chooses the wrong place, the wrong people, and the seemingly impossible mission.

He begins in darkness to bring light. Likewise, we are called to bring light in our own corners of the world—whether in forgotten communities, neglected families, or overlooked workplaces. God can use anyone to build His Kingdom. Repentance and following Him transform ordinary lives into instruments of God’s glory.

## 8. Darkness and Light

Darkness comes in many forms: death, illness, addiction, despair. Yet in Jesus Christ, light shines into every shadow. He heals, forgives, and restores. Each of us receives this light in baptism and is called to pass it on.

When we follow Jesus, we carry His light into the world. Like the disciples leaving their nets, we step forward, trusting in His power and in the support of the community. We are never alone.

## 9. Vocation: Hearing the Call Today

A person's vocation is not merely a profession; it is a calling. Jesus calls each of us, ordinary people, to participate in His mission. Just as He called the fishermen of Galilee, He calls teachers, parents, students, workers—anyone willing to respond.

Mother Teresa heard the cries of the dying in Calcutta as a call from Jesus. Today, He still calls through circumstances, people, and needs in our world. We need

to listen, respond, and be willing to step out, leaving old nets behind.

Vocation is ongoing. The forms may change, but the call remains. Every act of service, prayer, and faithfulness contributes to God's reign on earth.

Let us return to the circus boy. His leap was terrifying, and he almost fell. Yet the net of his father held him safe. Today, God calls us to leap into service, into discipleship, into the light of His Kingdom. We may stumble; we may feel inadequate. But the net of Jesus, woven through community, love, and faith, will hold us.

Let us take courage. Let us repent, follow, and work together to bring God's light into darkness. Let us trust that, step by step, beginning by beginning, His Kingdom will shine through us. Amen.

## INVITATION TO THE CREDO

Brothers and sisters,  
let us proclaim the faith that unites us,  
the faith that gathers us into one body,  
the faith that strengthens us to follow Christ's call:

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

God calls us with patience and tenderness.  
Now we place before Him the signs of our labour  
and the symbols of our hope.  
Let us ask Him to transform these gifts  
and to renew our hearts.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Lord our God,  
accept these gifts of bread and wine—  
fruits of the earth and work of our hands.  
As they become the Body and Blood of Christ,  
make us ready to leave behind what weighs us down,  
to walk in unity, and to serve You with generous hearts.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right to give You thanks,  
God of light and promise.  
From age to age You have walked with Your people—  
from the lands shadowed by fear  
to the shores where Your Son called His first disciples.

When discouragement covered the nations,  
You raised up a great light.  
In Jesus, Your Word made flesh,  
You revealed Your Kingdom,  
calling us to repentance, healing our wounds,  
and gathering us into one family.

Even today, He walks beside us,  
inviting us to trust, to follow,  
and to build a world shaped by mercy.  
And so, with all who hear Your call  
and with the choirs of heaven,  
we proclaim Your glory as we sing:

**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Jesus taught His disciples that God's reign begins  
when we trust in His Fatherly care.

With hearts made one in that trust,  
let us pray in the words He gave us:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray,  
from every form of darkness that touches our lives—  
the fears that bind us,  
the divisions that weaken our witness,  
and the discouragement that overshadows our hope.

Grant us the grace to walk as children of the light,  
to stand firm when trials come,  
and to keep our hearts steady  
as Your Kingdom draws near.

Strengthen our faith when the path is unclear,  
deepen our trust when we feel overwhelmed,  
and make us signs of unity in a world torn by conflict.

As we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You called Your first disciples into unity of heart and  
mission;  
look with kindness upon Your Church today.  
Do not count our sins or our failures,  
but see the longing we have for Your peace—  
peace in our homes, in our parishes, and in our world.

Calm every anxious spirit,  
heal the wounds of division,  
and pour into us the courage  
to be artisans of reconciliation wherever You send us.

May Your light scatter all darkness within us,  
and may Your Spirit make us one body,  
walking together in charity and truth.

You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.



## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
the Light who breaks into every darkness,  
the Master who calls us by name.  
Blessed are we who are invited  
to His saving banquet.

## MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, You have fed us with Your word and Your  
Body. Like the first disciples, help us to rise from this table  
with new courage. Strengthen our willingness to follow  
You, to bring light where there is gloom,  
and to cast the nets of compassion and unity  
wherever we go. Amen.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

God of our journey,  
You have renewed us with the gifts of Your love.  
Stay with us as we return to our daily tasks.  
Guide our steps, steady our hearts,  
and help us to hear Your call in every circumstance of life.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who called light out of darkness  
shine upon your path  
and guide your every step. **Amen.**

May Christ who called the fishermen of Galilee  
call you daily into deeper discipleship  
and make your life a blessing for others. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit unite your hearts,  
strengthen your witness,  
and fill you with peace that never fades. **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

Brothers and sisters,  
go forth as disciples of the Light.  
Follow Christ, shine His presence,  
and help others know the strength of His saving net.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Every beginning holds a call from God.

Take one small step toward His light today.”

## Monday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time (Year B)

*Saints Timothy and Titus*

*Readings: 2 Tim 1:1–8 or Titus 1:1–5; Lk 10, 1-9*

### INTRODUCTION

A few years ago I met an elderly missionary priest who had spent more than 50 years in a remote village in Papua New Guinea. I asked him, “Father, how did you stay so long?”

He smiled and said, “I didn’t stay because I was strong. I stayed because the people carried me. Every priest needs companions.” Today, as we honour Saints Timothy and Titus, we celebrate that same truth.

