

5 July, 2026 - 14th Sunday in Ord. Time  
Zech 9,9-10; Rom 8,9. 11-13; Mt 11,25-30  
*The family that comes to Christ*

## INTRODUCTION

A parish priest once visited an elderly woman who lived alone in a small apartment. On the table stood three objects: a worn Bible, a photograph of her family, and a small backpack.

Curious, he asked about the backpack. She smiled and said:

“When I feel overwhelmed, I put my worries into this bag. I don’t solve them all, I just imagine placing them there.

Then I sit quietly and say: ‘Lord, you carry this now.’”

The priest later said: “I realized she had discovered something very deep about prayer. She had learned how to hand over what she could not carry.”

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

in every family, life is held together by relationships. We come here today as people connected in many ways—by blood, by friendship, by faith, and by shared experience.

Some of these relationships give us joy and strength; others are marked by strain, silence, or hurt.

And yet it is precisely into this reality that God gathers us today as his family.

The Gospel we hear today speaks directly into our lives: “Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest.”

We come here carrying many things. Some are visible—illness, responsibility, family concerns. Others are hidden—worry, guilt, fatigue, the pressure to keep everything together. And sometimes even faith itself feels like another task we must manage.

But Christ does not stand at a distance. He stands in the midst of our life and says: **Come to me.**

Not: “Fix everything first.”

Not: “Become strong on your own.”

But simply: **Come.**

And so, as a family gathered in faith, we bring all that we are—and all that weighs us down—into his presence.

— brief silence —

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus Christ,

- You invite us to come to you with our burdens, yet we often try to carry everything alone and rely only on ourselves. Lord, have mercy.
- You invite us to take your yoke upon us and learn from you, yet we so often prefer our own plans and control. Christ, have mercy.
- You call all who labour and are burdened, yet we are often blind and slow to recognize the burdens of others. Lord, have mercy.

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

Grant that, freed from all that weighs us down, we may come to celebrate these sacred mysteries with hearts renewed in peace.

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life,  
Amen.

## INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Brothers and sisters,

in the presence of the Lord who says to us, “Come to me and I will give you rest,” we now lift our hearts in praise. Even when we carry burdens, we are invited not to remain focused on them, but to turn to the One who carries us. With grateful hearts, we glorify God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: **Glory to God in the highest...**

## COLLECT

Merciful God,

you do not wish to burden your people, but to set them free. You sent us your Son, Jesus Christ, who comes not as a distant ruler but as a gentle King who walks with us on the road of life.

Open our hearts today, so that we may hear his invitation: “Come to me,” and learn from his heart, which is gentle and humble.

May we discover in him the rest our souls long for, and the freedom your love intends for us.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son... Amen.

## HOMILY: “COME TO ME AND FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS”

A traveller once arrived at a busy international airport after a long-haul flight. In his hands he carried two heavy suitcases. One wheel was already broken, and every few steps the case dragged sideways, forcing him to correct its direction. On his back was a backpack stuffed to the point of strain. In his hand he also held a laptop bag—and, awkwardly, a gift box he had promised to deliver.

At one point, he simply stopped in the middle of the terminal and looked exhausted. A staff member noticed him and said, almost casually: *“You’re allowed to let go of some of that, you know.”*

The man replied, “I can’t. It’s all important.”

The staff member smiled and said, “Maybe. But not all of it was meant to be carried like this.”

That moment captures something of today’s Gospel.

Dear brothers and sisters,

We all carry things—some necessary, some self-imposed, some quietly crushing. And into that reality Jesus speaks words that sound almost impossible:

**“Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.”**

Not advice. Not a program. Not a system.

But an invitation: *Come to me.*

### 1. The King who comes differently

The prophet Zechariah gives us the first key to understanding this invitation. He announces a king:

**“See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey.”**

In the ancient world, that was almost absurd. Kings arrived on horses, symbols of war and power. But this king arrives on a donkey—an animal of peace, burden-bearing, everyday life.

One historian once noted that when Alexander the Great marched through regions, people either submitted or were

crushed. But Zechariah's king does neither. He enters differently. Quietly. Humbly. Close.

And the Gospel shows us this fulfilled in Christ: entering Jerusalem not with armies, but with palms and tears; not to dominate, but to save through love.

This is important. Because the one who says "*Come to me*" is not a distant ruler. He is a king who shares the road with his people.

## 2. The burdens we do not always recognize

Jesus names something very human: *burden*.

Some burdens are obvious: illness, grief, financial strain, family tension. Others are less visible but just as real: pressure to succeed, fear of failure, the need to appear always capable.

A modern example might be the constant digital noise many live with—messages, expectations, comparisons. One psychologist called it "the tyranny of availability": the feeling that we are never fully allowed to rest.

And then there are spiritual burdens: guilt that does not loosen its grip, the sense of never being enough, even before God.

Sometimes, without noticing it, we become like that traveller in the airport—carrying things we were never meant to carry alone.

## 3. "Come to me" is not a command, but a doorway

Jesus does not begin by saying, "Fix your life."

He does not say, "Become strong first."

He says: "**Come.**"

And the Gospel shows people doing exactly that:

- The woman who suffered for years touches his cloak.
- The leper comes despite being excluded.
- Zacchaeus climbs a tree just to see him.
- Even the thief on the cross turns in his final breath.

None of them came with perfect lives. They came with need.

A simple truth emerges: faith begins not with achievement, but with approach.

There is a beautiful story from the desert fathers of early Christianity. A young monk once asked an old abbot, “What must I do to find God?” The old man simply replied, “Go where you are loved.”

That is what Jesus is saying: *Come to me—where you are already loved.*

#### **4. The “yoke” that changes everything**

Then Jesus adds a surprising image:

**“Take my yoke upon you... for my yoke is easy and my burden light.”**

A yoke normally means control, labour, shared weight. Two oxen are bound together to pull in one direction.

But here is the key: Jesus does not say you carry the yoke alone.

There is an old farming insight: one strong ox alone can tire quickly under a heavy plough. But when yoked properly with another, the stronger quietly carries the weaker. The burden is redistributed. Movement becomes possible.

