

5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR A

Is 68,7-10; 1 Cor 2,1-5; Mt 5, 13-16

“You Are the Salt of the Earth, You Are the Light of the World.”

INTRODUCTION

I'd like to begin our worship today with a simple picture from everyday life.

Imagine you walk into your kitchen late at night, hungry and tired. You prepare a simple bowl of soup. You taste it... bland. Lifeless. Then you add just a pinch of salt — only a pinch — and suddenly the whole bowl comes alive with flavour. One tiny ingredient transforms the entire dish.

And then think of a dark street on a cloudy night. No moon, no stars. You can't even see the path. Then someone, somewhere far away, lights a small lamp. Not a floodlight, not a torch — just a tiny lamp. But that faint glow becomes the guide that helps you find your way home.

Salt and Light — two ordinary things with extraordinary power.

Jesus tells us today: “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.”

Today, as we gather for this Eucharist, we ask God to help us become exactly what Jesus calls us to be: people who preserve goodness, who bring flavour to life, who shine so that others may see the path that leads to Him.

PENITENTIAL ACT

To be salt and light means to live with sincerity, compassion, and courage. But often our salt loses its taste, and our light grows dim. Let us acknowledge our failures and ask the Lord for mercy.

Lord Jesus,

You call us to preserve goodness in the world.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus,

You ask us to shine with the light of your love.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,

You strengthen what is weak and restore what is fading.

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, renew the flavour of grace within us, rekindle the light of His love upon us, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Having been forgiven,
let us lift our hearts in praise to the God
whose light rescues us from darkness
and whose love seasons our lives with joy.

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

O God of radiant light and everlasting goodness,
You have called us to be salt for the earth
and light for the world. Strengthen our witness,
so that what we say may preserve hope,
what we do may reveal Your compassion,
and who we are may shine with the brightness of Christ.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.....,
God, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREDO

We profess the faith that enlightens our path
and keeps the flavour of hope alive in us.
Let us proclaim the Creed.

HOMILY: Matthew 5:14–16 – Salt and Light of the World

1. Introduction: The Power of Salt

I want to start today with a small story.
Imagine walking into your kitchen late at night, preparing a simple meal. You add a pinch of salt to your soup, taste it, and... something amazing happens. That bland, tasteless soup suddenly bursts with flavour. It transforms a simple dish into something nourishing and delightful.

Now, think bigger. Imagine a world without salt. Food would spoil faster, meals would be dull and uninviting, and life itself would feel a little more ordinary, a little less vibrant. That's exactly what Jesus is talking about when He calls us the salt of the earth.

Salt preserves, it enhances, it gives life to the ordinary. And just like that pinch of salt changes the soup, our lives—our

actions, our words, our faith—have the power to preserve goodness, add flavour, and make life more meaningful for those around us.

2. Jesus' Teaching on Salt

Jesus begins this part of the Sermon on the Mount with two striking images. First, He calls us the salt of the earth. Salt in the ancient world was priceless. It preserved food, it brought out flavour, it protected against decay. That's exactly what He calls us to be in the world—preservers of goodness, agents of flavour and life in a society that can easily become bland, corrupt, or decayed.

Imagine a meal without salt—it's tasteless, incomplete. That's what the world becomes without the faithful witness of Christians. And just as salt works quietly yet powerfully, so too does our influence in the world. Even small gestures of love, truth, and integrity—like that boy's tiny lamp—can preserve goodness and make life richer for those around us.

3. Transition to Light

And then Jesus continues: "*You are the light of the world.*"

There was a little boy living in a village with no streetlights. Every evening, his family lit a tiny lamp outside their home. One night, a traveller got lost on the twisting paths of the village. He could barely see anything in the dark. Then, he spotted the boy's little lamp flickering in the distance. That small light guided him safely to the boy's home. Later, the traveller said, "*That little light saved me tonight.*"

Light, unlike salt, is visible to everyone. It guides, warns, and draws people. Salt works quietly; light shines boldly.

Together, salt and light describe our calling fully: we are to preserve goodness and illuminate the way, to flavor life with God's love and shine so others can see the path to Him.

4. Light Belongs to Jesus First

Friends, today Jesus tells us something very similar: "*You are the light of the world.*"

At first, it sounds simple, almost ordinary. But if we stop and reflect, it's astonishing. In the New Testament, the title *"Light of the World"* belongs first and foremost to Jesus. He says in John's Gospel: *"I am the Light of the World. I have come as light into the world."*

Even Mary and Joseph heard this when they presented the infant Jesus in the Temple. Simeon held the child and proclaimed: *"A light for revelation to the Gentiles."* Even John the Baptist, one of the greatest prophets, was clear: *"He was not the light; he came only to bear witness to the light."*

And now Jesus turns to us and says: *"You are the light of the world."*

Think about that. It's not just a nice thought. It's our calling, our responsibility, and our dignity all at once.

5. Our Calling as Light

St. Paul helps us see what that looks like in everyday life.

In Philippians 2, he writes:

"Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you

may be blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a twisted and corrupt generation, among whom you shine like lights in the universe."

Think of sailors in ancient times. When they were at sea, the stars were their guide. Without them, they were lost. Paul is saying that we, too, are meant to be those guiding stars in the world—points of reference in a confusing and directionless time. People should be able to look at our lives and say: *"This is how God's love works. This is the path to hope and peace."*

And how much confusion there is today! So many people feel lost, uncertain which way to go. And God entrusts us with this beautiful responsibility: be the guiding lights.

