

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 55:10–11; Rom 8:18–23; Mt 13:1–23

INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, a woman told a simple but striking story. She had signed up for a small gardening course in the city. At the end of the first session, each participant received a tiny packet of seeds—nothing special, just ordinary wildflower seeds. The instructor said only one sentence: “Don’t judge these seeds by what you see now. Just plant them and trust what you cannot see.” She forgot about them. The packet lay in a drawer for weeks. Months later, after a storm had stripped a neglected corner of her garden, she scattered the forgotten seeds almost absentmindedly. Nothing seemed to happen for a long time. Then, slowly, green shoots appeared. Eventually the once-empty patch became the most colourful part of her garden.

What struck her most was not the beauty, but the patience hidden inside the process. Life had been working long before anything was visible.

We live in a world that prefers instant results. We expect

immediate outcomes in work, relationships, and even faith. If nothing visible happens quickly, we assume nothing is happening at all. Yet most real growth—human and spiritual—does not obey this impatience.

That is exactly where today’s Scriptures speak. They invite us to trust what is hidden, to recognize what is slow, and to believe that God is still at work even when nothing seems to be happening on the surface. And so we turn to him with our needs and our failures, and acknowledge how often we fail to notice his quiet work in us.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus Christ, you sow the seed of God’s word generously in our lives, yet we often fail to receive it with open hearts. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you teach us that your word can transform even what seems dry or barren, yet we often lose hope too quickly. Christ, have mercy. Lord Jesus Christ, you call us to become fruitful soil, yet we allow worries, distractions, and indifference to choke your word within us. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and make our hearts fertile soil for His Word,
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Or

May almighty God
who sows the seed of his Word into the hidden soil of our
lives, and who never tires of trusting what he has planted
in us, have mercy on us.

May he forgive us for the times
we have closed our hearts like hardened paths,
for the times we have allowed worry and distraction
to choke the growth of his grace within us,
and for the times we have doubted his quiet work in us.
May he free us from what prevents life from growing,
and lead us gently into everlasting life. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

As we have heard, God never stops sowing the seed of his
Word into our lives—even when the growth is hidden or
slow. With grateful hearts for this generous love, let us now
glorify him together:

Glory to God in the highest...

COLLECT

O God of patience and mercy,
you sow the seed of your Word generously in the soil of
human hearts,
and you never tire of calling us to new life.

Open our ears to hear your voice,
soften what is hardened within us,
and free us from all that chokes your grace.

That your Word may bear fruit in us in abundance,
we ask 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 told the story of inheriting a neglected garden behind his new home. It had once been beautiful, but now it was overgrown with weeds, the soil was hard in places, rocky in others, and choked with thorns. He thought of clearing it all at once, but the task felt overwhelming. So he began with a small patch. He loosened the soil, removed stones, pulled out weeds, and planted a few seeds. For weeks, nothing seemed to happen. Then one morning, small green shoots appeared. That little corner began to change. And slowly, over time, the whole garden followed. That story is very close to what Jesus is speaking about today.

All three readings speak of growth—but not quick, visible, measurable growth. Isaiah compares God’s Word to rain and snow that fall quietly on the earth, soaking in, unseen, yet making it fruitful. Saint Paul tells us that all creation is “groaning in labor pains,” waiting for something not yet fully visible. And Jesus gives us the image of a sower scattering seed—generously, even recklessly—on all kinds of

ground.

At first glance, it does not look very efficient. Much of the seed seems wasted: some falls on the path, some on rocky ground, some among thorns. Only a portion bears fruit. But Jesus is not teaching farming techniques. He is revealing how God works.

God does not calculate before giving. God does not wait for perfect conditions. The seed is scattered everywhere—into every kind of life, every kind of heart, every kind of situation. Because God trusts the power of the seed.

And that changes how we understand our lives.

We are used to measuring things: success and failure, progress and results. If nothing seems to happen, we assume nothing is happening. But the image of the seed tells us otherwise. Some of the most important growth in life is hidden. Like the child watching seeds on a windowsill, we may see nothing for a long time. But beneath the surface, something is already at work.

There is a story about bamboo that illustrates this. After planting, for several years there is no visible growth at all.

You water it, care for it, and still nothing appears. Then suddenly, within a short time, it shoots up dramatically. But the real growth was happening underground all along—roots spreading, foundations being laid.

Faith is often like that. Prayer that feels dry. Efforts that seem unproductive. Relationships that don't improve quickly. It can all feel like barren soil. And yet the Gospel says: do not judge too quickly. The seed is alive.

But Jesus is also very realistic. Not all soil receives the seed in the same way. And if we are honest, we recognize all four types of soil within ourselves.

Sometimes we are like the path—hardened by routine or disappointment. The Word touches us, but does not enter deeply.

Sometimes we are like rocky ground—quick to respond with enthusiasm, but without roots. When difficulty comes, faith fades.

Sometimes we are like thorny ground—good things begin, but slowly get crowded out by worries, distractions, ambitions. Not bad things—just too many things.

And sometimes—perhaps more often than we think—we are good soil. The Word takes root quietly and begins to change us: in patience, in forgiveness, in small acts of love that no one notices.

So the question is not: “Am I good soil or bad soil?” The more honest question is: “What is happening in the soil of my life right now?”

Because soil can change.

A hardened path can be broken open. Rocky ground can be deepened. Thorns can be cleared. Like that man in the garden, we do not need to fix everything at once. Even a small space given to God is enough for something to begin.

There is another simple story. A soap manufacturer once complained to a priest: “Christianity has been around for centuries, and look at the world—there is still so much evil.” The priest said nothing, but pointed to a dirty child playing in the street and replied, “Soap exists too, but it only works if it is used.” Then he added, “So does faith.” The seed must be received.

And this leads us further. The parable is not only about being soil. We are also, in a sense, the seed—and the sower.