Paul — great as he was — could not carry the Gospel alone. He needed faithful friends: Timothy, raised in a believing home, and Titus, a convert whose heart burned for Christ. Jesus Himself sent disciples two by two, reminding us that no one is sent alone, and no ministry grows in isolation.

Let us enter this Eucharist remembering the people who strengthened our own faith — parents, teachers, pastors,

and friends — and ask the Lord to make us, like Timothy and Titus, joyful companions in His mission.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT**

Brothers and sisters,  
the Lord sends us to bring peace, healing, and hope — yet we sometimes prefer to walk alone, to trust our own strength, or to hold back our gifts. Let us ask for mercy.

Lord Jesus, you send us out two by two to support one another. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you entrusted Timothy and Titus with the care of your people. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to courage, not fear — to love, not timidity. Lord, have mercy.

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May Almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins, heal our memories,  
and strengthen in us the Spirit of power, love, and self-control, that we may walk joyfully in His mission. Amen.

### **COLLECT**

God our Father,  
you raised up Timothy and Titus as faithful companions of the Apostle Paul  
and courageous shepherds of your people.  
Grant that, strengthened by the same Spirit of trust and perseverance,  
we may support one another on the journey of faith  
and proclaim your Kingdom with generous hearts.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever. Amen.

### **HOMILY**

Years ago, a young seminarian was assigned to a rural parish for summer ministry.  
On his first day, the old parish priest handed him a map of the village and said,  
“Choose one house and begin your mission.”  
Excited, the seminarian rushed out — alone.

Hours later he returned exhausted, discouraged, and sunburned.

The pastor simply smiled and said,  
“Next time, take someone with you. God never sends anyone alone.”

Today’s Gospel confirms that wisdom:  
Jesus sends the seventy-two *two by two*.

Why?

Because the Gospel grows through companionship.

Through shared courage.

Through mutual encouragement.

Through someone walking beside us.

### 1. Timothy and Titus: Companions on the Journey

Paul’s letters are filled with affection for these two young leaders:

- “*Timothy, my dear child...*”
- “*Titus, my true son in our common faith...*”

Paul did not work alone.

Jesus Himself did not work alone.

Today the Church invites us to see ourselves not as isolated believers  
but as co-workers, partners, brothers and sisters in one Body.

### 2. We receive faith from others

Timothy’s faith lived first in his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice.

Many of us stand on the shoulders of those who taught us to pray,  
who brought us to Mass,  
who whispered the first truths of the Gospel into our hearts.

### 3. We share faith by walking together

Jesus says:

“The harvest is plentiful.”

But the workers must support one another —  
because the mission is too heavy for one pair of shoulders.

Each of us has:

- A gift someone else needs
- A weakness someone else can strengthen
- A word someone else is waiting to hear

We evangelize best together:

through teamwork, friendship, shared witness, and mutual prayer.

4. When we go together, we fear less and love more

Paul reminds Timothy:

“God did not give us a spirit of fear.”

Fear isolates; love gathers.

Jesus sends His disciples out vulnerable —

with no purse, no sandals, dependent on hospitality —

so that they learn to rely not on things but on God,

and not on themselves but on each other.

A missionary in Africa once formed small groups of new believers.

One night he found one group walking in the dark forest to visit a sick neighbour.

“Why didn’t you wait until morning?” he asked.

One man replied,

“Because when we walk together, the night is not dark.”

Brothers and sisters,

the world can be dark —

but when we walk together,

when we pray together,

when we serve together,

the light of Christ shines.

May Timothy and Titus teach us to be companions on the journey,

so that through us, Jesus may say to every heart:

“The Kingdom of God is near to you.”

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Like Timothy and Titus, who offered their lives for the Gospel, let us now offer bread and wine, and with them our desire to be faithful companions in Christ's mission.

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts of bread and wine,  
signs of the work of many hands  
and symbols of our shared mission.  
As you strengthened Timothy and Titus for their service,  
strengthen us through this sacrifice,  
that united in one faith and one love  
we may bring your peace to the world.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE: Companions in the Mission of Christ**

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.

Through your Son you called disciples not to walk alone  
but to share the journey of faith.

He sent the seventy-two two by two  
so that their courage might be strengthened  
and their witness made radiant by mutual love.

In the early Church you raised up Timothy and Titus  
as trusted co-workers of the Apostle Paul,  
whose faith was deepened by their companionship  
and whose mission was extended through their zeal.

Even today you gather us into communities of service,  
that we may support one another  
and proclaim together the nearness of your Kingdom.

And so, with angels and saints,  
and with Timothy and Titus who rejoice in your glory,  
we praise you and acclaim:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With Timothy and Titus,  
and with all who have walked with us in faith,  
let us pray to the Father who sends us out in love.

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, from every fear that keeps us from your mission.

Grant peace to our days,  
courage to our hearts,  
and unity to your Church,  
that supported by one another  
we may joyfully await the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
when you sent your disciples into towns and villages,  
you told them to speak first of peace.

Look not on our sins  
but on the faith of your Church,  
and grant us the peace that comes  
when we walk together in your love.  
Amen.

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God  
who sends His disciples two by two  
and walks beside all who follow Him.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord Jesus,  
you fed Timothy and Titus with your Word  
and strengthened them with your Body.  
Feed us now with courage,

that we may go forth as companions in your mission.  
Where we walk alone, walk beside us.  
Where we grow weary, lift us up.  
Where we fear, fill us with your Spirit of power and love.  
Amen.

