

15. February - 6th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME –

YEAR A

Sir 15,15-20; 1 Cor 2,6-10; Mt 5,17-37

INTRODUCTION

A young musician once complained that practicing scales every day was exhausting and restrictive. “These rules take away my freedom,” he said. Yet years later, standing on stage and playing with ease and joy, he realized the truth: it was those very disciplines that had given him the freedom to create beautiful music.

“Freedom” is probably not the first thing that comes to mind when we think about commandments. Very often we feel as though rules, laws, and prohibitions restrict us. And yet today’s Gospel contains many commandments as Jesus continues His Sermon on the Mount.

At the heart of it all is a greater righteousness: not a fearful and rigid keeping of rules, but—as Saint Augustine once said—doing more out of love than God strictly demands. It is about choosing what truly helps—what helps me grow, and what helps the people I meet every day.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Along with all that goes well in our lives, daily life can also be tiring and difficult: with partners and children, parents and friends, colleagues at work, and people we meet in our free time. Not everything runs smoothly.

And still, we are always invited to reach out to one another, to take a step closer, and to stand up for one another. Because even with our sincere efforts we do not always fulfil God’s will, we ask now for His mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ,

- you proclaim to us the will of the Father. You speak into our time and into our lives—clearly and without compromise. Lord, have mercy.
- you ask us not simply to follow the letter of the law. Your teaching seeks to touch our hearts, so that our whole life may be directed toward your word. Christ, have mercy.
- you call us to be reconciled with our brothers and sisters before we bring our gifts to the altar. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the almighty and merciful Lord look with compassion upon us, heal what is wounded by sin, strengthen us in faith and hope, and lead us on the path of true conversion and to everlasting life. **Amen.**

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

Good and gracious God,
we gather to remember your message and your promises.
Do not let us grow weary of trusting in your word.
Do not let us grow tired of being touched, awakened,
and challenged by your voice.
We ask this through the power of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever. Amen.

HOMILY – “The Law That Leads Us Into Life”

Many years ago, a friend told me a story from his childhood. He said, “When I was little, my mum had rules for everything: No touching the stove. No running on the

road. No teasing your little sister.

One day I asked her, ‘Mum, why do you have so many rules? Other kids don’t!’ She knelt down, looked right into my eyes, and said: ‘Because I love you too much to let you get hurt.’ Only many years later did he understand: the rules were not about control—they were about protection, dignity, and love. That is exactly where today’s Gospel wants to take us.

1. When Religion Feels Like Petty Rule-Keeping

Let us be honest: the Church has sometimes gained the reputation of moralising. It can seem that faith is a long list of “Don’t do this” and “Don’t do that.” Add to this today’s Gospel—“Your righteousness must surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees”—and it can feel suffocating.

But Jesus is not criticising corrupt people.

He is comparing His disciples with those who were already experts in keeping the law down to the tiniest detail. And here lies the danger: when rule-keeping is pushed to the extreme, people become anxious, scrupulous, or self-righteous.

So what does Jesus want that goes beyond even their rigorous effort? Not more rules, but a deeper heart.

2. What the Commandments Really Are

We must step back and ask:

Why does God give commandments at all?

From the Old Testament to Jesus, they have two purposes: **First, commandments protect life together.** They prevent chaos, injustice, and harm.

Second, they reveal God.

They show His heart:

a God who treasures every human being,
a God who safeguards their dignity,
a God who loves fiercely.

A mother's "Don't touch the stove" is not about power—it is about love. God's commandments are the same.

When we interiorise them, we begin to see with God's eyes.

3. Jesus Sharpens the Law—Not to Burden Us, but to Free Us

When Jesus says, "You have heard...., but I say to you....",

He is not replacing the law but taking us **to its core.**

The problem with the Pharisees was not their obedience but their **external** obedience. They often fulfilled the letter while ignoring human beings. So Jesus goes deeper:

- Not only "Do not kill," but "Do not wound with your words."
- Not only "Avoid adultery," but "Guard the heart where infidelity begins."
- Not only "Tell the truth under oath," but "Let your yes mean yes always."

He is not building a fence of fear—He is opening a path of freedom.

Anecdote – The Novice and the Abbot

The retired abbot of Melk Abbey once told of his days as a novice.

He complained to his spiritual director about annoying customs in the monastery.