We are the seed: each of our lives is something God has planted in this world to grow and bear fruit. Often we do not see the fruit ourselves. But over time—sometimes only in hindsight—we realize that something has grown: in our character, in our relationships, in quiet faithfulness.

And we are also the sower. Every day, we scatter seeds—by what we say, by how we act, by how we treat others.

Parents sow into their children. Friends sow into one another. Even a single word, a gesture, a line of Scripture, can take root in someone's life in ways we may never see.

A simple example: a family that reads a short passage of Scripture together each night. Nothing dramatic. But over time, a different spirit shapes that home—more patience, more understanding, more forgiveness. The seed is small, but it is real.

And this is where hope becomes very concrete.

Because we often feel discouraged. We look at the world,

or even our own lives, and see more thorns than fruit. Saint Paul understood that feeling well: creation itself is “groaning.” Life is unfinished. Faith can feel fragile.

But Paul does not end with despair. He says this is like labor pains—something is being born.

And Jesus does not end his parable with the failed seeds. He ends with the harvest: thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold.

That is the logic of God. Not everything bears fruit—but what does, is beyond expectation.

So the invitation today is simple, but not easy:

to trust the seed,

to make space in the soil,

and to keep sowing.

Even when we do not see results.

Even when growth is slow.

Even when much seems lost.

Because the power is not finally in us—it is in the Word that God continues to give, generously, persistently, without calculation.

Let me end with one more story.

A teacher once gave each student a seed and asked them to plant it in a cup and bring it back after a week. One child came back with an empty pot, embarrassed and ashamed. “I watered it every day,” he said, “but nothing grew.” The teacher smiled and said, “You are the only honest one. I gave all of you boiled seeds—they could never grow.” The others had replaced theirs with new seeds to appear successful.

Then the teacher said, “Growth cannot be faked. But where there is real life, even if it is hidden, it will come in its time.”

God does not ask us to produce visible success. He asks for something more real: openness, patience, and fidelity. Because His Word—like rain on the earth, like seed in the soil—will not return empty.

And in ways we may not yet see, it is already bringing life to birth. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREED

We have heard today that God’s Word is living and powerful, never returning empty, but quietly bringing forth fruit in those who receive it.

Let us now profess our faith in this God who sows, sustains, and brings all creation to fulfilment:

ALTERNATIVE CREED (for personal meditation only)

I believe in God,
who sows the seed of life in every heart
and whose Word, like rain upon the earth,
never returns empty.

I believe that God works patiently and faithfully,
even in hidden ways,
bringing growth where we see little,
and life where we expect none.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,
the seed sown into our world,
who entered the soil of our human life,
died, and rose again
so that we might bear fruit in Him.

I believe that within us lies the soil of our lives—
sometimes hard, sometimes shallow, sometimes
crowded—

yet always capable of being renewed by grace.

I believe that God has placed within us
the power for new life to grow,
and that we are called not only to receive the Word,
but also to sow it in love, patience, and truth.

I believe that the Spirit of God is at work within us,
softening what is hardened,
deepening what is shallow,
clearing what is crowded,
and bringing forth a harvest beyond expectation.

I believe that we do not grow alone:
God gives us sisters and brothers
to walk with us, to sow with us,
and to share in the joy of the harvest.

I believe that even in a world that groans in waiting,
God's life is already taking root,
and His Kingdom is quietly growing among us. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we bring forward these gifts of bread and wine fruits of
the soil and our toil, let us also offer our lives, and pray our
sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God of all creation,
accept these gifts we bring before you,
and transform them by the power of your Spirit.

As grain is gathered into bread and grapes into wine,
so gather our scattered lives into unity with Christ.

May we who receive these gifts
also become fruitful in faith, hope, and 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,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you are the sower who never ceases to sow,
scattering the seed of your Word with generous love

into the fields of human history.

Even when the soil is hardened by indifference,
or shallow through fear,
or choked by anxiety,
you do not withdraw your hand.

In Christ your Son, the living Word,
you have entered the world yourself as the seed of life,
falling into the earth to rise in glory
and to bring forth a harvest without end.

Through him the barren world is made fruitful,
and creation itself is brought to its fulfilment.

And so, with angels and saints,
we praise your glory without end:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

As God continues to sow his Word into our lives,
let us pray with trust for the coming of his kingdom,
using the prayer Jesus himself taught us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free our hearts from all that hardens the soil of our
lives, distracts our attention, or chokes the seed of your
Word within us.

Break open what has become closed within us,
soften what has grown resistant,
and quiet the anxieties that prevent your Word from taking
root and growing in hidden patience.

Strengthened by your mercy, may we remain steadfast in
hope amid what is still unseen, as we await the blessed
hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Word that brings life and reconciliation;
look not on our failures,
but on the faith you have sown in your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will,
who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lord, the living Word,
the seed of new life given for us.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

In silence, we recognize that God's Word is still at work
within us—often quietly, often unseen.

Like seed beneath the soil, grace grows in hidden places:
in patience we did not expect, in forgiveness we thought
impossible, in hope we thought lost.

Let us allow him time. God is never finished sowing.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,
you have nourished us with the bread of life
and the living Word of your Son.

Let what we have received
take root deeply in our hearts,
so that our lives may bear fruit that remains.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

May the Lord bless you
and make your hearts fertile soil for His Word.

May He strengthen what is weak,
deepen what is shallow,
and clear away all that hinders growth.

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace,
to sow the Word of God in your lives and in the world.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“What I allow to be planted in my heart today
will become the harvest of my life tomorrow.”

13 July, 2026 – Monday, 15th Week in Ord. Time

Is 1,10-17; Mt 10.34-11,1

Red thread: "The light of Christ shines in costly choices and in small acts of love."

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a man who once visited a famous cathedral. He stood in awe before the stained-glass windows—brilliant, radiant, full of colour. But when he stepped outside and looked at those same windows from the street, they appeared dull and lifeless. An old caretaker nearby smiled and said, "They only shine when the light is within."