### **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Lord God,  
may this sacrament deepen within us the courage and zeal  
you awakened in Saints Timothy and Titus.  
Strengthened at this table of unity,  
may we bring your peace to every home,  
your hope to every heart,  
and your Gospel to every path we walk together.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **SOLEMN BLESSING**

May the God who called Timothy and Titus  
fill you with the strength of His Spirit.  
Amen.

May Christ, who sent His disciples two by two,  
walk beside you in every mission.  
Amen.

May the Holy Spirit unite you in faith and love,  
so that through your witness  
the Kingdom of God may draw near to all.  
Amen.

And may Almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son ✠ and the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

### **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace,  
as Timothy and Titus once did,  
to proclaim with courage and joy:  
“The Kingdom of God is near!”

### **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Faith grows strongest when we walk together.”



## **Tuesday of the third week in the Ord. Time (Year II)**

*2 Sam 6,12-15. 17-19; Mk 3,31-35*

*“Where God Dwells — and Who Belongs to His Family.”*

### **INTRODUCTION**

A teacher once asked her students, “Where does God live?”

One little girl lifted her hand and said, “God lives in the church.”

Another said, “God lives in heaven.”

But a third child answered, “God lives wherever someone loves Him.”

Children often say things that open our eyes.

Today’s readings also ask us to look again:

Where does God truly dwell?

And who belongs to His family?

In the first reading, God’s presence is carried in the Ark of the Covenant, and the people dance with joy.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that His true family are those who do God’s will.

So as we gather at this Eucharist — the place where God dwells so closely among us — let us open our hearts again to be His joyful, faithful family.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT**

Lord Jesus, you come into the ordinary places of our lives to make them holy. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you gather around you all who seek to do the Father’s will. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,  
you renew us when we grow tired,  
and you lift us up when we lose courage.  
Lord, have mercy.

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May the God who loves us like His own children  
forgive us our sins, heal what is wounded,  
and strengthen us to walk in His ways,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## COLLECT

God our Father,  
your presence makes every place holy  
and every heart courageous.  
As you walked with your people carrying the Ark,  
walk now with us.  
Make us ready to hear your word,  
eager to do your will,  
and joyful to belong to the family of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## HOMILY

A mother once watched her little boy build a small house  
out of blocks.

When she asked, “Who will live in your home?”  
he answered: “Anyone who listens to me.”  
He meant it playfully — but Jesus says something very  
similar in today’s Gospel, only far more profound.

1. The Ark: God dwelling among His people with joy

In the first reading, David brings the Ark of the Covenant  
into Jerusalem.

It is not a dry, quiet moment:  
*there is dancing, singing, celebration.*

Why?

Because the people know that God is close, walking with  
them, not far away.

Where God dwells, joy springs up.

2. Jesus: A new dwelling place, a new family

In the Gospel, Jesus teaches in a crowded house when  
someone says,

“Your mother and your brothers are outside looking for  
you.”

Jesus answers with a surprising truth:

*“Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and  
mother.”*

He is not rejecting His earthly family.

He is expanding it.

He is saying:

My home is with anyone who welcomes God's Word.  
My family is anyone who tries to live by it.

### 3. Where does God live today?

Yes, He dwells in the tabernacle.

Yes, He dwells in our churches.

But Jesus tells us:

God also lives in actions

—in moments of forgiveness,

—in acts of compassion,

—in quiet faithfulness,

—in a courageous “yes” to God's will.

### 4. Doing God's will

Doing God's will is not always easy.

Even the saints struggled.

Mary herself had to let go of her plans for Jesus.

Some days we feel outside the house, unsure if we belong.

But Jesus keeps calling us inside,

making us part of His family again.

A priest once visited a dying grandmother.

Seeing her many children and grandchildren gathered around her, he asked,

“How did you keep such a big family together all these years?”

She smiled and whispered,

“I simply tried to do God's will — and God kept the rest.”

That is the secret Jesus gives today.

God dwells where His will is welcomed,

and His family gathers wherever His word is lived.

May we let Him make His home in us.

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As God once dwelled among His people through the Ark,

He comes now through these simple gifts of bread and wine.

Let us present them — and our lives — with trust.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Lord our God,  
you choose ordinary things  
to reveal your extraordinary love.  
Receive the gifts we bring,  
and make our hearts a dwelling place  
where your will is welcomed  
and your joy is known.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PREFACE

Father of mercy and light,  
you have always chosen to walk with your people.  
You were with Israel as they carried the Ark with joy;  
you are with the Church now  
as we gather around your Son.  
  
He makes us one family  
in listening to your Word  
and in seeking to do your will.  
Through Him your presence becomes near,

your love becomes visible,  
and your Spirit makes our hearts your home.

And so, with all who rejoice in your presence,  
we sing the hymn of your glory:  
Holy, holy, holy...

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Jesus calls us His brothers and sisters.  
Let us pray with the confidence of His family:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every fear  
that keeps us outside the house of your love.  
Grant peace to our days,  
courage to do your will,  
and joy in belonging to your family,  
as we wait in hope  
for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you gather around you all who listen to your word.  
Look not on our sins,  
but on the faith of the family you have formed.  
Grant us the peace that comes from doing the Father's will,  
you who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

This is Jesus,  
who calls us His brothers and sisters  
and makes His home within us.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord Jesus,  
you have entered the house of our hearts.  
Stay with us.  
Let your word guide our steps,  
your will shape our choices,  
and your love make us one family. Amen.