The director simply said: "**Then do it differently.**"

In other words:

Don't live faith by minimum standards. Live it from a renewed heart.

That is exactly Jesus' message: do not ask, "How far can I go without sin?" Ask instead: "How far can love go?" This is where the commandments flourish.

4. The Gospel as a Structural Integrity Check

A friend of mine lives in a house whose oldest parts date back to the 15th century. Recently it underwent a complete structural inspection. Floors opened, beams exposed, every crack measured. It was exhausting—but necessary. A house needs stability.

The Gospel today is like a structural check for our discipleship.

Jesus asks: "What holds your life together?"

Each of us knows the moments when the structure wobbles:

- a broken relationship
- illness in the family
- unemployment

- a sense of failure
- uncertainty about vocation
- a burden that seems too heavy

In these moments, commandments are not meant to crush us but to hold us up—much like the beams of an old house. They support us, not imprison us.

5. Jesus Intends to Overwhelm Us—So We All Stand on the Same Ground

Make no mistake: Jesus' words today are overwhelming. Even the Pharisees couldn't fulfil all of this perfectly.

But here is the secret:

Jesus speaks in this radical way **to place everyone on the same level.**

None of us can boast.

None of us can say, "I have done enough."

We all need grace.

We all need His Spirit.

The law shows the direction.

Love gives the strength to walk it.

And the purpose is not to stand still, but to move forward.

Anecdote – The Hidden Beginning of Violence

A teacher once told me about a little boy in her class who repeatedly insulted another child.

When confronted, he said, “But it was just a joke!”

Yet the other child went home crying every day.

The teacher said, “Do you see? Violence begins long before fists.”

That is exactly what Jesus says: wrong begins long before it is visible.

Words can crush.

Glances can wound.

Small resentments, left unattended, become poison.

So Jesus calls us to reconciliation before we even come to the altar.

6. Jesus Was a Faithful Jew—And He Fulfilled the Law by Love

Sometimes people imagine Jesus as someone who

glossed over the Old Testament, or who preached a soft, “nice” God without demands. But Jesus was a faithful Jew who revered the Law of Moses.

He resisted any attempt to turn Him into a harmless mascot or a justification for throwing away the difficult parts of faith.

He sharpened the law not to create surveillance, but to awaken **personal responsibility**:

- I must pursue truth—not only under oath.
- I must seek reconciliation—not only when convenient.
- I must guard my heart—not only my actions.
- I must honour others—not only avoid harming them.

This is not the community policing me.

It is **Jesus trusting me** with my own conscience.

This is freedom. This is dignity.

7. The Commandments as Supports, Not Chains

The First Reading reminds us:

God never tempts us.

He always calls us toward life.

When lived in their spirit—not merely the letter—the commandments become supports that help us become salt of the earth and light of the world.

They are not a cage.

They are a compass.

And when love completes them, we begin to live differently:

- Differently toward our neighbour
- Differently toward those who hurt us
- Differently toward those who need forgiveness
- Differently toward God

Or in the words of that retreat director: **“Do it differently.”**

Closing Story – The Repaired Wall

A builder once worked on a house that had deep cracks in one of its walls. The owner said, “Just paint over it.”

But the builder replied, “If I paint over it, the crack will return. I must open the wall, repair the foundation, and strengthen the structure. Only then will it be whole.”

Brothers and sisters, Jesus refuses to “paint over” our lives. He loves us too much.

He opens what is fragile, heals what is broken, strengthens what is weak, and restores what cannot stand on its own.

His commandments are not paint.

They are the foundation.

His love is the strength.

And His Spirit is the builder.

May we let Him repair the structure, so that our lives may stand firm—and shine with His light. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREED

Let us now profess our faith with the words of the Creed—our faith in the God who loves us and desires to fill our lives with His goodness:

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Having listened to God’s Word that calls us to deeper freedom of heart, let us now place on the altar not only bread and wine, but also our desire to live from love rather than mere obligation. Let us 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)*

Merciful God,
we can give you nothing
that we have not first received from you.
But look kindly upon us: we bring you bread and wine,
our work and our worries, our courage for living
and all that has gone well for us.
You who transform bread and wine,
transform also our lives
in Christ your Son, our brother and Lord.

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

It is truly right and just, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks, eternal God.

From the beginning,
you have written your law upon the human heart.
With the people you chose for yourself
and led out of slavery in Egypt,

you made a covenant
and guided their lives through your commandments.
Through the prophets, you called them again and again
to remember your ways.