That simple remark holds a quiet truth. When the light of Christ is within us, even the smallest actions can shine with meaning and beauty. Without that inner light, even great works can lose their radiance.

Today, the Church also remembers Saint Henry, a ruler who tried to bring justice and reform to his people, often facing opposition and misunderstanding. His life reminds us that to stand for what is right, to let the light shine within,

is not always easy. It can create tension, even division, but it is the path of faithfulness.

As we gather now, we may recognize that we have not always allowed that inner light to guide our choices. We have sometimes chosen comfort over truth, indifference over kindness. And so, we prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries by asking the Lord for mercy and forgiveness.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are the light who calls us to live in truth even when it is difficult: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you teach us that even the smallest act of love is precious in your sight: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you unite us to yourself so that our lives may shine with your light in the world: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and awaken in us the light of Christ, that we may choose what is right with courage and serve others with humble love, and bring us to everlasting life.

COLLECT

O God, who call us to live in the light of your Son and to manifest his presence in both great and small acts of love, grant, we pray, that we may remain faithful in truth and charity, and so bear witness to your Kingdom in all we do. 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 young teacher once noticed a student coming to school every day without lunch. Quietly, without drawing attention, she began placing a small sandwich and a bottle of water on his desk each morning before others arrived. She never spoke of it. Years later, that student—now an adult—said those simple gestures sustained him, not only physically but emotionally. “It told me,” he said, “that someone saw me.”

That is the “cup of cold water” Jesus speaks of in today’s Gospel. Small, almost insignificant in appearance, yet in

the eyes of Christ it carries eternal weight. God’s light is revealed both in great sacrifices and in quiet acts of love. Yet the Gospel begins with a stark saying: “I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.” Jesus is not endorsing violence, but naming a reality: to follow him can bring division, even within families. Choosing truth over comfort, justice over silence, faith over fear often comes at a cost. We see this in our own world. Those who stand for what is right are not always applauded; sometimes they are rejected or misunderstood. Saint Henry experienced this tension in his efforts at reform and justice, yet he remained faithful.

From there, the Gospel shifts from the demanding to the simple: welcoming another, offering hospitality, giving even a cup of cold water. Jesus intentionally links the great demands of discipleship with small daily gestures. The same faith that requires courage in moments of trial is lived out in ordinary acts of kindness.

Discipleship, then, is not only about decisive moments but about daily attentiveness—recognising Christ in the other,

especially in the vulnerable, and responding with care. “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me,” Jesus says. In every act of welcome, Christ is both present and encountered.

The first reading from Isaiah deepens this call: God rejects worship that is not joined to just living—“Cease to do evil, learn to do good.” True worship is shown in lives shaped by justice and compassion. Even the smallest act, like a cup of cold water given in love, carries more weight than empty ritual.

So we are left with a simple but demanding truth: greatness in faith is revealed both in the crosses we carry and in the kindnesses we offer. The same light of Christ shines in both.

Let me end with a story.

A traveller once arrived in a village at dusk, tired and thirsty. He knocked on many doors, but no one answered. Finally, a child opened a small home and offered him a cup of water. Years later, that traveller—now a man of influence—returned and brought great help to the village.

When asked why, he said, “Because once, when I had nothing, someone here gave me a cup of water.”

We may never see the full impact of our small acts. Yet in Christ, none of them are lost. In his light, even the smallest act of love becomes something eternal.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered in the light of Christ who dwells within us, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look kindly, O Lord, upon the gifts we bring before you, and grant that, enlightened by your grace, we may offer our lives in truth and charity, so that even our smallest acts may shine with your light. 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 light that never fades,
and in your Son you have entered into the world
to illuminate every heart with truth and love.
He calls us to follow him not only in great sacrifices
but also in the hidden fidelity of daily life,
where your grace is revealed in quiet acts of kindness.
Though your truth may divide what is false from what is
good,
it always leads us to deeper communion with you
and to a love that is stronger than fear.
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 called to live in the light of the
Father's love:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free us from the fear that dims the light of your
presence within us, that, guided by your Spirit,
we may choose what is right and live in faithful 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 seeks to walk in your light and serve in your love,
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 is the light of the world
and who nourishes us with his love,
so that we may shine with his presence in all we do.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

We have received the One who is our light.
Now that light is placed within us, quietly and faithfully.
Even the smallest act of love, done in him,
becomes radiant with eternal meaning.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, O Lord,
that nourished by this holy Sacrament,
we may carry your light within us always,
and express it in both courageous choices and simple acts
of love,
so that our lives may glorify you.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you in his light,
that your life may shine with truth and love in all you do.
And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, letting the light of Christ shine through
your life.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The light of Christ is seen most clearly not in greatness,
but in love—especially in the small, faithful acts no one
else notices.

14 July, 2026 – Tuesday, 15th Week in Ord. Time

Is 7,1-9; Mt 11,20-24

Red thread: “Grace offered, grace received.”

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once spent weeks preparing her students for an important exam. She gave them notes, extra classes, even personal encouragement. When the results came out, a number of students who had every opportunity to succeed had simply not bothered to prepare. The teacher was not angry so much as deeply disappointed. “I gave you everything you needed,” she said quietly, “but you did not take it.” Her sadness came from care, not from wounded pride.

Today, the Church invites us to remember Saint Camillus de Lellis, a man who knew what it meant both to waste grace and then to receive it deeply. As a young man, he struggled with addiction and aimlessness, but when he finally opened his heart to God’s grace, his life changed completely. He became a servant of the sick, seeing Christ in them, and responding generously to what God offered

him.

Both the teacher’s experience and the life of Saint Camillus point us toward a simple but challenging truth: grace is given, but it must be received. God never forces His gifts upon us; He offers, invites, and waits.