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Lord our God,  
you have fed us with the Bread of your presence.  
As we leave this holy place,  
make us signs of your nearness and witnesses of your will.  
May our lives become a home  
where others, too, may find you.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **SOLEMN BLESSING**

May the God who walked with His people  
and danced with them in joy  
walk with you today. Amen.

May Christ, who calls you His brother and sister,  
make your heart His home. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit strengthen you  
to live God's will with courage and peace. Amen.

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

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
and let God dwell in your daily life.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God lives wherever His will is welcomed —  
make a small space in your day today where He can dwell.

## Wednesday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time (Year II) - Saint Thomas Aquinas

*2 Samuel 7:4–17; Mark 4:1–20*

## INTRODUCTION

A few years ago a teacher told her students to plant seeds in small paper cups. Some children watered their seed every day. Others forgot. Some checked the cup every morning, hoping to see something happen. For a long time, nothing changed—just soil. Then one day, a tiny green shoot appeared. And suddenly the whole class realized: life had been growing quietly all along.

Today's readings speak exactly this language. God promises David that even when he cannot see the future, God is building a house for him. And Jesus tells us that God sows His Word generously, even in places that look hopeless at first.

On this feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, we remember a man whose life grew slowly through prayer, humility, and the love of truth—until God made him a light for the Church.

Let us open our hearts to God's quiet work and ask His mercy for the times we have not trusted His growth in us.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT**

Lord Jesus, you sow your Word with patience and tenderness.

Lord, have mercy.

You heal our fears when we feel unfruitful or weak.

Christ, have mercy.

You call us to trust the hidden work of your grace.

Lord, have mercy.

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to the joy of lives that bear good fruit. Amen.

### **COLLECT**

God of truth and gentle wisdom,  
you filled Saint Thomas Aquinas  
with a longing to understand your ways  
and a humility that kept him close to you.

Awaken in us the same love for your Word  
and make our hearts soil where your grace can grow.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **HOMILY**

A young man once visited a monastery seeking advice. "I want to learn about God," he said to the old monk, "but nothing seems to be happening. I pray, I read, I listen... but I feel empty."

The monk took him to a field behind the monastery. He pointed to a tree full of fruit.

"When did this tree grow?" the monk asked.

"I don't know," the young man answered.

"Exactly," said the monk. "Growth is real even when it is silent."

#### **1. David's Lesson: The Future Belongs to God**

David wanted to build a physical house for God—but God told him something surprising: "*I will build a house for you.*"  
Not made of stone.

Not shaped by human hands.

But a future built on God's faithfulness.

Sometimes we say:

"I should have done more."

"I wasted my chances."

"My life feels scattered."

But God says:

"You are not the one keeping your life upright—I am."

## 2. Jesus' Parable: God Sows Beyond Our Expectations

In the Gospel, Jesus reminds us that God scatters His Word everywhere.

Not carefully.

Not selectively.

But freely—almost recklessly.

This means:

- He never gives up on us.
- He never stops planting in us.
- He works in us even when we see nothing.

## 3. St. Thomas Aquinas: A Seed that Grew Quietly

Thomas was not dramatic.

He was quiet, shy, and called "the dumb ox" by classmates.

But he let the Word root deeply:

- He prayed before he wrote.
- He studied with humility.
- He loved the Eucharist with his whole being.

And God made his life a hundredfold harvest for the Church.

His greatness was not brilliance—it was openness.

## 4. A Word of Encouragement

Like the early Christians who wondered whether anything was changing, or like the disciples facing opposition, we may wonder:

- Why do my efforts seem small?
- Why is prayer dry?



- Why do I plant seeds that never sprout?

Jesus whispers the same message He spoke through the parable: “Keep sowing. I am working. The harvest will come.”

A gardener once planted a vineyard. The first year—nothing. The second year—still nothing.

But in the third year the vines suddenly came alive, covering the whole hillside with grapes.

A neighbour asked, “How did you know it would work?” The gardener said, “I didn’t know. I trusted what I planted.”

So too with God.

Let us trust what He is planting in us today.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Sisters and brothers, as we prepare our gifts, let us bring to the Lord all the seeds He has planted in our lives—those growing, those hidden, and those we struggle to understand. Let us ask Him to bless them and make them fruitful.

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

God our Father,  
receive these gifts  
and receive the hopes we place upon your altar.  
As you guided St. Thomas Aquinas  
in study, prayer, and humble trust,  
guide us so that our lives may bear a generous harvest  
for your Kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right to thank you,  
God of compassion and wisdom.  
In every age you raise up women and men  
who seek your truth and hand it on to others.  
Today we remember Saint Thomas Aquinas,  
whose gentle spirit and faithful study  
helped your people understand the riches of faith.

You never tire of sowing your Word,  
and even when it grows slowly,  
you walk with us as you walked with David,  
promising a future built on your fidelity.

And so, with all creation,  
we praise you and acclaim:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With confidence in the God who builds our future and sows  
His Word in us, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, from every fear that our lives are barren  
or unfruitful.

Keep us safe from discouragement and sin  
as we wait in hope for the fullness of your Kingdom  
and the harvest of the good you have begun in us.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you calmed troubled hearts  
and brought peace to those who felt too weak to grow.  
Grant us the peace that comes from trusting you—  
a peace no trial can steal.  
You live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
the One who plants His life in ours  
and makes us fruitful by His grace.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **COMMUNION MEDITATION**

Lord Jesus, you enter the soil of our hearts  
with patience and hope.  
Help us to believe  
that your grace is growing in us today,  
even in hidden ways.  
Make us generous sowers of your Word  
to all we meet. Amen.