The Gospel is saying something similar: your life is not carried alone anymore.

St Paul echoes this in today’s second reading:

**“The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.”**

God is not watching from a distance. God is already present within the struggle.

Even Abraham Lincoln once wrote that he was often “driven to his knees” by the awareness that his own wisdom was not enough. Yet in that very moment, he discovered strength he did not have before.

#### **5. Why the “wise” sometimes miss what the “little ones” see**

Jesus then praises the Father because these things are hidden from the “wise and learned” and revealed to “little ones.”

This is not an attack on intelligence. It is a warning about self-sufficiency.

A child does not approach life with control, but with openness. A child receives.

There is a quiet irony in the Gospel: those who think they see everything sometimes miss what is most important.

A modern parallel might be someone who is so focused on analysing a painting that they never actually look at it.

Faith, Jesus says, is not about mastering God. It is about receiving God.

## **6. The rest Jesus gives**

What does Jesus actually promise?

Not escape. Not a life without struggle.

But **rest for your souls**.

This is not sleep. It is not withdrawal. It is what the Psalms call “green pastures” and “still waters”—the experience of being inwardly restored.

Think of an oasis in the desert. The desert does not disappear, but life becomes possible again.

Many Christians discover this truth in very ordinary ways: a quiet prayer in the morning, a moment of silence after a

difficult day, a conversation in which someone feels truly heard.

One missionary once said that prayer is not about taking time out of life, but about finding life within time.

## **7. A king who carries the cross first**

There is a final depth to this Gospel: Jesus does not only offer rest—he becomes the way of rest.

He himself carries the heaviest burden: rejection, suffering, the cross.

That means his invitation is not theoretical. It is lived.

He does not say, “Go where I have not gone.”

He says, “Come where I am.”

And where he is, is always with those who are burdened.

## **Conclusion – A final story**

There is a story of a mountain guide leading climbers through a difficult ascent. One climber insisted on carrying all his own equipment, refusing help. As the climb went on,

he slowed down, became exhausted, and eventually collapsed.

The guide quietly took one of his heaviest packs, strapped it onto himself, and said, “You are still climbing. But you are no longer climbing alone.”

The climb did not become easy. But it became possible again.

That is the Gospel.

Jesus does not remove every weight from our lives.

But he refuses to let us carry them alone.

And so he says again today:

**“Come to me... and you will find rest for your souls.”**

Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE CREED**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Jesus reveals today a God who is not distant, but close—a

Father who draws us into the life of his Son, and a Spirit who dwells within us.

In the midst of our struggles and questions, we are invited to place our trust not in ourselves alone, but in the God who carries our lives.

Together with the Church throughout the world, let us profess our faith: **I believe in one God...**

## **ALTERNATIVE PROFESSION OF FAITH –**

*Confession of Peace and Justice*

*World Conference of Christians, Seoul 1990*

*(for personal meditation only)*

I believe in God, who is love,

and who has given the earth as a gift to all people.

I do not believe in the right of the strongest,

in the power of weapons, or in the strength of oppression.

I believe in Jesus Christ, who came to heal us

and who frees us from all deadly forms of dependence.

I do not believe that wars are inevitable,

or that peace is impossible.

I believe in the communion of saints,

who are called to serve all people.

I do not believe that suffering must be meaningless,  
that death is the end,  
or that God wills the destruction of the earth.  
I believe that God desires an order for the world  
founded on justice and love,  
and that all men and women are equal in dignity and rights.  
I believe in God's promise:  
justice and peace for all humanity.  
I believe in God's promise:  
a new heaven and a new earth,  
where justice and peace will meet.  
I believe in the beauty of simplicity,  
in love with open hands,  
and in peace on earth. Amen.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

Dear brothers and sisters,  
we have heard the invitation of Christ: "Come to me, all  
you who labour and are burdened."

As we now bring forward bread and wine, we also bring  
before the Lord all that we carry within us—our work, our  
worries, our relationships, and our hidden burdens.  
Let us ask him to transform not only these gifts, but also  
our hearts.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God of life,  
bread and wine are signs of your closeness to us on our  
journey.  
As these gifts are transformed upon the altar,  
transform also what weighs upon our hearts: our anxiety,  
our restlessness, and our burdens.  
You never ask more of us than we can bear in your grace,  
and you never call us to walk alone.  
Strengthen us through this holy sacrifice,  
so that we may learn to trust you more deeply  
and find rest in your presence.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PREFACE

We thank you, faithful and merciful Father,  
for Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord.

He is the King who comes in humility,  
gentle and riding on a donkey, not to dominate, but to save;  
not to crush, but to heal.

His heart is open to the poor, the weary, and the burdened.

He never passes by human suffering,  
but draws near, lifts up, and restores.

In him we recognize the deepest truth of our lives:  
we are not alone on the journey.

The same Christ who calls us to himself is the One who  
walks with us. He does not wait only at the destination—he  
meets us on the road. And in his presence, what is heavy  
begins to be carried in trust, what is broken begins to be  
healed, and what seems overwhelming is quietly  
transformed by love.

In him we see that you are not distant,  
but a God who comes close—like a Father who gathers his  
children into one family of love.

And so, with all the angels and saints,  
as people who have found rest in your mercy and strength  
for the journey, we praise your glory:

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Dear brothers and sisters,

Jesus reveals to us today a deep truth: he shares his own  
relationship with the Father.

He teaches us that prayer is not first about many words,  
but about trust—about coming to the Father as children.

With Jesus, and in his Spirit, we dare to pray:

**Our Father...**

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
especially from the burdens that oppress our hearts: fear,  
division, and discouragement.

Grant us peace in our days,  
and strengthen us in your mercy, so that we may be free  
from unnecessary anxiety and confident in your presence  
as we await the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you are the one who gives rest to the weary and peace to  
the troubled heart.

Look upon your Church and upon our world,  
where so many carry heavy burdens—within families,  
nations, and hearts.