And so, as we come before the Lord today, we might ask ourselves honestly: how often have we failed to receive what God is offering us—His word, His guidance, His love? With humble hearts, let us acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you speak to us in countless ways, yet we are slow to listen: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you offer healing and conversion, yet we often remain unchanged: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us daily to new life, yet we frequently turn away: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God
who continually offers us His grace
and calls us back when we fail to receive it,
forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

COLLECT

O God, who in your Son continually sows the seeds of
grace in the soil of human hearts,
grant that we may not remain indifferent to your gifts,
but receive them with humility and allow them to bear
lasting fruit in us.

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 man once planted an orchard and tended it with great
care. He watered the trees, protected them, and did
everything necessary for their growth. After several
seasons, most bore fruit, but a few remained barren. He
did not neglect them; if anything, he gave them more

attention. Yet still they produced nothing. Standing among
them, he felt not anger, but a quiet sorrow: everything had
been given, yet nothing had been received.

In today's Gospel, Jesus stands before Chorazin,
Bethsaida, and Capernaum with a similar sorrow. These
were not distant or hostile places, but towns where he had
preached, healed, and revealed God's presence. They had
seen much, yet responded little. His words are not
rejection, but the grief of love that is not welcomed.

"Grace offered, grace received." That is the thread running
through today's readings.

We like to think we are in control—of outcomes, even of
responses. But one of the hardest truths is that we can
offer, but we cannot force acceptance. Even Jesus does
not compel belief. Love, by its nature, must be freely
received.

This can be painful. Parents experience it when children
turn away from what they were taught. Those who serve
others know it when efforts seem to bear no fruit. Jesus
himself knows this experience of apparent indifference.

Yet he does not stop. His lament is not the end. He continues to preach, heal, and call. The grace that is not received in one moment is offered again in another. God's patience does not run out.

The challenge, then, is clear: am I truly receiving the grace offered to me? We, too, can be like those towns—surrounded by God's word, the sacraments, and daily invitations to conversion, yet remaining distracted or unmoved.

The consolation is equally clear: God does not withdraw. Even when grace is refused, it is not revoked. Like Saint Camillus de Lellis, we may take time to open ourselves, but God keeps offering.

So today is an invitation, not to discouragement, but to attentiveness and openness.

Let us return to the orchard. Imagine one barren tree finally beginning to bear fruit. The gardener's sorrow becomes joy—not because of his effort, but because life has finally been received.

That is God's hope for each of us: "Grace offered, grace

received." May we not let his gifts fall unused, but welcome them and bear fruit from them.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Brothers and sisters,
in order that what He graciously gives us
we may also learn to receive with faithful hearts, and let us
now pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord,
as we present these gifts to you,
may we also present open and receptive hearts,
so that the grace you continually offer us
may not be received in vain, but transformed into faithful
living.

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 though we often fail to receive your grace,
you never cease to offer it;
though we are slow to respond,
you remain patient and faithful;
and though your word is sometimes ignored,
you continue to speak it in love.

In Christ your Son, you have shown us the fullness of your
gift,

a grace that seeks not to compel but to invite,
not to overwhelm but to awaken the heart.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints,
we praise you, as without end we acclaim:
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say, trusting in
the grace He continually offers us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and grant us the grace to recognize and receive the gifts
you continually place before us,
so that freed from indifference and hesitation,
we may live in faithful openness to your word,
as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our
Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you offer us your peace as a gift of grace freely given,
not as the world gives, but as only you can give;
look not on our failure to receive your gifts fully,
but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her unity and peace in accordance
with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who continually offers himself to us as grace
and life.

Blessed are those called to receive him with open and
trusting hearts.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord has not ceased to offer us His grace in this
Eucharist.

Now He asks only that we receive what He has given.

What is freely offered becomes life for us only when it is
welcomed with faith.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant us, O Lord,
that having received the gift of your Son,
we may not let your grace remain unfruitful in us,
but may live each day more fully in the gift we have
received.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord who continually offers you His grace
enlighten your hearts to receive it with humility;
may He strengthen you to respond with faith;
and may He bring to completion in you the good He has
begun.

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth,
not indifferent to the grace you have received,
but attentive to the Lord who continues to offer Himself to
you.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Grace is never absent; it is always offered.
The real question is not whether God gives, but whether I
receive.

15 July, 2026 – Wed. 15th Week in Ord. Time

St. Bonaventure: *Is 10,5-7. 13-16; Mt 11, 25-27*

Red thread: "Only the humble heart can receive what God longs to give."

INTRODUCTION

A university professor once visited a rural village and struck up a conversation with an elderly farmer. The professor spoke at length about science, philosophy, and the great thinkers of history. When he paused, he asked the farmer, "Have you studied any of these things?" The farmer smiled and said, "No, sir. I have not studied much—but I have learned to trust the rain, to care for the soil, and to thank God each day." The professor later admitted to a friend, "I knew many things, but that man seemed to understand life better than I do."

Today, as we celebrate St. Bonaventure, a brilliant theologian and Doctor of the Church, we are reminded that true wisdom is not opposed to learning, but it is never reduced to it. Bonaventure himself, though immensely learned, remained deeply humble—always seeking God

not only with his mind, but with the simplicity of a loving heart.

Both our readings today contrast two attitudes: the pride that closes itself to God, and the humility that opens itself to Him. The prophet Isaiah criticizes the arrogance of the Assyrian ruler, while Jesus rejoices that divine truths are revealed to "little ones."