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Lord God,  
we have received the bread of life.  
May this sacrament deepen in us  
the wisdom and humility of Saint Thomas Aquinas  
and help us bear lasting fruit  
in our families, our parish, and our world.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## **SOLEMN BLESSING**

May the God who planted His promise in David  
bless you and keep you faithful.  
Amen.

May Christ the Sower  
make your heart rich soil for His Word.  
Amen.

May the Holy Spirit  
fill you with the wisdom and peace

that guided Saint Thomas Aquinas.  
Amen.

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

## **DISMISSAL**

Go and sow the good seed God has placed in you.  
Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Growth is silent. God works in us even when we see nothing.”

## Thursday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time (Year II)

*2 Samuel 7:18–29; Mark 4:21–25*

*Do Not Hide Your Light – Listening Deeply, Living Generously*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a story about a small village in the mountains where electricity had never reached. One day, a traveller brought a simple oil lamp and placed it in one family's home. For the first time, the family saw their room brightened at night. But strangely, they kept the lamp inside a cupboard. When asked why, the father said, "We were afraid it would attract too much attention."

The traveller smiled gently and said, "A lamp is meant to be seen. Otherwise, its light is wasted."

Jesus says the same to us today: *"Do not hide your light under a bushel."*

The Word of God is the lamp given to us — but it shines only when we allow it to.

Today's readings remind us to listen deeply, to receive God's Word generously, and to let our faith shine in concrete actions. As we begin this celebration, let us open our hearts to God's light.

### PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus,  
You offer us the light of your Word, but we have often chosen shadows. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus,  
You invite us to listen with open hearts, but we have listened selectively and shallowly. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,  
You entrust us with gifts and talents meant for others, yet we sometimes keep them hidden. Lord, have mercy.

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who sees even the smallest flame within us shine His mercy upon us, free us from all sin, and bring us into His marvellous light. Amen.

## COLLECT

God of Light and Truth,  
your living Word illumines every path  
and brings joy to those who welcome it.  
Open our hearts to receive your voice with depth and  
generosity.  
Free us from carelessness and fear,  
that your Word may bear abundant fruit in our thoughts,  
our choices, and our daily witness.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son... Amen.

## HOMILY

A teacher once gave her students a riddle:  
“What weighs nothing, costs nothing, and yet can fill an  
entire room?”  
They shouted, “Air!” “Sound!” “Dust!”  
She shook her head and, lighting a small candle,  
whispered,  
“Light.”

A tiny flame — yet it changed everything in that dark  
classroom.

Jesus uses exactly that image today.

### 1. The Lamp That Must Not Be Hidden

“Does anyone bring in a lamp to put it under a basket or  
under a bed?”

A lamp exists to be seen.

The Word of God exists to be heard.

Faith exists to be lived.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus reminds us that faith is not a  
private treasure or a personal secret.

Christianity is not a hidden tribe, a closed circle, or an inner  
club.

We are not belonging to a secret society — we belong to a  
mission in daylight.

### 2. David’s Prayer: Receiving Light with Humility

In the first reading, King David sits before the Lord and says:

“Who am I, Lord God, that you have brought me this far?”

David recognizes that everything he has is gift.

Every gift is also a task.

The light God gives us — grace, faith, talents, opportunities — is not for admiration but for mission.

### 3. The Measure We Give

Jesus says something that sounds harsh:

“The measure you measure out will be measured back to you — and more besides.”

In divine mathematics:

- Small listening brings small understanding.
- Deep listening brings overflowing grace.
- Generous hearts receive unexpected abundance.

God always multiplies what we give Him.

### 4. Your Light Matters

Some people say, “But I am nothing special.”

Jesus says:

“Even a small lamp can fill a house.”

Your smile, your forgiveness, your patience in suffering, your courage in speaking truth — these become lamps placed on a stand.

Faith shines through ordinary deeds.

### 5. Ending Story

A mother once left a candle burning in the window when her son went to war.

Every night she lit it.

Years later, when he finally returned, he said,

“Mother, I walked through darkness, but whenever I imagined that candle, I knew you had not lost hope.”

You may not know it,

but your life might be the only light someone sees.

Do not hide it.

Let it shine.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Brothers and sisters,  
as we bring these gifts to the altar,  
let us place upon it the light of our faith  
and the desires of our hearts  
to let God's Word shine through our lives.

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Radiant God,  
receive the gifts we set before you  
and the silent hopes we carry within us.  
May this bread and wine  
become nourishment for our mission  
and strengthen us to shine with the light of Christ  
in all we say and do.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right to give you thanks,  
Lord, Father of endless light.  
From the beginning you spoke your Word

to scatter darkness and guide your people.  
Through the prophets, through David your servant,  
and finally through your Son made flesh,  
you revealed a light no darkness could overcome.

In Christ, you entrust to us the lamp of faith  
and call us to let its flame shine before the world.

As we listen to your voice  
and measure out generosity of heart,  
you pour upon us gifts overflowing.

And so, with the angels and all creation  
made bright by your glory,  
we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With faith that seeks the light  
and hearts ready to receive God's generous measure,  
let us pray as Jesus taught us:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, from every darkness  
that dims the light of faith within us.

Grant peace to our days,  
courage to our listening,  
and joy in doing your will.