6. Modern Illustration of Guidance

Let me give you a modern example. Imagine a city at night with roadworks. Long chains of warning lights guide drivers safely through dangerous detours. They warn: *"Slow down. Pay attention. Go this way, not that way."*

That is exactly our role as Christians. Through our actions,

our words, our lives, we are guiding lights. We say: “*If you continue down this path, it will lead to harm. But there is another way—God’s way.*”

Jesus’ call is both practical and joyful. But some Christians live their faith like a tiny flickering lamp. Always complaining: “*Do we really have to go to church?*” “*Do we really have to pray?*” That kind of light barely shines.

7. Shining Brightly in God’s Presence

Jesus calls us to shine brightly. To warm hearts, to give joy, to attract others to God.

Think of Moses. When he entered the Tent of Meeting, he encountered God. When he came out, his face shone so brightly that the people could hardly look at him. That radiance came from his encounter with God. And that’s exactly what Jesus wants for us. Our light comes not from ourselves, but from being in God’s presence.

And sometimes, our light fades. Many of us have seen those old bedside clocks with glowing numbers. At night, they shine brightly. But after a few hours, the glow fades. How do we bring it back? We switch on a light nearby for a

moment, and the numbers glow again.

It’s the same for us. If your light has grown dim, if your faith feels weak or tired, turn toward God. Spend time in His presence. Let Him shine on you. Your glow will return, and your joy will be restored.

8. Closing Story: Small Acts Make a Difference

I want to finish with a story about a young woman volunteering at a children’s hospital. She had nothing but her smile and gentle words. But she brought hope to children who were scared and in pain. One child later said: “*Your smile helped me feel safe when everything else was scary.*”

That is what Jesus asks of us: to shine, to illuminate even the smallest corners of the world with God’s love.

9. Call to Action

Jesus says: “*You are the light of the world.*” Not sometimes. Not only on special occasions. Always. Shine with love. Shine with joy. Shine with courage. Shine with faith. Let people see God through your life.

And remember, even the smallest light—or the smallest pinch of salt—can make a difference. Even your small acts of love, your small gestures of kindness, can be life-changing. So today, let us go out and be salt and light in the world. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we bring these gifts of bread and wine to the altar,
let us also bring the humble desire to become
salt that renews the earth and light that reveals God's love.
Let us now pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to
God the Father almighty.

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

Lord our God, In these simple gifts of bread and wine
You transform the ordinary into the sacred.
Make our lives likewise a holy offering:
seasoned with compassion, bright with faith,
and poured out in service for others.
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, source of every light
and giver of every good gift.

You formed the world with wisdom
and filled it with beauty.

You scattered the stars as lanterns across the night,
and You filled the earth with treasures
that sustain life and bring joy.

Yet in the fullness of time
You gave us a greater light:
Your Son, Jesus Christ,
the brightness of Your glory
and the flavour of Your love made flesh.
Through Him You call us to become
what He Himself is —
light for the world and salt for the earth —

a people who shine with hope
and preserve what is good.

And so, with angels and archangels,
with all the saints who reflect Your splendour,
we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

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

*(Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation
only: Father of lights,*

*You gather us around this altar
to rekindle in us the flame of discipleship.*

*As salt preserves what is precious
and light reveals what is hidden,
make our hearts ready to receive the gift
that transforms ordinary lives
into radiant witnesses of Your love.*

**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.

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

*Lord, as we remember the saving work of Christ
and await His return in glory,
renew in us the courage
to be what He calls us to be:
a people whose faith adds flavour to the world
and whose charity shines brightly
amid the shadows of our time.
Strengthen our witness,
so that all may taste and see
the goodness of the Lord).*

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 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 LORD'S PRAYER

United in faith and illumined by Christ's light,
let us pray with confidence to the Father
whose love seasons our lives
with mercy and joy.

EMBOLISM (Salt & Light)

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and preserve in us the flavour of Your grace.
Keep our hearts from growing dull
and our witness from losing its brightness.
Grant that, enlightened by Your Son
and seasoned with Your love,
we may shine with hope
and walk safely through the shadows of this world,
as we await the blessed coming
of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE (Salt & Light)

Lord Jesus Christ,
You are the Light that no darkness can overcome
and the Covenant that never loses its taste.
Look not on our sins but on the faith of Your Church;
strengthen what is fragile,
brighten what has grown dim,
and unite Your people in peace.
Grant us a peace that illuminates our homes,
heals wounded hearts,
and sends us forth as signs of Your Kingdom,
You who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
the true Light who scatters all darkness,
the Bread who strengthens our weakness,
the Lord who makes us salt and light for the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

Lord Jesus,
You have fed us with Your Body
and brightened our hearts with Your presence.
Let Your light remain in us,
and let the flavour of Your love
permeate our thoughts,
our words, and our deeds.
Make us gentle lights for the lost,
quiet strength for the weary,
and humble witnesses of Your mercy. Amen.

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

Radiant God,
You have renewed us with the Bread of Life
and strengthened us with the light of Your grace.
Grant that, having shared this holy meal,
our lives may shine with Your goodness
and preserve hope in all whom we meet.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who is Light from Light
shine upon your hearts
and drive all darkness away. Amen.

May Christ, the true Salt of the covenant,
enrich your lives
with His wisdom and peace. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit make your witness strong,
your compassion gentle,
and your joy radiant before the world. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth, seasoning the world with God's goodness,
and shining with the light of Christ.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Even a small pinch of love
and a small spark of faith
can change someone’s life.”