As we gather to celebrate these sacred mysteries, we are invited to ask: where do we stand? Are we self-reliant to the point of forgetting God, or are we open and receptive like children? Let us acknowledge our sins, especially the times we have relied more on ourselves than on God, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate these mysteries worthily.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call us to become little before the Father:
Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you reveal the Father to the humble and the open-hearted: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you invite us to trust rather than to rely on our own wisdom: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,
who reveals His wisdom to the humble
and pours His grace upon those who trust in Him,
forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

COLLECT

O God,
who in your Son reveal yourself to the humble and conceal
your mysteries from the proud,
grant us a heart that is simple and open,
so that we may receive the wisdom you freely give
and live in faithful dependence on your grace. Do not allow
us to be closed in on ourselves, but make us ever ready to
be taught by your truth.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
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 apprentice once worked under a master craftsman. Eager to prove himself, he often interrupted, insisting he already knew how to do each task. One day, the master handed him a delicate piece of woodwork and said, “Finish this.” The apprentice rushed, confident in his skill—and ruined it. Quietly, the master took another piece and said, “Watch.” This time, the apprentice said nothing. He observed, listened, and learned. Later he would say, “I only began to grow when I stopped trying to prove I already knew.”

This simple story captures the heart of today’s readings: only the humble heart can receive what God longs to give. In the first reading, the king of Assyria is full of himself. He boasts of his strength, his intelligence, his achievements. He forgets that he is only an instrument in God’s hands—“like an axe in the hand of the one who wields it.” His pride blinds him. He cannot see beyond himself, and so he cannot recognize God at work.

In the Gospel, Jesus points to a similar blindness among

“the learned and the clever.” These were not ignorant people—they were experts, scholars, deeply religious. Yet, their certainty became a barrier. Because they thought they already understood God, they could not recognize Him standing before them.

In contrast, Jesus rejoices in the “little ones”—not children in age, but those who are humble, open, aware of their need. They do not come with answers; they come with hunger. They do not claim mastery; they seek relationship. And so, they receive what others miss.

Here lies the paradox of the Gospel: only the humble heart can receive what God longs to give.

This does not mean that learning or intelligence is bad. St. Bonaventure himself was one of the greatest minds in the Church. But what made him truly great was not just his intellect—it was his humility. He once said that knowledge without love is empty. For him, theology was not just about understanding God, but about encountering Him. He remained, in the deepest sense, a “little one” before God. The Gospel today invites us into that same posture. Jesus

speaks of his intimate relationship with the Father—“No one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” This is not knowledge we can achieve; it is a gift we must receive. And to receive it, we must become small.

In our own lives, this can be challenging. We live in a world that values self-sufficiency, confidence, and control. We are encouraged to have answers, to assert ourselves, to rely on our own strength. But the spiritual life moves in a different direction. It calls us to trust, to surrender, to admit that we do not have everything figured out.

Sometimes, it is $\kappa\eta\rho\iota\tau\eta$ in moments of weakness, confusion, or failure that we become most open to God. When our certainties are shaken, we begin to listen. When our pride is humbled, we begin to see. When we realize our need, we make space for grace.

Only the humble heart can receive what God longs to give. Let us return to where we began.

There was once a child trying to help his father carry a heavy bag of groceries. The child insisted, “I can do it

myself!” He struggled, nearly dropping everything. Finally, tired and frustrated, he looked up and said, “Dad, can you help me?” The father smiled, took the weight, and together they carried it home.

In the end, the child did not lose anything by asking for help—he gained closeness, support, and strength he did not have on his own.

So it is with us and God. When we stop insisting that we can manage everything alone, when we dare to ask, to trust, to depend—then God can give us what He has always longed to give: Himself.

For only the humble heart can receive what God longs to give.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

God strengthens the humble and receives the offering of those who trust in Him. Therefore, let us now pray

That our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord,
accept these gifts we offer in humility,
and grant that, free from pride and self-reliance,
we may receive from you alone all that gives life.

May what we place upon this altar open our hearts to receive what your mercy continually gives.

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 wisdom not to the proud and self-sufficient, but to the humble and trusting of heart.

You resist those who rely on their own strength,
but you draw near to those who depend on your grace.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you have shown us the fullness of your truth,
not as a reward for human wisdom,

but as a gift received in faith.

And so, with Angels and Saints,
we praise you, as without end we acclaim:
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say, trusting not in ourselves but in His grace:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and grant us peace in our days,
that, freed from pride and self-reliance,
we may live as humble recipients of your grace,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
who reveal the Father to the humble
and give peace to those who trust in you,

look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her unity and peace in accordance
with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who gives Himself as food to the humble of heart.
Blessed are those called to receive Him in trust and
simplicity.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord has revealed Himself to us not because we are
worthy,
but because we have been invited to receive in humility.
What He gives cannot be grasped by pride,
only welcomed by trust.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this holy communion, O Lord,
strengthen in us a humble heart,
so that, receiving your grace with trust,
we may live ever more fully in your wisdom.

And as you dwell within us, teach us daily to depend not on ourselves but on your loving gift.

Through Christ our Lord.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord who reveals Himself to the humble
keep you free from pride of heart;
may He open you to receive His wisdom;
and may He strengthen you to walk in trust before Him.
And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,
come down on you and remain with you for ever.

DISMISSAL

Go forth,
and live today with a humble heart open to receive God's
grace.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God does not hide His wisdom from us—
we miss it when we no longer receive with a humble heart.

16 July, 2026 – Thursday, 15th Week in Ord. Time

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Is 26,7-9. 12. 16-19; Mt 11,28-30

“Our restless hearts find rest in him.”

INTRODUCTION

There is a story told of a traveller who, after days of walking through dry and dusty land, came upon a small wayside chapel. Exhausted, he stepped inside, not to pray at first, but simply to sit. In the quiet, he noticed a simple inscription near the altar: *“Rest here, for God has already been waiting for you.”* Something shifted in him. What he thought was merely a stop became an encounter.

In today's liturgy, we celebrate Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a woman who knew how to rest in God. The Carmelite tradition speaks of a deep, quiet relationship with the Lord—of listening, of trust, of allowing God to be God in the depths of one's life. Mary embodies that perfectly: she carried God not only in her womb, but in her heart.