Grant us your peace:  
not the peace of convenience, but the peace of trust;  
not the absence of struggle, but the presence of your love  
within it.

You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who does not stand far from our burdens,  
but carries them with us.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The Lord does not always remove our burdens  
immediately.

But he changes how we carry them.

In his presence, what was crushing becomes bearable.

What was isolating becomes shared.

What was heavy becomes a path of trust.

We are no longer alone on the journey.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of mercy,  
you have nourished us at your table  
and allowed us to rest for a moment in your presence.

Let what we have received here  
strengthen us for the journey ahead.

Teach us to live more lightly in trust,  
more freely in love,

and more deeply in communion with you and one another.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## BLESSING

May God the Father, who created you in love and knows every burden you carry, fill your hearts with his peace and keep you in his care. **Amen.**

May Jesus Christ, the gentle and humble of heart, walk with you in all your struggles and give rest to your souls. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit, who dwells within you and strengthens your weakness, lead you into freedom, hope, and new life. **Amen.**

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

## DISMISSAL

Go in the peace of Christ,  
carrying your burdens no longer alone,  
but in the presence of the One who walks with you.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

You are not asked to carry life alone.  
Bring what is heavy to Christ—  
and learn the quiet strength of walking with him.

**6 July, 2026 – Mon., 14th Week in Ord. Time**

*Hosea 2,16-18. 21-22; Mt. 9,18-26*

*Faith that reaches out to the Bridegroom who gives life.*

## INTRODUCTION

A small coastal village once told the story of an old fisherman who would go out to sea alone each night. One evening, a violent storm rose unexpectedly. When he returned safely, drenched but alive, his wife asked him how he managed to find his way back in such darkness. He simply replied, “I never lost sight of the lighthouse.” That quiet confidence in a guiding light speaks to something deeply human—the need for a presence that leads us safely home.

Today the Church also remembers Saint Maria Goretti, the young martyr of purity and forgiveness. In her brief life, she held fast to a light within her—the light of faith that guided her even in the face of violence, and which shone most brightly in her final act of forgiving her attacker. Her witness reminds us that God’s grace can sustain fidelity and courage even in the darkest moments.

The Scriptures today speak of God as the faithful Bridegroom who draws his people into love (Hosea), and of Jesus who enters human suffering with life-giving compassion in the Gospel. In both, God is revealed not as distant, but as intimately involved—healing, restoring, and calling us back to life.

And so, as we prepare to hear his word and encounter his mercy, we acknowledge the times we have not followed his light with trust or fidelity. We turn now to him with contrite hearts, and ask for forgiveness in the penitential act.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you are the faithful Bridegroom who calls us back to love and restores our lives: Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you respond with compassion to all who reach out to you in faith, whether in strength or in weakness:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the light who guides us through the storms and darkness of our lives: Lord, have mercy.

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and strengthen our faith to reach out with trust to his Son, the Bridegroom who gives life, and bring us to everlasting life.

### **COLLECT**

O God, who draw your people to yourself with the tenderness of a faithful Bridegroom and restore life to those who reach out to you in faith, grant, we pray, that we may follow the light of your presence with steadfast trust and, like Saint Maria Goretti, remain faithful even in trial. 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.

## HOMILY

A busy emergency ward once received a young mother whose child had stopped breathing after a sudden accident. While doctors worked frantically, she stood outside the glass doors, unable to enter, unable even to touch her child. All she could do was whisper, “If I can just reach him, he’ll live.” That instinct—to reach out in faith toward the source of life—lies at the heart of today’s Gospel.

In Matthew’s account, two people reach out to Jesus in their desperation: a synagogue official who bows low in public grief, and a woman who slips quietly through the crowd, believing that even the edge of his cloak carries healing. Their approaches are different, but their faith is the same. Jesus responds to both—not because of how they come to him, but because they come to him at all. Here the red thread of the Gospel becomes clear: “faith that reaches out to the Bridegroom who gives life.”

This is precisely the image Hosea gives us in the first reading. God speaks as the Bridegroom who draws his

beloved into the wilderness—not to abandon her, but to speak tenderly to her heart. “I will espouse you in fidelity,” the Lord says, “and you shall know the Lord.” The love of God is not distant or transactional; it is covenantal, faithful, and restorative. Jesus reveals this Bridegroom’s heart when he restores life to the dead girl and healing to the suffering woman. And in doing so, he shows that God’s love is stronger than isolation, stronger than illness, and even stronger than death.

Saint Maria Goretti, whom we remember today, understood something of this faithful love. In her final moments, she did not respond to violence with hatred but with forgiveness. Her life became a quiet but powerful echo of the Bridegroom’s fidelity—a love that refuses to be extinguished even when wounded. Like the woman in the Gospel, she “touched” the mystery of Christ not in grandeur, but in the hidden offering of her heart.

We too often find ourselves alternating between these two Gospel figures. At times we are like the official, bringing the weight of our public responsibilities, our visible

struggles, our urgent needs. At other times we are like the woman, quietly carrying burdens no one else sees, hoping simply to touch the edge of grace. Christ meets both. He does not turn away from either.

And perhaps that is why this Gospel stays with us: because it assures us that no approach to Christ is wasted when it is made in faith. Whether loud or silent, public or hidden, confident or trembling, it is still a reaching out to the Bridegroom who gives life.

Years after her recovery, the child from that emergency ward would ask his mother why she never stopped praying outside the glass doors. She would answer, “Because I believed that love was stronger than the barrier between us.” In the same way, every act of faith—no matter how small—is a hand stretched toward Christ, who always takes us by the hand and calls us to rise.

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

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered in faith as we reach out to the Lord who gives life, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Look with favour, O Lord, upon the gifts we place before you, and grant that, as we reach out to you in faith, we may be drawn ever more deeply into the covenant of your love and experience the healing power of your Son. Through Christ our Lord.

### **PREFACE**

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 your mercy you have drawn us to yourself with the tenderness of a faithful Bridegroom, speaking to our hearts and restoring us when we are lost. In your Son, Jesus Christ, you have entered into our suffering and our death, that all who reach out to him in faith might receive healing, forgiveness, and new life.