As we await the blessed hope  
and the full dawning of your Kingdom,  
we trust in your mercy  
now and forever. Amen.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you reveal all things in light  
and make peace the fruit of truth.  
Look not on our sins  
but on the faith that shines within your Church.  
Grant us the peace that only your Word can give,  
and make us witnesses of your light.  
Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God, the Light of the world,  
the One who comes to fill our hearts with understanding.  
Blessed are we who are called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT COMMUNION MEDITATION**

Lord Jesus, your presence is a lamp within us.  
May this Eucharist quiet our fears,  
sharpen our listening, and deepen our faith.  
Let your light shine in us  
so that others may find their way to you.

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

God of all goodness,  
you have enlightened us with your Word  
and strengthened us with the Bread of Life.  
Do not allow our faith to remain hidden or silent.  
Send us forth with courage and clarity,  
that our lives may make your light visible in the world.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



## BLESSING

May the God who called you out of darkness  
into His marvellous light fill your hearts with wisdom.  
Amen.

May Christ, Light of the World,  
make your words and deeds shine before others. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit, giver of insight and courage,  
increase in you every gift you generously share. Amen.

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

## DISMISSAL

Go forth, carry the light of Christ into the world,  
and let it shine through your lives.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“The light God gives you is never for hiding —  
it is always for sharing.”

## FRIDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR II)

*2 Samuel 11:1–10, 13–17 • Mark 4:26–34*

*Responsibility, Limits, and the Quiet Growth God Alone  
Gives*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a story told about a father who was teaching his young son how to plant sunflower seeds. The little boy, full of excitement, pushed the seeds into the soil and covered them carefully. The next morning he dug them up again—just to check if they had grown. “If you keep digging, nothing will ever grow,” the father said gently. “There are things you must do... and there are things you must leave to God.”

Today’s readings invite us to reflect on exactly that. David learns hard lessons about responsibility—and his limits.

The disciples listen as Jesus explains that God’s Kingdom grows quietly, beyond our control.

Let us enter this Eucharist aware of our own responsibilities, yet humble before the God who works in silence and in His own time.

## **PENITENTIAL ACT**

Lord Jesus, You entrusted people to our care, yet often we have failed them— Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You invite us to sow seeds of faith, yet we grow impatient when we do not see quick results—  
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You work quietly and faithfully in our lives, yet we try to control what belongs to You— Lord, have mercy.

## **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May the God who sees our efforts and our limits pour upon us His mercy, forgive our sins, heal our impatience, and lead us into the peace of those who trust in Him alone. Amen.

## **COLLECT**

### **Option A**

God our Father,  
You gather the strong and the weak,  
the hopeful and the discouraged,  
the responsible and the burdened  
into one family of faith.  
Send us Your Spirit  
so that we may understand our limits without fear,  
trust Your work without anxiety,  
and walk together toward the fullness of Your Kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Option B**

God of every good gift,  
You speak Your Word and offer us the Bread of Life.  
Make us generous in sharing what we receive—  
our faith, our strength, our compassion—  
so that others may find hope through us.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## HOMILY

A well-known Eastern tale tells of a rice farmer who grew tired of waiting for his crop to sprout.

“I must help them,” he said.

So he went to the field and gently pulled each tender shoot upward.

The next day every plant had withered.

He wanted quick growth and destroyed what God intended to grow slowly.

The first reading shows us a David who forgets responsibility, tries to control outcomes, and ends up causing great damage. His story reminds us how easily human impatience and misuse of power can hurt others.

Jesus, in the Gospel, offers a completely different picture: a farmer who sows the seed... and then steps back.

The seed grows “of its own accord”—by God’s mysterious power.

This is how the Kingdom grows:  
quietly, steadily, invisibly, without our constant interference.

We sow kindness, but God transforms it.

We offer forgiveness, but God heals hearts.

We speak faith, but God makes it take root.

Many of us struggle with the desire to control:

parents with children,

supervisors with workers,

pastors with parishes,

Christians with their own spiritual life.

Jesus invites us to work faithfully, but also to trust deeply.

As Friedrich Oettinger prayed:

“Lord, give me the courage to change what I can,  
the calm to accept what I cannot,  
and the wisdom to know the difference.”

Ending Story:

A man once placed a small pot on his windowsill with a tiny lemon seed. Every day he checked it, watered it just enough, and waited. Months passed—nothing. But he refused to throw it away. One morning, almost unnoticed, a

fragile green shoot appeared. “It was growing all along,” he said. “I simply couldn’t see it.”

So too, God’s grace in our lives.

It grows quietly, even when everything looks still.

Our task is to sow faithfully—

and then to trust the God who never stops working.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

With the bread and wine, we bring our responsibilities, our efforts, and our limits.

Let us place everything into God’s hands,  
who brings growth in His own way and time.

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Lord our God, Accept the gifts we bring:

the work of our hands, the hopes of our hearts,  
and the patience we try to learn.

Make these offerings signs of our trust

that You alone bring Your Kingdom to completion.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,

our duty and our joy,

always and everywhere to give You thanks,

Father of hidden growth and quiet miracles.

You work in hearts we cannot reach,

You heal wounds we do not see,

You bring forth faith where we imagine only emptiness.

Even when we sleep,

Your Kingdom advances;

even when we fail,

Your grace continues its work.

And so, with wonder at Your patience

and trust in Your mercy,

we join the angels in their hymn of praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting the God who sees what grows unseen  
and who knows what we need before we ask,  
let us pray in the words Jesus gave us.

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from the fear that nothing is happening  
when Your work is hidden.

Protect us from impatience and discouragement.

Grant that, as we await the coming of our Savior Jesus  
Christ,

we may live with quiet confidence in Your faithful plan.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,

You sow peace where we sow anxiety,  
and You bring calm where we bring haste.