Both the readings today speak to a deep human experience: the weight we carry and the place where that

weight can finally rest. Isaiah speaks of a soul that longs for God in the night; the Gospel gives us Jesus' tender invitation to the burdened: "*Come to me.*"

As we gather, we might recognize that we do not come here empty-handed—we carry worries, fatigue, regrets, and sins. Let us bring all of that before the Lord now, trusting in his gentle and humble heart, as we ask for mercy and forgiveness.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call the burdened to yourself:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you reveal the gentle and humble heart of the Father: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you invite us into true rest and peace:

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who sees the burdens we carry and knows how often we struggle to let them go,
and who in his Son calls us not to carry life alone but to rest in his mercy and love,

forgive us for our self-reliance and our lack of trust, and gently draw us back into communion with him,
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who in your Son invite the weary and burdened to find rest in his gentle heart, and who have given us the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel as an example of trusting surrender and interior peace, grant that we may learn to carry life not in anxious self-reliance, but in confident abandonment to your love.

Free us from the weight we wrongly bear alone, and draw us ever more deeply into the quiet rest of communion with 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 young boy once tried to carry a heavy bag of groceries all by himself. His father watched as he struggled down the path, arms trembling. When the father finally offered help, the boy insisted, “I can do it.” Only when he stumbled did he finally let his father carry the load with him.

That simple story echoes a deeper truth of our lives: we often insist on carrying alone what was never meant to be carried alone.

This is the thread running through today’s readings:

“Come to me, and I will give you rest.”

In the first reading, we meet a God who is not distant or indifferent. God says, “I have seen... I have visited... I will bring you out.” This is a God who sees the burden, shares the suffering of his people, and acts—often before they even cry out fully.

And yet Isaiah also reminds us that distress can awaken something deeper: “My soul longs for you in the night.”

Burden can strip away self-sufficiency and reveal a more profound hunger—not just for relief, but for God himself.

Into that reality Jesus speaks in the Gospel:

“Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened.”

He does not say, “Come to a law” or “Come to a system,” but “Come to me.” At the heart of faith is not first a rule, but a relationship.

The people of his time were weighed down not only by life, but by religious burdens lacking compassion. Into that situation Jesus reveals the heart of God: gentle and humble. His teaching is demanding—yes—but never crushing, because it is lived with him, not apart from him.

That is why his burden is “light”: not because it is weightless, but because it is shared.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel shows us what this looks like lived out. In her, we see interior prayer, quiet trust, and fidelity even in not understanding everything. She carried sorrow, yet remained close to God, allowing him to sustain her. She teaches us that rest is not escape from life, but remaining in God within it.

So the question is not whether we carry burdens—we all do. The question is: where do we bring them?

Do we insist, “I can manage”?

Or do we hear Jesus and respond, “Yes, Lord, I come”?

Because the promise remains:

“Come to me, and I will give you rest.”

Not superficial rest, but the deep rest of a heart anchored in God.

An elderly woman once told a priest she tried his advice of placing her worries in God’s hands each night. “But in the morning,” she said, “I find I’ve taken them back again.” The priest replied, “Then tonight, place them in his hands—and leave them there.”

That is the invitation of Jesus today.

That is the path Mary walked. And that is the grace offered to us: to come, to trust, and to rest in him.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we bring before the Lord these gifts of bread and wine, we also bring the hidden burdens of our hearts, trusting that he who calls us to himself will transform what we lay before him. Let us now pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the offerings we bring before you in humble trust,
and grant that, freed from the weight of self-reliance, we may find in this sacrifice the rest you promise to your faithful.

May these gifts unite us ever more deeply to Christ, who carries our burdens and gives us peace.

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 yourself not as distant from our struggles, but as the God who comes close to the weary and overburdened, calling them into the rest of your presence. In your Son, you have shown us a heart that is gentle and humble, bearing with us what we cannot bear alone.

In Mary, the Virgin of Mount Carmel, you have given the Church a sign of contemplative trust, where silence

becomes surrender and surrender becomes peace. Her life reminds us that true greatness is not in carrying all things alone, but in resting all things in you.

Through Christ the choirs of angels praise your glory, and in this festival of Mary we join them in singing without end: Holy, Holy, Holy...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting in the Lord who invites the weary into his rest and teaches us to depend not on ourselves but on his loving care, let us pray with confidence as Jesus himself taught us: Our Father...

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and grant us peace in our days,
that, sustained by the gentle yoke of your Son and freed from the burdens we need not carry alone,
we may live in trusting surrender, without fear or anxiety,
as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who call the weary to yourself and give rest to all who trust in you, look not on our anxieties but on the faith that seeks to rest in your presence,
and graciously grant your Church that peace which flows from hearts anchored in you alone.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the One who does not add burden to our lives but takes them upon himself;
the Lamb of God who invites the weary to rest in his heart.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Having received the Lord who says, "Come to me," we no longer carry our burdens alone.

In this communion, Christ does not remove the weight of life but enters into it with us, transforming heaviness into shared love and restless striving into peaceful trust.

Like Mary of Mount Carmel, we are invited to remain with him, quietly, faithfully, and without fear.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by this holy sacrament, O Lord,
we pray that, strengthened by the presence of Christ within
us,
we may learn to lay down every unnecessary burden and
to walk in the freedom of those who trust wholly in you.
May the example and intercession of the Blessed Virgin
Mary of Mount Carmel keep us faithful in interior prayer
and steadfast in peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord, who calls the weary to himself,
free you from the burdens you cannot carry alone.
May he who is gentle and humble of heart
teach you to rest in his love.
And may the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel
lead you ever deeper into the peace of trusting surrender.
And may almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in the peace of Christ,
no longer burdened as those who carry life alone,
but resting in the One who walks with you.
Thanks be to God.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The burden Christ asks us to carry is not heavier than life
itself—but lighter, because it is shared.
Today, do not take back what you have already entrusted
to him.