Monday of the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time –

9 February 2026

1 Kings 8:1–7, 9–13; Mark 6:53–56

Theme: God's dwelling among us – healing through contact with Christ

INTRODUCTION

A pilgrim once travelled a long distance to visit a famous shrine. When he finally arrived, tired and worn, he sat quietly at the back of the church. Later he said, *“I did not see anything spectacular, but I felt that God was near.”*

People have always searched for places where they can meet God. King Solomon believed such a place was the Temple in Jerusalem, where the Ark of the Covenant rested. In the Gospel today, people recognise that God is near not in a building, but in a person — Jesus. They hurry to him, touch him, and are healed.

Today, we gather in this sacred place not as tourists, but as pilgrims. We come with our wounds, our hopes, and our longing for healing. Let us begin this Eucharist by asking the Lord for mercy.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus,
you are the dwelling place of God among us.
Lord, have mercy.

You allow yourself to be touched
by the wounded and the broken.
Christ, have mercy.

You invite us to bring our weakness
and our need before you. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God of compassion,
who dwells among his people
and heals the broken-hearted,
forgive us our sins, restore us in hope,
and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

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

Almighty God,
we profess that our Redeemer
is with you in glory.

Hear our prayer
and let us experience
that he remains with us every day
until the end of the world,
as he has promised.

He lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY

A nurse once said, “*Sometimes healing begins the moment a patient realises they are not alone.*” That simple truth captures the heart of today’s readings.

In the first reading, Solomon brings the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple. The people rejoice, yet Solomon

speaks of darkness — a reminder that God is present, even when unseen. God cannot be confined, yet he chooses to dwell among his people.

In the Gospel, there is no Temple ceremony. Instead, there is urgency. People hurry through villages and countryside. They bring the sick on stretchers. They ask only to touch the fringe of Jesus’ cloak — and that is enough.

Saint Josephine Bakhita, whom we remember today, knew deep wounds: slavery, humiliation, cruelty. Yet she allowed herself to be touched by Christ crucified. From that encounter came healing, dignity, and forgiveness. She once said of her captors, “*If I were to meet them again, I would kneel and kiss their hands.*” That is the power of Christ’s healing presence.

We, too, are pilgrims. Every Mass is a small pilgrimage. We come with our hidden wounds — physical, emotional, spiritual. Sometimes faith feels dark, God feels distant. Yet today’s Word assures us: God dwells even in the darkness.

The mission of the Church — and of each of us — is to make contact possible: to bring the sick, the broken, the tired, and sometimes simply to bring ourselves.

A child once asked his grandmother, “*Where does God live?*” She answered, “*God lives wherever someone opens the door.*”

Today, Christ passes by. May we not stand at a distance. May we reach out — even timidly — and allow ourselves to be healed.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As pilgrims on our journey toward the heavenly Jerusalem, let us place on this altar our lives, our wounds, and our longing for healing. Pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

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

Lord God, accept these gifts as signs of our trust in your healing presence. As we offer bread and wine, receive also our brokenness and transform it by your grace 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.

For though no building can contain your glory, you chose to dwell among your people, and in your Son Jesus Christ you made yourself present in a new and living way.

In him, the sick found healing, the broken found hope, and the weary found rest.

Even when hidden from our eyes, you remain near, touching us with mercy and compassion.

And so, with pilgrims of every age and with all the saints, we sing the hymn of your glory:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text remains unchanged)

(Insertion before the Epiclesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Lord,
as we journey toward you,
we ask you to gather our scattered lives,
our hidden wounds, and our silent hopes.
Let this Eucharist become
a point of contact with your healing presence,
as real and life-giving
as the touch of your Son's garment.

(Then continue with the original Epiclesis text unchanged)

(Insertion after the anamnesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Remember, Lord,
your people who still hurry toward you today:
the sick, the lonely, the discouraged,
and all who long for healing in body, mind, or spirit.

May this sacrament strengthen us
to bring others to you
and to reveal your dwelling among us.

(Then continue with the original prayer unchanged)

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

As pilgrims who trust in the nearness of God
and as children who depend on his mercy,
let us pray with confidence:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the darkness
that makes us feel alone or forgotten.
Grant peace in our days, that, helped by your mercy,
we may always trust in your presence
and journey in hope toward the fullness of your Kingdom,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus,
you brought healing wherever you went
and peace to all who touched you.
Look not on our sins,
but on the faith of your people,
and grant us the peace
that flows from your living presence,
who live and reign for ever and ever.
Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who allows himself to be touched
so that we may be healed.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,
we have touched you
and you have touched us.
Remain with us in our weakness,
heal what is wounded,
and make us living temples
of your presence.

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

Lord God,
you have nourished us
with the bread of healing and hope.
Strengthen us on our pilgrimage
and help us to reveal your presence
to all we meet,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who dwells among his people walk with you on your journey.

May Christ touch your wounds and heal you.

May the Holy Spirit guide you in hope and peace.

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

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, bringing Christ's healing presence to the world.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Every Mass is a pilgrimage.

Every prayer is a reaching out.

Even the smallest touch of faith can open the door to healing.