Through Jesus,
you have called us into your people
and renewed your covenant.
He has sent us the Spirit
who enables us to know your will
and to reshape our lives according to your love.

And so, with all the angels and the whole of creation,
we praise you and sing the hymn of your glory:

EUCARISTIC PRAYER II

(Original text remains unchanged. Insertions only.)

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

Lord, you know how often our faith remains on the surface,
how easily we settle for outward correctness
instead of inner conversion.

As we prepare for your Spirit to descend upon these gifts,
we ask you to prepare also our hearts:
free us from fear, soften what has grown hard,
and renew within us the joy of living according to your will.

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

As we remember the death and resurrection of your Son,
we remember also his teaching
that true righteousness flows from a transformed heart.
Strengthen us, gathered at this altar,
so that what we celebrate in faith
may shape our words, our relationships, and our daily
choices,
until our lives themselves become a living offering to you.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

United with Christ,
who fulfilled the law not by fear but by love,
we dare to call God our Father
and place our lives into His hands as we pray:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
from hearts that grow rigid
and from faith that forgets compassion.
Grant peace in our days, that, helped by your mercy,
we may live as people of integrity and reconciliation,
and wait in hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus
Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us that reconciliation comes before sacrifice.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will.

You live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who heals what is broken
and strengthens what is weak.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

We have received not only bread and wine, but Christ himself— the One who writes God's law upon our hearts. Let us remain in silence for a moment, asking that his presence within us may become visible in patience, truth, and love.

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

Go with us, faithful God, as we set out again on our way. Without your support, without your guiding presence, we cannot live. What we do not yet know is safe with you: the days that lie ahead, the people we will meet, the words we will need to find. Let your face shine upon us and grant us your peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God, who has called you to freedom of heart, strengthen you to live in truth and compassion. May Christ, who fulfilled the law through love, guide your steps and guard your conscience. May the Holy Spirit, who dwells within you, renew your hearts and give you courage for the days ahead. And may almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, and let your lives proclaim the freedom that comes from love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's commandments are not limits to endure, but supports that hold our lives together. When love completes them, they become not a burden—but a path into freedom.

16 February 2026 – Mon. of the 6th Week in Ord. Time

James 1:1–11; Mark 8:11–13

Faith without demanding signs – trusting God in the ordinary and in trial

INTRODUCTION

A young man once said to a priest, “*If God would only give me a clear sign, then I would really believe.*”

The priest smiled and replied, “*And if He already has, but you were looking in the wrong direction?*”

That simple exchange touches something very human. We long for certainty. We want unmistakable proof—something dramatic, convincing, undeniable. Like the Pharisees in today’s Gospel, we sometimes say to God, “*Show me, and then I will trust you.*” Yet the strange truth of faith is this: God rarely overwhelms us with signs; instead, He invites us into relationship.

We gather today not because all our questions are answered, but because the Lord desires to be among us. He meets us quietly—in his Word, in this Eucharist, and in one another. As we begin this celebration, let us open our hearts to recognize the God who is already present.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge before God and one another that our faith is often hesitant, and ask for the mercy that strengthens and renews us.

- Lord Jesus, you call us to trust you even when we do not understand.
Lord, have mercy.
- Christ Jesus, you remain patient when we demand signs instead of surrendering in faith.
Christ, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus, you meet us not in spectacle, but in faithful presence.
Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God of mercy,
who knows our weakness and our searching hearts,
forgive us our sins, strengthen our faith when it is tested,
and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

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

God, our loving Father,
you created us for joy and trust,
yet you know how easily disappointment, fear,
and suffering shake our faith.

Grant us the wisdom to seek you sincerely,
the courage to trust you in times of trial,
and the patience to grow through what we endure.

May our faith mature, and may we become attentive to the needs of others, as living signs of your presence.

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

Most of us know the story of *Robinson Crusoe*. As a child, what troubled me most was not the shipwreck or the struggle to survive, but the loneliness. Robinson had no one to speak to, no one with whom he could share his thoughts, fears, or hopes. He had to carry everything

alone—until Friday arrived. Only then did his isolation end. When it comes to faith, many people today feel like Robinson on that lonely island. Faith is no longer something naturally shared or spoken about. We often feel isolated in our questions, uncertain about our doubts, and hesitant to speak openly about belief. We long for someone—or something—that reassures us that we are not alone.