17 July, 2026 – Friday, 15th Week in Ord. Time

Is 38,1-6. 21-22. 7-8 ; Mt 12,1-8

Saint Alexius

Red thread: "God desires mercy, not sacrifice."

INTRODUCTION

A young architect once spent years designing a beautiful chapel. Every line was precise, every stone carefully chosen. When it was finally opened, people admired its beauty—but one elderly woman quietly remarked, "It is lovely... but I hope people pray here." The building was perfect, but its purpose depended on something more than structure; it depended on the heart.

Today, the Church invites us to reflect on that tension between what is outward and what is inward, between what is constructed and what is lived. Even the most sacred realities can lose their meaning if the heart is not engaged. This is something the saints understood deeply. Today, we remember Saint Alexius, who chose to leave behind comfort, status, and even recognition, to live a hidden life of humility and trust in God. For him, God's presence was not tied to honour or place, but to a

surrendered heart.

In the Gospel, Jesus makes a startling claim: "Here is something greater than the Temple." For his listeners, this would have been almost unthinkable. The Temple was the center of God's presence. Yet Jesus reveals that God's presence is not confined to a place—it is alive in a person, and it is expressed most clearly in mercy.

As we gather here, we might ask ourselves honestly: have we sometimes held on to forms, rules, or habits, but forgotten the heart of mercy? Have we, like the Pharisees, judged rather than understood? Let us now acknowledge our sins, and ask the Lord to form in us a more merciful heart.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are greater than the Temple and reveal the Father's mercy: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you teach us that mercy is greater than sacrifice: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you heal hearts hardened by judgment and legalism: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who sees beyond our outward actions into the truth of our hearts, and who in his Son reveals mercy as the fullness of the law, forgive us for every time we have judged without love and observed without compassion, and lead us back to the freedom of his mercy and peace, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who in your Son have revealed that mercy is greater than sacrifice and that true worship is found in a heart that loves before it judges,
grant that we may be freed from all hardness of heart and renewed in the simplicity of your Gospel.

Through the example of Saint Alexius, who sought you in humility and hiddenness,
teach us to prefer compassion over condemnation and love over mere observance.

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 told how, as a boy, he was scolded for taking bread from the kitchen before dinner. When his father found out, he was ready to punish him. But his mother quietly said, “He hadn’t eaten all day.” The father paused, looked again, and instead of punishment, gave him food. The rule had been broken—but mercy saw what the rule could not.

That simple story captures the heart of today’s Gospel: “God desires mercy, not sacrifice.” The disciples are hungry and pluck ears of grain on the Sabbath. The Pharisees see only a violation of the law. Jesus sees something deeper: human need. The law is not denied, but fulfilled in compassion.

Jesus then says something striking: “Here is something greater than the Temple.” For his listeners, the Temple was the very place of God’s presence. Yet Jesus reveals that God is not confined to sacred spaces or external observance. In him, God’s presence is personal, living—and marked above all by mercy.

The Pharisees were not without faith; they were serious about the law. But they had gradually lost sight of its purpose. When the law is separated from love, it becomes heavy, even harsh. And so they could no longer see hunger, only rule-breaking. That danger remains real for us: we can become more focused on correctness than on compassion.

Jesus reorients everything. The law is not abolished but fulfilled in love. What God seeks is not empty sacrifice, but hearts that reflect his mercy. His question is always about the person in front of us, not only the rule in the abstract.

Saint Alexius offers a quiet but powerful contrast. He chose a hidden life of humility and surrender, leaving behind honour and recognition. His sanctity was not in outward visibility but in a heart turned completely toward God. In that hiddenness, he witnesses to the truth that what matters most is not external performance, but interior fidelity shaped by love.

So the question becomes very direct: when we meet others, what do we see first—their fault or their need? Do

we react quickly in judgment, or do we pause long enough to understand?

A nurse once stayed with a dying patient beyond her shift, even though she was free to leave. Later she said, “I broke the schedule, but I think I kept the Gospel.” That is the choice Jesus places before us: not between law and chaos, but between judgment and mercy fulfilled in love. And so we return to the guiding word of today’s Gospel: God desires mercy, not sacrifice.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we present these gifts at the altar, we also present our hearts, asking the Lord to purify them from judgment and to fill them with mercy. Let us now pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, these gifts we bring in humility and trust, and transform them into the sacrament of your mercy, that we who celebrate this holy mystery may become what we receive: a people shaped not by rigid judgment, but by compassionate 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 in your Son you have revealed that the fullness of your law is mercy, and that true worship is not found merely in sacrifice or external observance, but in hearts conformed to your love. In him, the hunger of the disciples becomes a sign of divine compassion, and the accusations of the proud are answered by the gentleness of truth.

You have also given us in Saint Alexius a witness of hidden holiness, whose life teaches that what is most pleasing to you is not outward recognition, but inward surrender. Therefore, with all the angels and saints, we praise you without end:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting in the God whose name is mercy and whose will is love, let us pray with confidence as Jesus himself taught us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and grant us peace in our days, that, freed from harsh judgment and guided by your mercy, we may live in the freedom of the children of God, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us that mercy is greater than sacrifice, look not on our failures to love, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her the peace and unity of your Kingdom. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who does not judge as we judge, but who feeds the hungry, heals the sinner, and gives himself as mercy made flesh. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

In this holy Communion, we receive the One who placed mercy above sacrifice and compassion above judgment.

United to him, we are called to see others as he sees them: not as problems to be judged, but as persons to be loved.

What we have received, we are now sent to become.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by the sacrament of your Son, O Lord,
we pray that we may be transformed into living witnesses
of your mercy,
rejecting all hardness of heart and embracing the
compassion of Christ in our daily lives.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord who is greater than the Temple
free you from every spirit of judgment.

May he who desires mercy and not sacrifice
form in you a heart that loves before it condemns.

And may Saint Alexius, who sought God in humility and
hiddenness, guide you in the quiet path of faithful love.