Through him, the silent cry of the suffering is heard, the hidden touch of faith is answered, and the power of your love is revealed as stronger than

death itself.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

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

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say, trusting in the love of the Father who draws us to himself:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and strengthen our hearts when faith feels fragile or distant.

Graciously grant peace in our days, that, reaching out to your Son with trust, we may be healed and restored by his life-giving love, and, 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you; look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, which reaches out to you in trust and hope, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever.

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God, the Bridegroom who gives his life for his people and who responds to every act of faith with healing and mercy.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

In the quiet of this moment, we have touched the Lord who gives life.

Whether in strength or in weakness, our faith has reached out—and he has answered.

Like the woman in the crowd and the grieving father,  
we carry within us the certainty that no gesture of trust is  
lost.

His love is stronger than every barrier, stronger even than  
death.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that renewed by this heavenly Sacrament,  
we may remain steadfast in faith,  
always reaching out to your Son with trust and love,  
and so be drawn ever more deeply into the joy of your  
covenant. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and keep you,  
strengthen your faith to reach out to him in every need,  
and fill your hearts with the assurance of his life-giving  
love.

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

### **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, reaching out in faith to the Lord who  
gives life.

### **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

No act of faith is too small: every time you reach out to  
Christ—whether in silence, struggle, or hope—he takes  
you by the hand and leads you back to life.

7 July, 2026 – Tuesday, 14th Week in Ord. Time

*Hosea 8,4-7. 11-13; Mt. 9,32-38*

*Seeing with the eyes of Christ.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A lighthouse keeper once told how, during a violent storm, he noticed a faint flicker of light far out at sea. At first he thought it was a ship in distress, but as he adjusted his lens, he realized it was another lighthouse answering his signal. “Even in the worst weather,” he said, “light speaks to light.” That discovery changed the way he endured storms thereafter.

Today the Church also remembers St. Willibald, bishop and missionary of the 8th century, who crossed lands and seas to bring the light of the Gospel to unfamiliar peoples. His life itself became a kind of beacon—steady, patient, and attentive to where God was already at work.

In the first reading from Hosea, we hear of a people who have sown the wind and are reaping the whirlwind, forgetting the One who formed them. Yet even in warning, God’s desire is not destruction but return, not rejection but renewal. The Gospel shows us Christ moving through

towns and villages, healing, preaching, and awakening hope—yet also calling for more labourers for the harvest.

It is this contrast between divine generosity and human forgetfulness that brings us to ourselves. For the times we have failed to notice the light of God already shining, for the times we have not responded to His call to labour in His harvest, we turn now and ask for mercy...

## **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you see with compassion the crowds who are harassed and searching for meaning: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you open the eyes of our hearts to recognize the harvest ready before us: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to labour with you and share in your saving work: Lord, have mercy.

## **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and open the eyes of our hearts to see with the compassion of Christ and to serve generously in his harvest, and bring us to everlasting life.

## COLLECT

O God, who sent your Son into the world to reveal your compassion and to gather your scattered people, grant, we pray, that we may see with the eyes of Christ and respond with willing hearts to labour in your harvest, so that your light may shine through us in every place. 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.

## HOMILY

A small boy once stood beside his father watching a farmer trying to gather a scattered flock of sheep that had broken through a fence. The farmer whistled, called, and ran from one end of the field to the other, but the sheep kept drifting further apart. The boy finally asked, “Why doesn’t he get more help?” His father replied, “Because he’s waiting for others to care enough to come and help him.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus is very much like that farmer—moving through towns and villages, healing a man who

cannot speak, teaching in synagogues, proclaiming the kingdom, and curing every kind of illness. Yet He does not act as though He can do it alone. Looking at the crowds, harassed and dejected like sheep without a shepherd, He turns to His disciples and says: “The harvest is rich, but the labourers are few.” St. Willibald, who left his homeland to labour in distant fields of mission, reminds us that the call to serve is never confined by place or comfort.

There is a *red thread* running through this Gospel: seeing with the eyes of Christ. The people in Matthew’s Gospel who witness Jesus’ works see hope and wonder, while others see suspicion and even evil. The same reality produces two completely different visions. Hosea already warned what happens when people lose that divine vision: life becomes scattered, empty, and self-destructive. But Jesus restores sight—not only to the blind eyes of the body, but to the inner eyes of the heart.

To see with the eyes of Christ is also to see the world as a field ready for harvest, not as a problem to be avoided. It is to recognize that the labourers are not “other people,” but

ourselves—baptized, gifted in different ways, called to small and great acts of service. Even the quietest gesture of care becomes part of God’s gathering work. St. Willibald’s missionary journey began not with certainty, but with availability; and that is where every true labour begins. A parish once struggled to keep its outreach programs alive. An elderly woman, unable to do much physically, began simply by baking bread every week for those who visited the food bank. Others followed—some offered time, others skills, others prayer. What began as one small act quietly grew into a network of care that no single person could have organized alone. The harvest, as Jesus said, was greater than any one labourer.

And so we return to the question: do we see as Christ sees? Do we recognize the fields already ripe around us, and are we willing to be sent? As we prepare our hearts, we ask forgiveness for the times we have been blind to God’s presence, slow to respond to His call, and hesitant to labour in His harvest of love...

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

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered with hearts attentive to the needs of others and ready to serve in the Lord’s harvest, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Look kindly, O Lord, upon the gifts we bring, and grant that, enlightened by your grace, we may see the needs of the world with the eyes of Christ and offer ourselves in loving service for the gathering of your people.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

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 your mercy you do not abandon your people when they wander or lose their way, but you send your Son among us

to heal, to teach, and to gather what has been scattered.  
He looks upon the crowds with compassion,  
opening the eyes of hearts to see beyond fear and division,  
and calling each of us to share in the work of your  
Kingdom.

Through him, light speaks to light,  
and those who respond become bearers of hope,  
labourers in a harvest that is rich with your grace.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

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

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say, as children who trust in the Father who  
calls us to share in his work:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and free us from the blindness that keeps us from seeing  
your presence at work among us.

Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, with hearts renewed by your grace,  
we may respond generously to your call to labour in your  
harvest, and, 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I  
give you;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
which seeks to see with your eyes and serve with your  
compassion, and graciously grant her peace and unity in  
accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who looks with compassion upon his people  
and gathers us into one through his healing love.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

We have received the Lord who sees us completely and  
loves us without measure.

He opens our eyes not only to his presence, but to the  
needs around us.

The harvest is already before us—quiet, waiting, abundant.

What matters now is our willingness to see, and to  
respond.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that nourished by this holy gift,  
we may grow in the vision of Christ,  
seeing with compassion and serving with generous hearts,  
so as to take our part in the gathering of your people.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and open the eyes of your hearts,  
that you may see his presence in those around you  
and respond with courage and generosity.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, seeing with the eyes of Christ and  
serving in his harvest.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

To see with the eyes of Christ is to notice both the need  
and the possibility for love—and then to respond, even in  
the smallest way.

8 July, 2026 – Wed. 14th Week in Ord. Time

*Hosea 10,1-3. 7-8. 12; Mt. 10,1-7*

*St. Kilian - The mutual search of love*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A gardener once planted seeds in a dry and cracked piece of soil. Day after day he returned, not seeing any change, only hard earth and empty skies. Neighbours suggested he give up, but he kept tending the ground, waiting for rain that had not yet come, trusting that life was hidden beneath the surface even when nothing seemed visible.

On this day the Church also remembers Saint Kilian, the Irish missionary bishop who left his homeland with companions to bring the Gospel to Franconia in present-day Germany. He, too, was a man of searching—seeking Christ among unfamiliar peoples, ready to witness even unto martyrdom. His life reflects a heart wholly directed towards the Lord who first sought him.

The Scriptures today place before us this same movement of desire: God calls through Hosea, “Seek the Lord until he comes to rain salvation on you,” while the Psalm urges us

to “seek his face constantly.” In the Gospel, Jesus calls the Twelve and sends them out, revealing that our searching for God is always met by God’s prior and loving search for us. This is the red thread running through today’s word: the mutual search of love between God and his people.

Yet our hearts are often divided, like the Twelve who were called yet struggled to remain faithful, like Judas who would ultimately betray the One who chose him. As we begin this Eucharist, we acknowledge those divided desires within us and ask the Lord to heal them, so that our searching may become wholehearted. We turn now to him in humility and say: Lord, have mercy.

## **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you seek us with a faithful and patient love, even when our hearts are divided: *Lord, have mercy.*

Christ Jesus, you call us by name and invite us to seek your face with undivided hearts: *Christ, have mercy.*

Lord Jesus, you send us to share in your mission of seeking the lost and restoring them to life:

*Lord, have mercy.*

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins, and heal the divisions within our hearts,  
that we may respond fully to his loving search  
and seek him with faithful love,  
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

## COLLECT

O God, who first seek us with a love that never grows  
weary and call us to seek your face without ceasing,  
grant, we pray, that our hearts may be made whole in your  
service, so that, responding to your call,  
we may faithfully share in your mission of gathering your  
people.

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.

## HOMILY

A mountain rescue team once set out in the early hours of  
the morning after a hiker failed to return from a remote trail.  
The weather had turned harsh, visibility was poor, and  
every passing hour made the search more urgent. Yet the  
rescuers pressed on, convinced that the lost person was  
still worth finding, still reachable, still loved by someone  
waiting at home. Their mission was simple: do not stop  
seeking until you find the one who is lost.

That image echoes today's Gospel and the life of Saint  
Kilian, who himself left the safety of home to seek out  
those who did not yet know Christ. Like the Twelve chosen  
by Jesus, he was sent on mission not because he had  
mastered everything, but because he had been found first  
and could not keep that gift to himself. The same Lord who  
sent Kilian sends the apostles, and sends us, into the  
world marked by the red thread of today's message: the  
mutual search of love—God seeking us, and calling us to  
seek him in return.

In Hosea and the Psalm, the invitation is clear: "Seek the

Lord,” “constantly seek his face.” Yet the Gospel reveals something even deeper: before we ever begin to seek, we are already being sought. Jesus calls the Twelve by name, entrusts them with authority, and sends them to the lost sheep of Israel. But the shadow of betrayal already lies within the group. Judas is not an outsider; he is one of the chosen. This uncomfortable truth reminds us that closeness to Jesus is not the same as fidelity to him. The call is always personal, but so is the response.

Saint Kilian understood this tension. He left Ireland not merely to bring an idea, but to respond to a Person who had already claimed him. His martyrdom witnesses to a love that does not withdraw when rejected. And yet the Gospel does not end with failure. Even the brokenness of the Twelve becomes the place where mercy will later rebuild them after the Resurrection.

This is the red thread again: the mutual search of love that refuses to be broken by human weakness. God continues to seek, even when we wander; and we are invited again and again to seek, even when we have failed.

A fisherman once returned to shore after a long night with

empty nets. As he prepared to leave, he noticed a small child standing nearby, holding a tiny object that had fallen from his boat earlier that morning. In all his hours of searching the sea, he had missed what had been quietly placed within reach on the shore. What he thought was lost had already been found—waiting for him to notice.

So it is with us. The Lord who sends us is also the Lord who finds us first. And in that quiet truth, the search of God and the search of the human heart become one movement of love that never ceases.

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

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered with hearts seeking the Lord who first seeks us, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Receive, O Lord, the offerings we bring before you, and grant that, in seeking you with sincere hearts, we may be drawn ever more deeply into your love and made worthy to share in your saving mission. Through Christ our Lord.

## **PREFACE**

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 your mercy you never cease to seek those who have  
wandered, and you call each of us by name  
to share in the mystery of your love.

Before we turn to you, you have already turned toward us;  
before we search for you,  
you have already set out to find us.

In your Son, you reveal this faithful love,  
choosing and sending disciples to seek the lost  
and to proclaim the nearness of your Kingdom.