In today's Gospel, the Pharisees ask Jesus for a sign from heaven. Mark tells us that Jesus responds "*with a sigh that came straight from the heart.*" It is the sigh of someone who knows that no sign will ever be enough for those who refuse to trust. They are not really seeking faith; they are testing God.

The Letter of James tells us that faith is not proven by success or ease, but refined through trial. Faith grows when it is tested, when it learns perseverance, when it trusts without guarantees. This is difficult for us, because we prefer clarity over trust, control over surrender.

Jesus does not reject signs altogether. Rather, he refuses

to reduce faith to proof. For those with open hearts, he himself is the sign—in his compassion, his forgiveness, his closeness to the poor, his willingness to suffer for love.

The witnesses of faith preserved in Scripture are like “Friday” for us. They speak to us across time. They tell us how real people struggled, doubted, trusted, and discovered that God was faithful even when they could not see clearly.

Someone once said, *“I prayed for God to take away my burden, but instead he taught me how to carry it.”*

That is often how faith works. God does not remove every trial, but he does not abandon us within them.

If today we feel unsure, tested, or longing for signs, let us remember: faith does not begin when everything is clear. Faith begins when we dare to trust that God is already present—even quietly, even hidden, even in the ordinary.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Trusting not in signs but in God’s faithful love, let us bring to the altar the gifts of bread and wine, and with them our lives—our questions, our struggles, and our trust. Let us pray that they 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 offerings we place before you.
As bread and wine are transformed by your Spirit,
so transform our hearts—
from fear to trust,
from doubt to perseverance,
from self-reliance to faith in you.
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 call your people to walk by faith and not by sight.
In your Son, you have given us
not a sign to be tested,
but a presence to be trusted.

In his words, his deeds, and his self-giving love,
you reveal your nearness to the world.

He teaches us to discover your glory
in the ordinary moments of life,
in perseverance through trial,
and in love that endures without proof.

And so, with angels and archangels
and all the hosts of heaven, we proclaim your glory,
as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER II

(*Original text unchanged*)

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

Lord, you know how often our faith hesitates
and how quickly we ask for certainty
before we dare to trust.

As we call upon your Spirit, teach us to recognize your
saving presence not in signs we demand,
but in gifts received with humble faith. (*Epiclesis – unchanged*)

(*Anamnesis – unchanged*)

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

Remember, Lord, all who struggle with doubt,
all whose faith is tested by silence, suffering, or loss.
Strengthen them with the quiet assurance
that your love never withdraws,
even when answers are slow to come
and the way forward is unclear.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With trust in our heavenly Father—
not because we see clearly, but because we are loved—
let us pray as Jesus taught us.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the fear that weakens trust.
Grant peace in our days, that, supported by your mercy,
we may persevere in faith, grow in hope through trial,
and await with confidence
the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you sighed at unbelief
yet never withdrew your compassion.
Look not on our doubts, but on the faith of your Church.
Grant her peace and unity,
and help us to be signs of your presence
in a world longing for meaning and hope.
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

In this simple bread, God entrusts himself to us once more.
Faith is not proven here— it is nourished.
May this communion strengthen us
to trust God quietly, faithfully, and day by day.

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.
Strengthen our faith,
so that we may recognize your presence
in ordinary moments and hidden ways,
and become living signs of your love for others.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God bless you
with faith that endures trials,
with eyes that recognize his presence,
and with hearts that trust even in uncertainty.
And may almighty God bless you,
the Father,  and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace,
trusting in the Lord
who walks with you,
even when the way is unclear.

Thanks be to God.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Faith does not demand signs;
it learns to recognize presence.

February 17, 2026 – Tuesday of the 6th Week in
Ordinary Time - *James 1:12–18; Mark 8:14–21*

INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, a teacher gave her students a simple task: *“Listen carefully. I will explain it only once.”* She spoke slowly and clearly. Yet when the students began the exercise, almost everyone did it wrong. Frustrated, the teacher asked, *“Did you hear what I said?”* One student replied honestly, *“Yes, teacher—but I was thinking of something else.”*

That simple moment captures today’s Word of God. The disciples hear Jesus, walk with Him, see His miracles—yet they are preoccupied with bread, shortages, and fear. They hear, but do not truly listen. They see, but do not truly understand.