10 February 2026 - Tuesday of the 5th Week in Ordinary Time

Memorial of Saint Scholastica

1 Kings 8:22–23, 27–30; Mark 7:1–13

INTRODUCTION

Once, an elderly monk was asked what had kept him faithful through more than sixty years in the monastery. He smiled and said, *"I never got used to God."*

He explained: *"The day God becomes familiar, faith becomes routine. But when I remain amazed that God still speaks to me, still feeds me, still waits for me—then prayer stays alive."*

Today's readings speak exactly to this danger and this grace. Solomon stands before the newly built Temple and dares to ask: *Can God really dwell among us?* And Jesus warns us in the Gospel about a faith that keeps the rules but forgets the heart.

Today we also remember Saint Scholastica, sister of Saint Benedict—a woman known not for many words or great

deeds, but for her deep closeness to God. She lived faith not as habit, but as relationship.

As brothers and sisters in faith, let us come before the Lord with renewed wonder, grateful that the God who cannot be contained by heaven chooses to dwell among us.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Let us now acknowledge before God and one another the times when faith has become routine, when we have honoured forms but forgotten love.

Kyrie

- Lord Jesus Christ, you came among us as our brother. Lord, have mercy.
- You call all who belong to you sisters and brothers. Christ, have mercy.
- You show us the way to the Father with a heart full of mercy. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God of mercy,
who looks not at outward appearances but at the heart,
forgive us our sins,
renew our joy in his presence,
and lead us from empty routine
into a living and faithful relationship,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

Holy God,
you are greater than all we can imagine:
the heavens cannot contain you,
and yet you choose to be close to us.
Grant that we may stand before you with reverence,
serve you with sincere hearts,
and find our joy not in appearances,
but in your living presence.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

HOMILY

At wedding anniversary celebrations, I sometimes invite couples to say aloud to one another:

“What a loving person you are, walking with me through life.”

“What a faithful and wonderful companion you are to me.”

These words are never automatic. They are always a rediscovery. Love fades not because it ends, but because it is taken for granted.

The same can happen in our relationship with God.

Solomon, standing before the Temple, is overwhelmed with wonder: *“Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you!”* He knows that God is not captured by buildings, rituals, or symbols. And yet—this great God listens. This great God turns toward his people.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks with passion because he sees faith losing its heart. Traditions meant to protect life have become burdens. Rules meant to guide people have

begun to replace compassion. Jesus is not attacking tradition itself—he is defending the human person.

Saint Scholastica understood this well. Her holiness did not consist in rigid observance, but in deep listening, shared prayer, and trust in God. Her famous final meeting with her brother Benedict reminds us: love and prayer always have priority over schedule and structure.

Faith flourishes where relationship comes first—with God and with one another.

A young man once said after years away from church: *“What brought me back wasn’t a rule. It was the feeling that God still wanted me.”*

That is the wonder we are invited to recover today: that God still speaks, still welcomes, still feeds us. When faith becomes relationship again, worship comes alive.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Trusting not in outward appearances but in God's mercy, let us place our lives and our gifts upon the altar. Pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
receive these gifts
as signs of our desire to worship you in spirit and in truth.
May this Eucharist renew our wonder at your presence
and teach us to serve you with sincere hearts,
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.

For though the heavens cannot contain you,
you choose to dwell among your people.
You speak to us in your Word,
you nourish us in the Bread of Life,
and you call us not to empty observance
but to a living relationship with you.

In Jesus Christ, your Son,
you have shown us that true worship
flows from the heart
and that love is the fulfilment of every commandment.

And so, with angels and saints,
and with Saint Scholastica,
we proclaim your glory, saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text remains unchanged)

(Insertion before the Epiclesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Lord, as we prepare to call upon your Spirit,
we remember that you are greater than all we can imagine,
yet nearer to us than our own hearts.
Send your Spirit upon these gifts and upon us your people,
that our worship may be sincere and our lives transformed
by your love.

(Epiclesis – unchanged)

(Insertion after the anamnesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Remembering the death and resurrection of your Son,
we thank you that you do not dwell in temples made by
hands alone, but in hearts open to your Word.

Renew in us the wonder of faith, that this sacrifice may
bear fruit in compassion, humility, and faithful love.

(Rest of Eucharistic Prayer II unchanged)

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With the trust of children
and the confidence of sisters and brothers,
let us pray to the Father who desires not appearances, but
hearts.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil,
especially from a faith that grows cold through habit.
Grant peace in our days, that renewed by your mercy
we may live with joy, sincerity, and hope
as we await the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you came to restore what truly matters.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church.
Free us from division and hardness of heart,
and grant us the peace
that flows from truth, justice, and love,
for 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.
Happy are those invited
not to empty ritual,
but to the living presence of the Lord.

Short Meditation after Communion

God whom the heavens cannot contain
has chosen to dwell within us.
Let us rest for a moment
in silent wonder and gratitude.

Post-Communion Prayer

Lord God,
you have nourished us with the Bread of Life.
May this sacrament deepen our relationship with you
and teach us to honour your Word
above all human tradition,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The God whom the heavens cannot contain
has placed himself into our hands
and entrusted himself to our hearts.
Not as an idea, not as a rule, but as living presence.
In this quiet moment,
let us lay down all habit and familiarity
and allow ourselves to be amazed again:
that God still desires our closeness,
still waits for our response,
still chooses to dwell within us.

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

Lord God, you have nourished us with the Bread of Life,
the presence of your Son
who teaches us what truly matters.
Let this sacrament
free us from a faith that lives only on the surface.
May your Word take root in our hearts,

your love shape our choices, and our lives give witness to a relationship renewed each day in wonder and trust. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who is greater than all we can imagine fill you with wonder and reverence.

May Christ teach you to choose love over appearance.