Even when hearts falter, your mercy remains,  
drawing us back into the communion you desire.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say, as those who have been found by the  
Father's love and who seek him with trusting hearts:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and free our hearts from all that divides our love for you.  
Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, responding to your faithful search for us,  
we may seek you with sincerity and perseverance,  
and, 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles: Peace I leave  
you, my peace I give you; look not on our sins, but on the  
faith of your Church, which seeks your face and trusts in  
your unfailing love, and graciously grant her peace and  
unity in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who seeks the lost and gathers them into his love,  
and who invites us to remain in him as he remains in us.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

We have been found by the One we seek.  
In this Eucharist, the searching heart of God has met our  
own. Even in our weakness, even in our divided desires,  
his love does not withdraw.  
He continues to seek us, and gently teaches us to seek  
him in return.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that nourished by this holy Sacrament,  
we may persevere in seeking your face  
and grow ever more faithful to the love with which you first  
sought us, so that our lives may bear witness to your  
saving presence.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and strengthen your hearts,  
that you may seek him with sincerity  
and respond to his call with faithful love.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, seeking the Lord who has first sought  
you.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

Before you begin to search for God, remember: he is  
already searching for you—and never stops.

9 July, 2026 – Thursday, 14th Week in Ord. Time

*Hosea 11,1-4. 8-9; Mt. 10,7-15*

Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions

*God is already at work in what we receive and what we give.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A schoolteacher once received an unexpected letter many years after retiring. It was from a student she had taught briefly and had almost forgotten. The letter explained how a single word of encouragement she had spoken in class had kept that student from abandoning school during a very difficult time. She had no memory of the moment; for her it was ordinary, almost insignificant. Yet, for someone else, it had become life-changing.

Today the Church remembers Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions, martyrs who, in different times and places, bore witness to Christ even at the cost of their lives. Their courage reminds us that the Gospel often works in hidden ways—through words spoken, lives offered, and gifts given without calculation or return.

The Scriptures today speak of a God who is both tender and sending: in Hosea, a God who lifts Israel as a parent

lifts a child; in Matthew's Gospel, a Lord who sends disciples out with nothing but trust, asking them to proclaim that the Kingdom is near and to give freely what they have received. The red thread running through it all is this: God is already at work in what we receive and what we give.

And yet, we recognize how often we fail to notice God's quiet action in our lives, or how hesitant we are to trust that what we have received is enough to be shared. For these moments of doubt, self-reliance, and missed opportunities for love, let us call to mind our sins and prepare ourselves for the celebration of these sacred mysteries.

## **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you reveal the Father's tender love and lift us up as children in your care: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you send us to give freely what we have first received from you: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are already at work in the hidden moments of our lives, both in receiving and in giving: Lord, have mercy.

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and open our hearts to trust in his grace at work within us, that we may receive his gifts with humility and share them freely in love, and bring us to everlasting life.

## COLLECT

O God, whose love is tender and faithful, and who are already at work in all we receive and all we give, grant, we pray, that we may trust in your providence and become generous instruments of your grace, freely sharing with others what we have first received 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.

## HOMILY

There is a well-known story in Genesis that captures the emotional heart of today's Scriptures. Joseph, sold into slavery by his brothers and left for dead, rises to become an instrument of salvation in Egypt. Years later, when

famine brings his brothers before him, they do not recognize him, but he recognizes them. The very ones who betrayed him now depend on his mercy. Yet Joseph does not seek revenge; instead, he speaks of providence: "It was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you." What they meant for harm, God has already woven into a larger story of life.

This hidden providence also runs through the Gospel. Jesus sends the Twelve out with nothing beyond trust—no wealth, no security, no surplus. They are to proclaim that the Kingdom of heaven is at hand, to heal and restore freely. Like Joseph, they are invited to discover that God is already at work in what is received and what is given. Nothing is wasted, not even vulnerability. The saints we remember today—Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions—lived this truth, going out with nothing but faith, often at the cost of their lives. Yet their witness proclaimed: the Kingdom is near, even in suffering.

The temptation is to think mission depends on having enough—enough strength, answers, or control. But Jesus

overturns this logic. The Gospel is not a transaction but a gift already received: “You received without charge; give without charge.” We do not earn God’s love before sharing it; we pass on what we have first been given.

Joseph only understood his suffering in retrospect. The disciples only understood their mission after they were sent. We too often recognize God’s presence only when we look back on what once felt like absence. That is why Jesus calls us to trust in the moment of sending, not only in hindsight.

There are times we resist receiving freely because we want control, and times we hesitate to give freely because we fear emptiness. Yet what is given by God does not diminish when shared; it becomes life for others.

A story is told of a young volunteer who travelled to a remote village with little more than basic training. At first there was little he could do. Yet he began by listening, tending wounds, and offering what he had. Gradually, others joined, supplies arrived, and a small clinic emerged where none had existed. He later said he thought he had

gone to give, but discovered he had also been sent to receive—hospitality, wisdom, and faith.

That is the pattern of the Kingdom: what is freely received becomes freely given, and what is freely given returns as grace we did not expect.

As we continue this Eucharist, we ask for the grace to trust that God is already present in the hidden threads of our lives, and to become willing instruments of that presence.

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

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered in gratitude for what we have received and in readiness to give freely, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, the gifts we bring before you, and grant that, trusting in your providence, we may learn to receive with gratitude and to give with generous and open hearts, becoming instruments of your saving love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

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 reveal your love as both tender and faithful,  
guiding your people with the care of a parent  
and never abandoning those you have called your own.  
In all things, seen and unseen,  
you are already at work,  
drawing good even from what we do not yet understand.

In your Son, you send us forth without fear,  
to proclaim that your Kingdom is near  
and to give freely what we have received.