Look not on our sins but on the faith of Your Church,  
and grant her the peace that grows from trusting Your  
Father's will, now and forever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
the Sower of the seed  
and the Lord of the harvest.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## COMMUNION MEDITATION

Lord, Your presence in this Eucharist  
is like a seed planted deep in us—  
quiet, unseen, yet powerful.

Give us patient hearts  
so that Your grace may take root  
and bear fruit in our daily lives. Amen.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

God of hidden growth,  
You have fed us with the Bread that strengthens our hope.  
Help us to continue sowing goodness  
even when we see no immediate results.  
Make us patient, trusting workers in Your Kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## BLESSING

May God, who works quietly in all things,  
bless you with patient hearts. Amen.

May Christ, whose Kingdom grows in secret,  
guide your responsibilities with wisdom. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit, who brings every good seed to  
maturity, make your life rich in hidden and lasting fruit.  
Amen.

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

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
trusting the God who works in you  
far more than you can see.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Sow faithfully. Trust deeply.  
God is working—even when everything looks still.”

## FEAST OF ST. JOHN BOSCO

*Saturday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time (Year II)*  
*2 Samuel 12:1–7, 10–17 • Mark 4:35–41*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a story told about young John Bosco when he was only nine years old. One morning, after tending the family’s sheep, he ran to the small clearing where he often entertained the village boys with little tricks—balancing on a rope, juggling stones, and performing acrobatics. The other boys loved him, but they also fought constantly. They teased, insulted, and pushed each other.

One afternoon, after breaking up yet another quarrel, John went home frustrated. That night he had a dream—one that would shape his life forever. He saw the same boys fighting, but suddenly a majestic man appeared beside him and said, “Not with blows, but with kindness you will win them.” Beside the man was a Woman who said, “My son will give you a teacher. Learn from him.”

John woke up confused, but the message stayed with him: the storms around him would not be calmed by shouting or force, but by patient love. Years later, Don Bosco would recognise in that dream the beginning of his vocation: to be a calm presence among storm-tossed young people.

And today's readings bring us into a similar scene: storms—inner and outer—raging around us. Jesus asleep in the boat. The disciples panicking. And the gentle yet firm voice calling us: "Why are you afraid? Have faith."

Before we begin this Eucharist, let us look into our own hearts—not into a mirror of outward appearance, but the inner mirror of truth. Let us ask God for mercy.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT**

Lord Jesus, you see our fears even before we name them.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you stand beside us when storms threaten to overwhelm us. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you offer peace not of this world but from your own heart. **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God, whose mercy is greater than every storm, wash away our sins, calm our troubled hearts, lift us when we stumble, strengthen us when we are weak, and bring us into the peace only Christ can give. Amen.

### **INVITATION TO THE GLORIA**

On this feast of St. John Bosco—friend of the young, teacher of hope, and herald of Christ's peace—let us join the angels and saints in praising the God who still calms storms and awakens faith.

### **COLLECT**

God of boundless compassion,  
you formed the heart of St. John Bosco  
to mirror the gentleness of Christ  
and the protective care of the Good Shepherd.

Through his intercession  
strengthen us when life's storms unsettle our faith,  
renew our courage when fear threatens to drown us,  
and awaken in us the trust  
that your Son is ever present in the boat of our lives.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

### Opening Story — Don Bosco and the Street Boys

In the early days of his ministry in Turin, Don Bosco often walked through the poor industrial quarters where hundreds of young boys wandered the streets, unemployed, homeless, and unwanted. Once, during a bitter winter evening, he found a group of them huddled under an abandoned shed. They were shivering, starving, and fighting among themselves for scraps of bread.

Don Bosco approached them quietly, knelt down, and in his warm, joking tone said:

“Boys, if we all yell at once, we might frighten the cold away!”

They burst out laughing. The storm within them—fear, anger, abandonment—began to settle. Don Bosco could not change their world overnight, but he could bring calm into the storm around them. And that is exactly what he did: gently, patiently, consistently.

Today, the Word of God shows us that Jesus does the same.

### 1. The Storm Within and the Storm Around

Life demands much from us.

Sometimes too much.

We reach our limits.

We are stretched.

We are shaken.

We are afraid.



Just like the disciples.

Just like Don Bosco with the abandoned youth.

Just like every one of us.

The disciples were experienced fishermen. They knew storms.

And yet today they panic. Why?

Because this storm is not only around them—it is inside them.

The Gospel says:

“The waves broke over the boat so that it was almost swamped.”

They think they are going to drown. And in their panic comes a cry that echoes through human history:

**“Master, do you not care that we are perishing?”**

This is one of the most honest questions in the entire Bible.

It is the question we ask in sickness, in grief, in failure, in confusion.

It is the cry of the persecuted church.

It is the cry of a parent watching a child drift away.

It is the cry of a young person who feels lost.

It is the cry of Don Bosco as he saw the misery of youth in industrial Turin.

## **2. Jesus Asleep — Not Indifferent, but Trusting**

Mark gives a striking detail:

Jesus is asleep on a cushion.

Why asleep?

Not because He doesn't care.

But because He trusts.

His sleep is a silent sermon:

God is greater than the storm.

The disciples see only the storm—

Jesus sees the Father.

The disciples focus on the waves—

Jesus rests in God.

This is why Don Bosco, in the middle of poverty, hostility, and lack of resources, often said:

“Let us trust in God. He does everything. We are only His instruments.”

There were storms in his mission—prisons, street violence, opposition, financial ruin.

But he trusted.