May the Holy Spirit renew your faith each day.

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

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace,
to live your faith with sincerity and joy.

Thanks be to God.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Never get used to God.
Wonder keeps faith alive.

11 February 2026 – Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes

Wednesday of the 5th Week in Ordinary Time

Readings: 1 Kings 10:1–10; Mark 7:14–23

INTRODUCTION

On a cold February morning in 1858, a poor, sickly, uneducated girl stood quietly before a dark, damp grotto in Lourdes. Bernadette Soubirous had no power, no influence, no learning. Yet in the silence of Massabielle, she heard what others could not hear and saw what others could not see. Why? Because her heart was simple, open, and attentive.

Today, Jesus gathers us as he once gathered the crowds, not to speak about what is merely external, but about what lies within us. On this Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes, Mary teaches us again what Bernadette learned: God speaks to hearts that are uncluttered, humble, and listening. Leaving behind the noise of the world, the burden of appearances, and the masks we wear, let us come before the Lord with trusting hearts, confident that he

desires to heal us, cleanse us, and draw us closer to himself.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus,
you look not at appearances but at the heart:
Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus,
you heal what is wounded within us: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,
you call us to purity of heart and sincerity of life:
Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,
who sees the depths of our hearts
and desires our healing and salvation,
have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
cleanse us from all that is false and unloving,
and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

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

O God, who chose the humble Virgin Mary to reveal your mercy at Lourdes and to lead countless hearts back to your Son, grant us purity of heart and simplicity of faith, that, cleansed within and renewed by your grace, we may listen attentively to your Word and bear witness to your healing love. 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

When the Queen of Sheba finally stood before King Solomon, Scripture says that she was almost breathless with wonder. What she had heard was already astonishing—but what she saw exceeded everything. And remarkably, she did not praise Solomon first; she praised the Lord, the giver of wisdom and blessing.

At Lourdes, something similar happened. Millions came seeking miracles, signs, and healing. Yet Mary did not point to herself. She did not perform wonders. She simply directed hearts toward God—toward repentance, prayer, and trust.

In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds us of a hard but liberating truth: evil does not come from outside us. It rises from within—from hearts that are distracted, hardened, or self-centered. Healing, therefore, must begin not with appearances, but with conversion of the heart.

Mary at Lourdes invites us to the same inner journey. The water of Lourdes does not magically replace faith—it awakens it. The grotto does not distract from Christ—it leads to him. The true miracle is not always physical healing, but a heart that begins again.

Many pilgrims who leave Lourdes say something surprising: *"I did not receive what I asked for—but I received what I needed."*

They return home changed, gentler, more patient, more forgiving.

Perhaps that is the greatest Lourdes miracle:
a heart cleansed,
a heart softened,
a heart made ready for God.

May Mary, Our Lady of Lourdes, teach us to listen deeply, to trust humbly, and to allow God to heal us—starting from within.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Trusting in Mary's intercession and confident in God's healing love, let us present our offerings and ourselves to the Lord. Pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

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

Lord God, as we offer these gifts at your altar,
purify our hearts and accept our humble trust,

as you once accepted the faith of Bernadette
and the devotion of countless pilgrims at Lourdes.
May this sacrifice bring healing, peace,
and renewed hope to your people.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**PREFACE (Our Lady of Lourdes) - (Adapted to the feast
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.

For in the Blessed Virgin Mary,
you have given your Church a sign of hope and healing.
At Lourdes, you revealed your mercy
to the humble and the poor of heart,
and through Mary you continue to call all people
to prayer, conversion, and trust in your saving love.

She points us always to Christ,
the healer of body and soul,

who cleanses hearts and restores dignity,
and through whom you pour out life in abundance.
And so, with angels and saints,
and with all who have found comfort and renewal through
her intercession,
we sing the hymn of your glory:
Holy, Holy, Holy...

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text remains unchanged)

*(Insertion before the Epiclesis - Adapted to the readings of
the day for personal meditation only)*

Merciful Father,
on this Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes,
we remember all who seek healing of body, mind, and
heart.
As your Spirit is about to be invoked upon these gifts,
we place before you the sick, the weary, the broken,
and all who long for inner renewal.

May your Spirit descend also upon us,
cleansing our hearts and restoring our hope.

(Continue with the original text of Eucharistic Prayer II)

*(Insertion after the anamnesis - Adapted to the readings of
the day for personal meditation only)*

Remembering the saving death and resurrection of your
Son,
we entrust to you all who have come to Lourdes in faith
and all who, wherever they are, cry out for healing and
peace.

Through the intercession of Mary,
grant us hearts purified by grace
and lives that reflect your compassion and mercy.

(Continue with the original text of Eucharistic Prayer II)

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

As children who trust in a loving Father
and as pilgrims guided by Mary's faith,
let us pray with confidence:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the hardness of heart
that blinds us to your presence and your mercy.
Grant peace in our days,
that, helped by the intercession of the Virgin Mary,
Our Lady of Lourdes,
we may be free from sin and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you healed the sick, comforted the broken,
and restored peace to troubled hearts.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and grant us the peace that comes
from hearts reconciled and renewed,
where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those whose hearts are open to his healing and saving presence.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

In this quiet moment,
let us allow the Lord to touch what lies deepest within us.
Like Bernadette before the grotto,
we need no many words—only trust.
May the grace we have received
become a spring of living water
flowing from our hearts into our daily lives.