You teach us that your grace is never diminished in  
sharing, but becomes a source of life for the world.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say, as children who have received everything  
from the Father and trust in his providence:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and free us from the fear that keeps us from trusting in  
your providence. Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, confident in your grace already at work within us,  
we may receive your gifts with humility and share them  
generously with others, and, 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
which receives your gifts with gratitude and seeks to share  
them in love,

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

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who gives himself freely for the life of the world  
and invites us to receive and to give in the same spirit of  
love.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

We have received more than we can fully understand.  
In this quiet moment, we recognize that grace has already  
been at work—  
in what we have been given and in what we are called to  
share.  
Nothing offered in love is ever lost;  
it becomes part of God's hidden work in the world.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that nourished by this holy Sacrament,  
we may trust more deeply in your providence

and grow in the freedom to give without counting the cost,  
as we have received without measure from you.

Through Christ our Lord.

### **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and deepen your trust in his loving  
providence,  
that you may recognize his work in your lives  
and share his gifts with generous hearts.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

### **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, receiving God's grace and sharing it  
freely with others.

### **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

What you have received from God is already enough—  
trust it, share it, and you will discover that grace grows as it  
is given.

10 July, 2026 – Friday, 14th Week in Ord. Time

*Hosea 14,2-10; Mt. 10,16-23*

St Canute IV of Denmark, king and martyr,

*We are never alone when we witness to Christ*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A violinist once rehearsed alone in a small church hall late in the evening. She played beautifully, but every time she imagined an audience, her hands began to shake. One night, she confided to her teacher that she was afraid of being judged if she ever played in public. The teacher simply replied, “You are already playing for Someone who hears you fully.”

Today the Church commemorates St Canute IV of Denmark, king and martyr, who chose fidelity to Christ over the security of power. His life reminds us that faith is not a private ornament but a public witness, even when it carries a cost.

In today’s Gospel (Mt 10:16-23), Jesus prepares his disciples for resistance and misunderstanding. Yet the heart of his message is not fear but trust: the Spirit will

speak through them when they are tested.

We too can find ourselves silent when faith becomes inconvenient, or hesitant when gospel values are challenged in our culture. And so, as we gather, we ask the Lord to forgive our fears and our silence, and to renew in us the courage to witness.

## **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you call us to witness to you with courage and trust, even in the face of fear: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you promise that your Spirit will speak within us when we are tested: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you remain with us always, strengthening us to be faithful in word and in life: Lord, have mercy.

## **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and free us from fear, that we may trust in his Spirit who speaks within us and bear faithful witness to Christ, and bring us to everlasting life.

## COLLECT

O God, who never leave your people alone but strengthen them by the presence of your Spirit, grant, we pray, that we may bear courageous witness to your Son in every circumstance of life, trusting that you are always with us in trial and in peace. 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 young Christian stood before a Roman official. He had been accused of refusing to burn incense to the emperor. The official leaned forward and said, “Just say the words, and you will live in peace.” The young man hesitated, not because he was uncertain, but because he knew that truth sometimes costs more than safety. In that silence, the Spirit gave him courage, and he replied, “I cannot deny the One who gave me life.” He was led away, but not alone. That scene echoes what Jesus says in today’s Gospel: *“You will be dragged before governors and kings for my*

*sake... but when they hand you over, do not worry... the Spirit of your Father will speak in you.”* The red thread running through this Gospel is simple yet demanding: we are never alone when we witness to Christ—the Spirit speaks in us.

Jesus is not preparing his disciples for comfort but for mission in a world that often misunderstands or resists them. He speaks of division even within families, of suspicion, and of persecution. It is a stark realism, and it is important not to soften it. The Gospel does not always harmonise easily with every cultural value of its time. That tension remains in every age.

In our own time, as in the days of St Canute IV, witness can still come at a cost. Canute’s desire to strengthen Christian life in Denmark led him to face opposition and ultimately martyrdom. His courage was not rooted in political strength but in fidelity to Christ. The same Spirit that sustained him is the Spirit promised in today’s Gospel.

Yet most of us do not face dramatic trials. Our challenge is often quieter: the temptation to stay silent when faith is questioned, to step back when Christian values are

inconvenient, or to reduce discipleship to something private. But Jesus does not call for hidden discipleship. He calls for steady courage, the kind that trusts the Spirit more than public approval.

A second-century believer once stood in a crowded arena, aware that denial could save his life. Instead, he made the sign of the cross openly. As the crowd grew restless, he reportedly said, “I cannot hide the One who has never hidden Himself from me.” In that moment, his fear was overtaken by trust, and his witness became prayer.

The same Spirit who spoke through martyrs speaks quietly in us today—when we forgive instead of retaliating, when we speak truth without aggression, when we hold to Christ without shame. That is where the Gospel becomes flesh again in our lives.

And years ago, in a school corridor, a teenager was asked by friends whether he still went to Mass. There was a pause, a smile, and then a simple answer: “Yes. It matters to me.” Nothing dramatic followed, no applause, no conflict. But in that ordinary moment, faith was not hidden. It was simply lived.

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

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered with trust in God who strengthens us in every trial, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Receive, O Lord, the gifts we bring before you,  
and grant that, strengthened by your grace,  
we may remain steadfast in faith  
and bear witness to your Son with courage and trust.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

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 do not abandon those who follow your Son,  
but remain close to them in every trial and difficulty.  
When fear arises and voices oppose the truth,  
your Spirit speaks within the hearts of the faithful,  
giving them words of wisdom and courage.  
In every age you raise up witnesses to your love,

who, sustained by your presence,  
proclaim the Gospel not only in strength but in weakness,  
showing that your power is made perfect in trust.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

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

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say, trusting in the Father who is always with us  
and never leaves us alone:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and free us from the fear that keeps us from witnessing to  
your truth.

Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, trusting in the presence of your Spirit,  
we may remain faithful in every trial  
and confident in your unfailing help,

and, 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I  
give you; look not on our sins, but on the faith of your  
Church, which trusts in your presence and seeks to  
witness to you with courage, 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 remains with us and strengthens us  
to bear witness to his love in every circumstance.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

We are not alone.

In every moment of hesitation, every quiet act of courage, the Spirit is already at work within us.