And like the disciples in the Gospel, he too witnessed miracles.

### **3. Faith Is Not the Absence of Storms — It Is Trust Within Them**

Jesus asks two questions:

“Why are you afraid?”

“How is it that you have no faith?”

Faith is not the absence of fear.

Faith is not a life without storms.

Faith is trusting that Christ is in the boat.

In Mark’s Gospel, the opposite of faith is not doubt—it is fear.

Fear freezes us.

Fear blinds us.

Fear makes us forget who is with us.

We all know inner storms:

- anxiety,
- depression,
- financial worries,
- family tensions,
- illness,
- aging,
- job insecurity,
- or the sense of drowning beneath responsibilities.

And sometimes Jesus seems asleep.

Yet He says:

“I am here. I am with you. Trust me.”

### **4. The Church as the Storm-Tossed Boat**

Biblical scholars often see today’s Gospel as an image of the early Church.

Mark wrote to Christians facing persecution, violence,  
injustice, and the feeling that Christ was silent.

How easy it was for them to cry:

“Lord, don’t you care?”

How easy it is for us to think the same.

Yet Jesus remains in the boat.

He will not abandon His Church.

He will not let the storm swamp it.

He may be silent at times, but He is not absent.

## **5. Going to the “Other Side” — The Mission of the Church**

Jesus says:

“Let us cross to the other side.”

To the Gentiles.

To unfamiliar territory.

To discomfort.

To new mission.

When the Church sets out on new ground—  
youth ministry, evangelisation, healing, social outreach—  
storms arise.

Resistance appears.

Fear grows.

But Jesus calls us to go.

Don Bosco heard that call, too.

He crossed to the “other side”—  
into factories, prisons, slums—  
where others were afraid to go.

And like Jesus, he found storms.

But also miracles.

## **6. Jesus Brings Calm — Turning Chaos into Peace**

Jesus rebukes the wind and the sea.

His word brings absolute calm.

This calm is not magic—it is relational.

It flows from trust in the Father.

Don Bosco experienced storms:  
homeless boys, violent youth, lack of funds, illness.  
Yet he remained calm, sometimes even smiling.  
His calm became contagious.  
It saved many boys not only from the storm outside but the  
storm within.

Jesus offers that same calm to us.  
Not by removing every difficulty—  
but by giving peace in the midst of them.

## 7. The Call of Today

Brothers and sisters,  
today's Gospel asks every one of us:

- Which voices do we listen to?
- The voice of fear?
- The voice of despair?
- The voice saying "God is asleep"?
- Or the voice of Christ saying,  
**"Do not be afraid. Trust. I am here."**

Faith is not about controlling the storm.  
Faith is about trusting the One who does.

Let us take Don Bosco's example:  
calmness in chaos,  
love in violence,  
patience in confusion,  
joy in hardship,  
trust in every storm.

## Closing Story

Near the end of his life, Don Bosco visited the boys in the Oratory. They begged him for advice. He said only:  
"Whatever you do, do it with love. Whatever storms you meet, trust in Mary and in Jesus. They will never abandon you."

May we too learn to trust, to love, and to remain peaceful in the boat with Christ. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As Jesus calmed the storm on the sea,  
and as Don Bosco brought peace to anxious hearts,  
let us bring our gifts to the altar,  
asking God to transform our fears into faith  
and our storms into trust.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of unwavering mercy,  
receive the gifts we bring with humble hearts.  
As you strengthened St. John Bosco  
to serve the young with joyful sacrifice,  
grant that these offerings may become for us  
signs of your presence and instruments of your peace.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE: Christ Who Calms the Storms

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Father of compassion and God of every hope.

Your Son, Jesus Christ,  
entered the storms of our humanity  
and showed us that your love  
is stronger than wind and wave.  
In His peaceful trust  
you reveal your constant care;  
in His powerful word  
you calm the depths of fear within us.

You raised up St. John Bosco  
as a witness to this same love—  
a father to the young,  
a shepherd of hearts,  
a sign of your tender mercy  
in the tumult of a restless age.

And so, with angels and saints,  
and with all who seek the peace of Christ,  
we lift our voices in joyful praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Gathered as one family in the boat with Christ,  
strengthened by His Word and nourished by His Body,  
we dare to say:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every storm,  
and grant peace in our days.  
In your mercy calm our troubled hearts,  
that we may trust in your providence  
and await with joyful hope  
the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you stood among your disciples with a calm stronger than  
the waves. Look not on our fears but on our faith,  
and grant your Church the peace  
that only your Heart can give.  
You who live and reign forever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who stands with us in every storm.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

In the quiet of this moment, listen again to the voice of  
Jesus: "Do not be afraid. I am here."  
Let these words settle in your heart  
like calm upon a stormy sea.  
Let His presence become your peace,  
His strength your courage, His love your security.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord God, you have fed us with the Bread of peace  
and strengthened us with the presence of your Son.  
Through the example and prayers of St. John Bosco,  
help us to be signs of calm and hope  
to those who struggle, suffer, or doubt.  
May our lives reveal the gentle power of your love.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who calmed the storm  
strengthen your hearts and keep you in His peace. **Amen.**

May Christ, who walked with His disciples in fear,  
walk beside you in every trial of life. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit, who inspired St. John Bosco  
to guide the young with courage and compassion,  
guide you in every good work. **Amen.**

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

## DISMISSAL

Go forth with the peace of Christ.  
Bring calm where there is fear,  
light where there is confusion,  
and hope where hearts are troubled.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“No storm is stronger than the One who travels with you.”