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

Lord God, renewed by this sacrament of salvation,
we thank you for the healing presence of your Son.
Through the intercession of the Virgin Mary of Lourdes,
strengthen our faith, purify our hearts,
and make us instruments of your compassion in the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God the Father bless you
and draw your heart ever closer to himself. Amen.

May Christ the Lord heal what is wounded within you
and fill you with his peace. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit renew you interiorly
and guide you in purity of heart. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace,
with hearts cleansed and renewed,
to love and serve the Lord.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The greatest healing God desires is not only of the body,
but of the heart.

Listen deeply—and let him begin there.

12 February 2026 – Thursday of the Fifth Week in

Ordinary Time - 1 Kings 11:4–13; Mark 7:24–30

Theme: What truly matters to me? Persistent faith that crosses boundaries

INTRODUCTION

A mother once stood at the door of a hospital ward long after visiting hours were over. The nurse gently reminded her, “You must go now.” The mother replied quietly, “I will go—only after I know my child is safe.”

Nothing mattered more to her than the life of her child.

Today’s Gospel presents such a mother: a woman who crosses borders—geographical, religious, and emotional—to reach Jesus. She refuses to be discouraged. In contrast, the first reading shows King Solomon, who had everything, yet slowly allowed his heart to drift away from what truly mattered.

As we gather for this Eucharist, we ask ourselves honestly: What truly matters to me? What am I willing to hold on to with faith—and what have I slowly allowed to replace God in my heart?

PENITENTIAL ACT

Brothers and sisters, aware that our hearts are often divided, let us ask the Lord for mercy and healing.

- Lord Jesus Christ, you proclaim God’s mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus Christ, you proclaim God’s goodness.
Christ, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus Christ, you proclaim God’s faithful love.
Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
heal our divided hearts,
and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

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

God and Father,
you unite peoples of every nation in the confession of your name.
Purify our hearts from all that draws us away from you,

and grant that we who have been reborn in Baptism

may be one in faith and rich in works of love.

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

A traveller once asked a wise monk, “What is the greatest danger in the spiritual life?” The monk thought for a moment and replied, “Not that God leaves us—but that we slowly replace him.”

That simple answer helps us understand today’s readings. Solomon did not suddenly reject God. He did not wake up one morning and decide to abandon the Lord. It happened quietly, gradually. Out of convenience, out of relationships, out of compromise, other gods found space in his heart.

What once mattered most slowly lost its centre.

The contrast of the readings

In the Gospel, we meet a striking contrast: a woman who has nothing by religious standards—no status, no privilege, no claim—yet she possesses one thing that matters above

everything else: a stubborn, courageous trust in Jesus. Her daughter is suffering, and she refuses to walk away.

Jesus’ response sounds harsh at first. His silence and his words test her faith. But this woman does not retreat in resentment or disappointment. She stays. She listens. She answers back—not with anger, but with humility and hope. Her prayer is not polished; it is persistent.

What prayer really is

This Gospel gently corrects a misunderstanding we often carry. Prayer is not a vending machine. We do not insert requests and expect immediate results on our terms. Prayer is a relationship—and every real relationship involves trust, patience, and sometimes wrestling.

The woman teaches us that faith is not the absence of questions, nor the guarantee of instant answers. Faith is refusing to give up on God even when he seems silent or distant. It is believing that God’s mercy is larger than our expectations and that his answers may come in ways we did not plan. There is an old saying: “*The door of mercy opens not by force, but by faith.*”

The Syrophenician woman knocked—not once, but again and again. And the door opened.

As we leave this Eucharist, the question remains with us: What truly matters to me?

Like Solomon, our hearts can slowly drift. Or like this woman, we can cling to the Lord with honest, persevering faith. May we leave today choosing what truly matters—not comfort, not control, not certainty—but a living trust in the God who never turns away a sincere heart.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

With trusting hearts, like the woman in the Gospel, let us place our lives and needs upon the altar as we present these gifts to God. Pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

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

Lord God, receive the gifts we offer and purify our hearts as you sanctify these offerings. Teach us to seek you above all things and to trust your saving work in our lives.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

It is right and just.

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.

For you are a God whose mercy knows no borders. You listen to the cry of the humble and respond to faith wherever it is found.

In your Son, you draw near to the outsider, the struggling, and the persistent seeker, revealing that your love is offered to all.

Therefore, with angels and saints and with all who trust in your mercy, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim: *(Holy, Holy, Holy...)*

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text remains unchanged)

(Insertion before the Epiclesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Lord, as we prepare for your Spirit to come upon these gifts, we place before you our divided hearts, our unanswered prayers, and our persistent hopes. Like the woman who refused to turn away, we ask you to transform what we offer and to strengthen our faith in your saving presence.

(Epiclesis continues unchanged)

(Insertion after the anamnesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

As we proclaim the mystery of faith, we remember all who struggle to believe, all who wrestle with silence, and all who cling to you with fragile yet sincere trust.

Teach us to recognise your answers, even when they come in unexpected ways, and to remain faithful until we share fully in your Kingdom.

(Intercessions and remainder continue unchanged)

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting in a Father who listens even to the smallest cry of faith, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, especially from divided hearts and weakened trust. Grant us peace in our days, that, supported by your mercy, we may persevere in faith, never discouraged in prayer, and always confident in your loving care, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you welcomed the faith of the outsider and healed what was broken. Look not on our fears or hesitations, but on the faith of your Church,

and graciously grant her unity and peace
in accordance with your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who listens to the cry of every faithful heart
and takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The woman asked for crumbs and received healing.
We receive the Bread of Life itself.