As we gather today, we come with full stomachs perhaps, but distracted hearts; with many words in our ears, but little silence within. Jesus invites us again to listen deeply, to trust beyond what we can count or control, and to let His

Word nourish us more than bread. Let us open our hearts to Him.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Brothers and sisters, aware of our distractions, our fears, and our lack of trust, let us acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord for mercy.

- Lord Jesus, you speak to us, yet we are often slow to understand. Lord, have mercy.
- Christ Jesus, you nourish us with your Word, yet we cling to false securities. Christ, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus, you remain faithful even when we misunderstand and fail. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God of patience and mercy open our eyes and unstop our ears, forgive us our sins, heal our blindness and fear, and lead us forward in trust and hope, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

God our Father,
amid the noise and confusion of our days,
you continue to speak your living Word.
Free us from the temptations that arise from fear and desire, open our hearts to trust in your providence, and teach us to live not by bread alone but by every word that comes from you.
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 man once complained to his spiritual director: *“Father, God never speaks to me.”* The priest gently replied, *“Perhaps He does—but you are listening with a calculator instead of a heart.”*

That is precisely what happens in today's Gospel. The disciples are in a boat with Jesus. They have just

witnessed the feeding of thousands, yet they worry because they have only one loaf of bread. Jesus speaks about *leaven*—a symbol of hidden corruption—but they hear only scarcity. Their minds are fixed on what they lack, not on who is with them.

James, in the first reading, reminds us that temptation does not come from God. God gives only good gifts. Temptation arises when desire takes over trust—when fear replaces faith. The disciples are not sinful because they lack bread; they struggle because they lack perspective.

Jesus' sharp questions—“*Do you not yet understand? Are your hearts hardened?*”—are not words of rejection but of deep concern. Like a teacher who refuses to give up, Jesus keeps asking, keeps waiting, keeps walking with them.

After the Resurrection, Jesus meets these same confused, fearful disciples again. He does not reproach them. He breaks bread with them.

A child once asked her mother, “*Why does God keep forgiving us?*”

The mother replied, “*Because He sees not only who we are, but who we are becoming.*”

That is today's hope. We may misunderstand. We may worry too much about bread. We may listen poorly. Yet Christ remains faithful. He goes ahead of us. He feeds us again—with His Word, His patience, and His very life.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Trusting not in what we bring, but in the goodness of the Giver, let us present our offerings to the Lord and pray that they may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

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

Accept, O Lord, the gifts we offer,
and purify our hearts from all that blinds us to your presence. May this sacrifice strengthen our trust in you and make us attentive hearers of your Word.

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 are the giver of every good and perfect gift.

You do not tempt your children,
but test and strengthen them
so that they may grow in freedom and trust.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you have revealed a love that does not abandon,
a patience that does not grow weary,
and a mercy that always invites us to begin again.

Therefore, with Angels and Archangels,

and with all the hosts of heaven,
we proclaim your glory

as without end we acclaim:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER II

(*Original text unchanged*)

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

Lord, as we prepare to invoke your Spirit upon these gifts,
we ask that the same Spirit
open our minds to understand your Word,
strengthen us in times of temptation,
and teach us to trust your providence
even when we feel unprepared or afraid.

(*Epiclesis – unchanged*)

(*Institution Narrative & 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 not only Christ's death and resurrection,
but also his unwavering faithfulness to weak disciples.

May this Eucharist renew our calling,
heal our blindness,
and make us witnesses of hope in a distracted world.

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With hearts taught by Christ to trust the Father beyond fear and temptation, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and especially from the fears that cloud our trust.

Grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always 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 remained faithful to your disciples
even when they failed to understand you.

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 feeds us not only with bread,
but with his very life.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

We have received the Bread of Life.

May this communion quiet our fears,
sharpen our listening,
and teach us to trust that Christ is enough.

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

May the sacrament we have received, O Lord,
heal our blindness, strengthen us against temptation,
and nourish us for the journey of faith,
so that we may live by your Word
and walk in your peace.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God open your eyes to see His work,
your ears to hear His Word,
and your heart to trust His providence.

May Christ go ahead of you on every road,
especially when you feel lost or unprepared.

May the Holy Spirit guard you from temptation
and strengthen you in faith, hope, and love.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, listening deeply, trusting fully,
and living by the Word of the Lord.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

When fear counts loaves, faith remembers who is in the
boat.