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

DISMISSAL

Go and live what you have received:
not judgment, but mercy;
not sacrifice alone, but love fulfilled.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God is not first found in what is strictly correct, but in what
is deeply merciful.

18 July, 2026 – Saturday, 15th Week in Ord. Time

Micah 2,1-5; Mt 12, 14-21

Saint Camillus de Lellis

“Not to break, but to restore”

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once noticed a young boy in her class who always handed in crumpled papers. One day, instead of correcting him sharply, she gently smoothed out his paper, looked him in the eye, and said, “There’s something beautiful here—let’s help it shine.” Years later, that boy would say it was the first time he felt seen, not judged.

We live in a world where it is often easier to point out what is wrong than to patiently draw out what is good. Strength is often mistaken for loudness, and authority for harshness. Yet the quiet power that heals, restores, and encourages is far more transformative than the power that crushes.

Today, as we remember Saint Camillus de Lellis, a man who cared tenderly for the sick and the abandoned, we are reminded that true holiness is expressed in compassion. He saw Christ in the suffering and served them with

gentleness and dignity, becoming a living reflection of God’s mercy.

And yet, if we are honest, there are times when we have not been gentle, when we have broken rather than healed, discouraged rather than lifted up. As we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries, we bring before the Lord our moments of hardness of heart and ask for his mercy and healing.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, you come not to break but to restore: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you heal the broken and lift up the weak with compassion: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to be instruments of your restoring love: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who restores what is broken and strengthens what is weak,
and who in his Son reveals mercy stronger than judgment,
forgive us for every time we have harmed rather than

healed, discouraged rather than encouraged,
and bring us to the fullness of his peace and life.

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

COLLECT

O God of mercy and compassion,
who in your Son have shown that true strength is gentle
and that divine power restores rather than destroys,
grant that we may become living reflections of his Spirit.
Heal in us all hardness of heart, and make us instruments
of encouragement and healing for others,
especially where life is fragile and hope is dim.
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 found a small bird with an injured wing. At
first, he thought it might be better to leave it. But something
moved him to take it home. Day after day, he cared for it
gently—feeding it, protecting it, giving it space to heal.

Slowly, the bird regained strength, until one day it flew
again. The man later said, “It wasn’t strength that saved
it—it was gentleness.”

“Not to break, but to restore”—this is the thread running
through today’s readings.

In the first reading from Micah, we hear of those who “plot
evil,” who use power to crush and destroy. In the Gospel,
the Pharisees begin to plot against Jesus. Faced with
goodness, their response is hostility. They represent a
power that destroys.

In striking contrast, we are shown who Jesus truly is.
Matthew applies to him the words of Isaiah: “He will not
break the bruised reed nor quench the smouldering wick.”
Jesus does not come to crush what is fragile or extinguish
what is weak. His power is not to dominate, but to restore.
We all know what it is to be a bruised reed or a
smouldering wick—times when we feel fragile, worn down,
barely holding on. At such moments, we do not need
harshness, but the gentle strength of Christ, who heals
rather than condemns, and rekindles rather than

extinguishes.

But the Gospel also calls us further. The same Spirit given to Christ is given to us. We are called to embody his way of gentle restoration in a world quick to wound and to judge.

Saint Camillus de Lellis lived this. He drew near to the sick and the rejected with tenderness, seeing in them not a burden, but Christ himself. His life shows that holiness is found in quiet acts that restore dignity and hope.

So we might ask: in my words and actions, do I break or do I restore? Do I extinguish or encourage?

Let me end with another story.

A candle was flickering in a dark room, almost going out. A child came in, cupped his hands around it, and shielded it from the wind. Slowly, the flame grew steady again. When asked why he bothered, the child simply said, “It just needed a little help to keep shining.”

That is what Jesus does for us. And that is what he asks us to do for one another—not to break, but to restore, until every flickering light burns brightly again.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we present these gifts at the altar, we also present our lives—often fragile, often in need of healing. May they be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the offerings we bring before you with humble hearts, and transform them by your grace, that we who are often fragile and in need of your healing touch may become signs of your compassion and instruments of your restoring peace.

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 Son Jesus Christ you have revealed a power that does not destroy but restores, that does not crush the weak but raises them up. In him, the bruised reed is not broken, and the smouldering wick is not extinguished, but strengthened and rekindled in love.

Through his life and teaching, you show us that true greatness is found not in domination, but in gentle service; not in breaking others, but in restoring them to dignity and hope.

And so, with all the angels and saints, and with Saint Camillus de Lellis, who served the suffering with tender love, we proclaim your glory:

Holy, Holy, Holy...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting in the God who restores the broken and strengthens the weak, let us pray with confidence as Jesus himself taught us: Our Father...

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and grant us peace in our days,
that, strengthened by your gentle hand and freed from every spirit of harshness,
we may live as instruments of your healing love,
as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who are the gentle restorer of the broken-hearted,
look not on our failures to love with tenderness, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her the peace and unity of your Kingdom.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who does not break the bruised reed nor extinguish the dim flame, but comes to heal, to strengthen, and to restore all who trust in him.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Having received Christ, we are no longer only the ones who need healing, but also those sent to heal.
His gentle presence within us calls us to see others not in their weakness alone, but in their potential for renewal.
What we have received, we are now called to share: a love that restores rather than breaks.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son, O Lord,
we pray that we may be transformed into faithful
instruments of his healing love,
bringing encouragement where there is discouragement
and hope where there is fragility.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord who does not break the bruised reed
heal what is fragile within you.
May he who does not quench the smouldering wick
rekindle in you hope and courage.
And may Saint Camillus de Lellis, servant of the suffering,
inspire you always to restore and not to break.
And may almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go and live as Christ has lived among us:
not to break, but to restore;
not to judge, but to heal.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

In a fragile world, Christ calls you not to crush what is
weak, but to help it shine again.