May this Eucharist strengthen our trust, deepen our prayer,
and teach us to hold fast to what truly matters.

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

Lord God,
you have nourished us with the bread of heaven.
Strengthen our faith,
steady our hearts in times of trial,
and help us to trust your mercy

even when your ways surprise us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God who listens to persistent faith
strengthen your trust. Amen.
May Christ, who crossed every boundary in love,
draw you closer to the Father. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit keep your heart undivided
and your hope alive. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace,
holding fast to what truly matters.
Thanks be to God.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Faith that refuses to walk away
always finds an open door in God's heart.

13 February 2026 - Friday of the 5th Week in Ordinary Time - 1 Kings 11:29–32; 12:19; Mark 7:31–37

INTRODUCTION

There is a quiet story told of an elderly couple who had been married for more than fifty years. When asked about the secret of their long life together, the husband smiled and said, “We learned early that love is not about always agreeing, but about learning to listen.” Many arguments ended, not because one won, but because one truly heard the other.

As we gather today, we come not only to speak our prayers, but above all to listen—to God’s word, to God’s presence in bread and wine, and to one another. True communion happens when hearts are opened, when ears are unstopped, and when God’s love is allowed to pass through us into the world. Let us open ourselves now to the One who says to us again: “*Be opened.*”

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus,
you speak words of life, yet we often close our ears to your call. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus,
you open hearts to reconciliation, yet we cling to our divisions.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus,
you invite us to speak words of healing, yet our words sometimes wound.

Lord, have mercy.

PRAAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God of mercy,
who opens what is closed and heals what is wounded,
forgive us our sins,
restore our hearts,
and lead us into the freedom of his children,
through Christ our Lord.Amen.

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

God of life and light,
your word brings healing to what is broken
and unity to what is divided.
Open our ears to hear your voice,
soften our hearts to receive your truth,
and shape our words to serve peace and reconciliation.
Through Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY

A teacher once noticed that one of her students never answered questions in class. When she finally spoke with him privately, she discovered that the boy could hear the teacher's voice—but not clearly. He had learned to sit quietly rather than risk misunderstanding. Only after his hearing difficulty was addressed did his confidence return, and with it, his voice.

In today's readings, we encounter both division and healing. The First Book of Kings speaks of a kingdom torn apart by ambition and power. Where listening fails, unity collapses. Where hearts close, relationships fracture. The Gospel shows us another path. A man who cannot hear and cannot speak is brought to Jesus. He does not heal him publicly or hastily. Jesus takes him aside, touches him, looks to heaven, and speaks a single word: "*Ephphatha—Be opened.*" The ears open, and only then does the tongue speak clearly.

This order matters. Hearing comes before speaking. Listening comes before witness. In baptism, the Church repeats this same gesture and prayer, reminding us that faith is first received before it is proclaimed. We live in a noisy world, full of words and opinions, yet often poor in listening. When we stop listening—to God, to one another—we become spiritually deaf. But when Christ touches our lives again, our ears are opened, and our words can once more bring life.

A hospital chaplain once said that the most healing thing

he could offer dying patients was not answers, but presence—quiet, attentive listening. Many said afterward, “Thank you for hearing me.”

That is what Christ does today. He listens to human suffering, and by opening ears, he restores communion. May we leave this Eucharist a little less deaf to God's voice, a little more attentive to one another, and ready to speak words that heal rather than divide.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Brothers and sisters, let us place on this altar not only bread and wine, but also our desire to listen more deeply and to become instruments of reconciliation.

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

God of communion, accept these gifts and transform them into the sacrament of your presence. As you open our ears to your word, open our lives to your peace, so that what we celebrate here may bear fruit in love and service. 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.
For through your Son
you draw near to every human weakness.
He listens to the cry of the poor,
touches what is wounded,
and opens what is closed.
In him the deaf hear, the broken find their voice,
and divided hearts are restored to communion.
Therefore, with angels and saints
and all the hosts of heaven, we proclaim your glory
and sing with joy: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text unchanged)

(Insertion before the Epiclesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

As we call upon your Spirit, O Father,
we remember the healing touch of your Son,
who opened ears and hearts
and gathered strangers into one people.

May this same Spirit open us now
to receive Christ fully and faithfully.

(Epiclesis – unchanged)

(Institution Narrative – unchanged)

(Anamnesis – unchanged)

(Insertion after the anamnesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Remember, Lord, your Church scattered yet called into communion. Heal our deafness to one another, unbind our tongues from fear, and make us witnesses of your reconciling love in a world longing to hear words of hope.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

As children whose ears have been opened to trust,
let us pray to our Father with confidence and humility.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil,
especially from hearts that refuse to listen
and words that divide rather than heal.

Grant peace in our days, that, freed from fear,
we may serve you with attentive hearts
and joyful voices,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you spoke peace into troubled hearts
and opened what was closed.

Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her unity and peace
in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who opens ears and hearts,
who heals division and restores communion.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

As we receive the Body of Christ,
let us ask for the grace
to hear God's word more clearly
and to become living voices of his mercy
in the world.

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

God of healing and peace,
you have nourished us with the Bread of Life.
May this sacrament open our hearts,
guide our words, and strengthen us to live
what we have received.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God,
who opens what is closed,
give you attentive hearts and listening ears. Amen.
May Christ,
who touched the wounded and restored communion,
make your words instruments of healing. Amen.
May the Holy Spirit,
who binds the Church into one body,
lead you in peace and reconciliation. Amen.
And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, listening to God's word
and speaking it with love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Before we speak for God, we must learn to listen to him.
Opened ears lead to healing words—and true communion.