Even the simplest witness, offered in trust, becomes a place where God's presence is made known.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that nourished by this holy Sacrament,  
we may be strengthened in faith  
and grow in courage to witness to your Son,  
trusting always in the presence of your Spirit within us.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and strengthen your hearts,  
that you may never be overcome by fear  
but trust in his Spirit who speaks within you.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, confident that you are never alone as you witness to Christ.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

When you speak or live your faith, you are never on your own—the Spirit is already within you, giving you the courage you need.

11 July, 2026 – Saturday, 14th Week in Ord. Time

St. Benedict, Abbot

*Is 6,1-8; Mt 10,24-33*

*“Do not be afraid, you are worth more than many sparrows.”*

## INTRODUCTION

A civil engineer once oversaw the construction of a long suspension bridge. After months of work, a visitor asked what concerned him most. He replied, “Not the towers you can see—but the smallest bolts hidden inside the steel. If even one is ignored, the whole structure is weakened.” The visitor was struck by how something so unseen could matter so much.

This attentiveness to hidden detail quietly echoes a deeper truth celebrated in the life of Saint Benedict, Abbot, whom the Church remembers today. His Rule shaped communities where nothing was considered too small for God—daily work, silence, prayer, even the arrangement of a table. Everything was lived *coram Deo*, before the gaze of God who sees all things.

In the first reading, Isaiah is overwhelmed by the holiness of God, while in the Gospel Jesus speaks of a God who notices even the fall of a sparrow. Between awe and intimacy, grandeur and detail, we are invited to rediscover a God who is both infinitely above us and intimately close to us.

That tension is also within our own hearts. We often live as if some parts of life escape God’s attention, or as if we ourselves are insignificant. As we prepare now for the penitential act, we acknowledge those moments when we have doubted God’s care, failed to trust his nearness, or forgotten our own dignity in his sight.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you reveal the holiness of God and call us into his presence without fear: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you remind us that we are known and loved, worth more than many sparrows: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you send us forth with courage, trusting in the Father who sees all things: Lord, have mercy.

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and free us from fear, that we may trust in his loving care and respond generously to his call, and bring us to everlasting life.

## COLLECT

O God, who reveal your greatness in what is exalted and your tender care in what is small and hidden, grant, we pray, that we may live always in your presence and be freed from every fear, knowing that we are precious in your sight. 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.

## HOMILY

Isaiah's vision in today's first reading begins with overwhelming majesty. He sees the Lord seated on a high throne, the hem of his robe filling the temple. The air trembles with the cry of the seraphim: "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.*" Isaiah's immediate reaction is not

comfort but crisis: "*Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips.*" The closer he comes to God, the more he becomes aware of his own smallness.

And yet, it is precisely this encounter that prepares him for mission: when a burning coal touches his lips, fear gives way to readiness—"*Here I am, send me.*" The red thread running through this entire encounter is simple but demanding: "Do not be afraid, you are worth more than many sparrows." The God who is infinitely holy is also the God who calls personally.

In the Gospel, Jesus brings that truth into even sharper focus. Not a single sparrow falls unnoticed by the Father. Every hair on our head is counted. This is not poetic exaggeration; it is Jesus revealing the depth of divine attentiveness. If God is present to the smallest creature, then no human life can ever be considered insignificant or forgotten.

This is where fear begins to lose its grip. Jesus repeats it three times in this missionary discourse: *do not be afraid*. Fear shrinks our vision of God and of ourselves. Saint

Benedict understood this deeply in his monastic life. His communities were built on trust in God's presence in the ordinary, where prayer, work, and fraternity were not escapes from reality but the very place where God is encountered and fear is slowly dismantled.

To live without fear, then, is not to ignore danger or struggle, but to live anchored in a deeper truth: we are known, fully and personally, by God. His knowledge is not distant observation but loving attention. That is why Jesus can say, even in the face of hostility and misunderstanding, that those who confess him will be confessed before the Father.

A story is told of a young nurse working in a crowded hospital during a severe crisis. Overwhelmed and exhausted, she was tempted to remain silent about her faith, afraid of being judged or dismissed. Yet one night, as she gently held the hand of a dying patient who had no family present, she whispered a prayer aloud. The patient, barely conscious, squeezed her hand in response. In that moment, she understood that courage is not the absence

of fear, but the quiet decision to act as though God is truly present in every detail of a human life.

As Isaiah was sent, and as the disciples were sent, so too are we sent—into a world where fear is common but never final, because the God who sees the sparrow also sees us.

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

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered with trust in the God who sees all things and cares for each of us, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, the offerings we bring before you,  
and grant that, living always in your presence,  
we may offer ourselves with confidence and trust,  
knowing that nothing given in your name is unnoticed.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## **PREFACE**

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 God of infinite majesty,  
whose glory fills heaven and earth,  
yet you bend close in loving care  
to all that you have made.

Not even the smallest creature escapes your gaze,  
and you know each of us more deeply than we know  
ourselves.

In your presence, fear is overcome by trust,  
and those who feel unworthy are called and sent.  
You strengthen your servants to live without fear,  
grounded in the certainty of your faithful love.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say, trusting in the Father who knows us, loves  
us, and cares for every detail of our lives:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and free us from the fears that diminish our trust in you.  
Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, confident in your loving care for all that is small and  
hidden, we may live with courage and faith,  
and, 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles: Peace I leave  
you, my peace I give you;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
which trusts in the Father's loving care and seeks to live  
without fear, 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 knows us completely and loves us without measure,  
and who calls us to trust in the Father's care.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

In this Eucharist, we have been seen and loved.  
Nothing in our lives is too small or too hidden for God.  
In his presence, fear gives way to trust,  
and we rediscover our worth in his eyes.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, we pray, O Lord,  
that nourished by this holy Sacrament,  
we may live without fear,  
trusting always in your loving care  
and responding generously to your call.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and free you from all fear,  
that you may live with confidence in his loving care  
and walk always in his presence.

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

### **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, trusting that you are precious in God's  
sight.

### **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

Nothing in your life is too small for God's attention—so do  
not be afraid; you are deeply known and greatly loved.