14 February 2026 – Saturday of the 5th Week in

Ordinary Time

Feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius

1 Kings 12:26–32; 13:33–34 · Mark 8:1–10

INTRODUCTION

A traveller once arrived in a foreign land where he did not know the language. Hungry and tired, he entered a small village. He pointed to his mouth, hoping someone would understand. An old woman smiled, disappeared into her house, and returned with bread. No words were exchanged—but communion happened.

Saints Cyril and Methodius knew this truth well. When they went to the Slavic peoples, they did not ask, “*What will Rome think?*” or “*What will the powerful say?*” They asked instead: “*How can these people hear God speak in their own language?*” And so they gave them an alphabet, translated the Scriptures, and fed their hunger for God.

Today’s readings confront us with a crucial question: Whose voice do we follow?

King Jeroboam followed fear and public opinion—and led

people astray.

Jesus followed compassion—and fed a hungry crowd in the wilderness.

As we gather for this Eucharist, we bring our own hungers—physical, emotional, spiritual. Like the crowd in the Gospel, we have come a long way. Let us place what little we have into the Lord’s hands and ask for his mercy.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus Christ,

you are the Bread that has come down from heaven to give life to the world.

Lord, have mercy.

You are the Living Water who quenches the deepest thirst of the human heart.

Christ, have mercy.

You have come so that we may have life, and have it in abundance.

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins, heal the hungers of our hearts,
and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

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

Eternal God,
you gathered Saints Cyril and Methodius
and sent them to proclaim your Gospel
in a language people could understand
and in a love people could receive.

As you speak to us today
and nourish us with the Bread of Life,
make us capable of passing on
what we ourselves have received.
Grant that our words and actions
may satisfy the hunger of those we meet.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit...Amen.

HOMILY

A missionary once said: “The Gospel travels fastest on the road of compassion.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus notices something others might have ignored: *“They have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat.”*

Before teaching, before preaching, before correcting—he sees hunger.

The disciples ask a desperate question: *“Where could anyone get bread to feed these people in a deserted place?”*

Jesus asks a hopeful one:
“How many loaves do you have?”

That difference changes everything.

The first reading shows us the danger of asking the wrong questions. King Jeroboam worries about losing power and public opinion. So he invents false worship—and leads a nation into spiritual famine.

Saints Cyril and Methodius asked a different question:

“How can Christ be truly heard here?”

Their answer fed generations.

Jesus still asks us today:

“What do you have?”

Not: *What don’t you have?*

Not: *What can’t you do?*

A little bread placed in his hands becomes abundance.

There is a beautiful detail at the end of the Gospel:

“They picked up seven baskets of leftovers.”

God is never stingy.

Someone once said after Communion,

“I came to Mass empty—but I leave with more than I can carry.”

That is the miracle we celebrate here.

May we, like Cyril and Methodius,

carry that abundance into the languages of kindness,
service, and courage—
so that others, too, may be fed.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

From the little we bring, you prepare a feast.

Let us now place our gifts on the altar
and ask the Lord to multiply them
for the life of the world. Pray that our sacrifice may be
acceptable to God the Father almighty.

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

Lord God, accept these gifts we offer
in memory of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

As you once transformed their humble efforts
into nourishment for nations,
transform this bread and wine
into the sacrament of salvation,
and make us 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, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you called Saints Cyril and Methodius to proclaim the Gospel beyond borders, to honour cultures without fear, and to make your saving word understood by every people.

Through their witness you teach us that your Word must be broken like bread and shared with love, so that no one may hunger for truth or hope.

And so, with angels and saints, with every language and nation, we proclaim your glory, as we sing: *Holy, Holy, Holy...*

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text unchanged)

(Insertion before the Epiclesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

Before we ask the Spirit to come upon these gifts, we remember all who hunger— for bread, for dignity, for meaning, for peace. Like the disciples, we bring what little we have, trusting that the Spirit of God can make it enough for many.

(Epiclesis – original text unchanged)

(Institution Narrative – unchanged)

(Anamnesis – unchanged)

(Insertion after the anamnesis - Adapted to the readings of the day for personal meditation only)

As we proclaim the mystery of faith, we remember Saints Cyril and Methodius and all who carried this mystery

into unfamiliar lands and languages.

May this Eucharist strengthen us
to become living signs of Christ's compassion
in our own time and place.

(Remaining text unchanged)

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say the prayer
that unites all peoples
and names God as Father.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil,
especially from the fear
that makes us cling to false securities.
Grant peace in our days,
that, nourished by this Bread of Life,
we may live as courageous witnesses of your love,
awaiting the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you fed the hungry and reconciled the divided.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity,
in accordance with your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those called
to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

You have eaten the Bread of Life.
Do not keep it for yourself.
What you have received in silence,
carry into the hunger of the world.

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

God of generosity,
you have nourished us
with the Bread of heaven.
As you once strengthened Saints Cyril and Methodius
for their mission,
strengthen us to live what we have received
and to feed others with faith, hope, and love.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God, who satisfied the hunger of his people
and spoke his Word in every language,
bless you and make you a blessing.

May Christ, the Bread of Life, go before you on every road.

May the Holy Spirit give you courage
to offer what you have and trust in God's abundance.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life—
and by the bread you share.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God does not ask how much you have—
only whether you are willing to place it in his hands.