

16 August, 2026 – 20th Sunday in Ord. Time

Is 5,1. 6-7; Rom 11,13-15. 29-32; Mt 15,21-28

INTRODUCTION

There are moments when love refuses to give up. Parents sitting through endless nights beside a sick child, friends standing faithfully with someone who is struggling, communities protecting one another in times of danger—such love reveals a strength deeper than fear. It keeps knocking even when doors seem closed.

Today's Gospel gives us one of the most striking examples of such persistence. A Canaanite mother comes to Jesus pleading for her daughter. Though she faces silence and apparent rejection, she refuses to walk away. Her love becomes a courageous faith that trusts mercy more than obstacles.

The Gospel also widens our hearts. God's compassion cannot be locked within human boundaries. Again and again, Jesus reveals that faith can emerge in unexpected people and places, and that mercy reaches farther than we imagine.

As we gather before the Lord, we recognize the times when we have drawn narrow boundaries around others, failed to trust in God's mercy, or given up too quickly in prayer and love. Let us now ask the Lord for pardon and peace.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you welcomed the cry of the outsider and revealed the wideness of the Father's mercy:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you strengthened those who would not give up in faith and hope: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call your Church to break down barriers and become a sign of compassion for all peoples:

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, whose mercy reaches beyond every human boundary, forgive us our sins, strengthen us in persevering faith, and open our hearts to all who seek his compassion, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Like the Canaanite woman who trusted in the goodness of Christ, let us now raise our voices in praise to the God whose mercy embraces every people and every nation.

COLLECT

O God,
whose compassion reaches beyond every barrier
and whose mercy never turns away those who seek you in faith,
grant that we may persevere in prayer with trusting hearts
and become instruments of your reconciling love in a divided world.
May our lives reveal the wideness of your mercy
to all who long for healing, hope, and 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 few years ago, the world followed the heartbreaking story of baby Charlie Gard. His parents refused to stop fighting for their seriously ill child. Even when medical experts believed there was no hope, they continued searching for treatment. Whether one agreed with every decision or not, nobody could miss the power of their love. Love makes people persist beyond exhaustion. It keeps hoping when logic alone would surrender.

That is the emotional world of today's Gospel.

A desperate mother comes to Jesus begging for her daughter. Notice something important: she does not say merely, "Have mercy on my daughter." She cries, "Have mercy on me." Her daughter's suffering has become her own suffering. Every loving parent understands this instinctively. When a child hurts, the parent hurts too. And then comes the disturbing part of the Gospel. Jesus is silent. Then he says his mission is to Israel. Then comes the image about children's bread and dogs beneath the table. We are uncomfortable because it sounds harsh.

Many people reading this Gospel for the first time feel shocked.

Yet perhaps that discomfort is precisely the point. The Gospel is showing us a real human encounter, not a polished religious scene. And what shines through this difficult encounter is the greatness of the woman's faith.

Jesus eventually says to her: "Woman, great is your faith."

What an extraordinary statement! Could there be a greater praise from the lips of Christ? Imagine Jesus saying to one of us: "Your faith is great." And the remarkable thing is this: the woman is not even part of Israel. She is a Canaanite, a foreigner, an outsider. Yet she becomes one of the few people in the Gospel whose faith Jesus openly praises in such strong terms.

So what does her faith look like in practice?

First, she brings her suffering to Jesus.

Her daughter is tormented, and the mother turns toward Christ with her pain. That sounds simple, but it is often the hardest thing to do. When people are deeply overwhelmed—by illness, grief, family struggles,

disappointment, depression, or fear—they can become trapped in anxiety and endless worrying. Sometimes suffering narrows our vision until we can no longer see God clearly.

But this woman teaches us the first lesson of faith: bring your need to Jesus.

No suffering is too small. No situation is too hopeless.

There is a story of a man who lost his job unexpectedly and fell into despair. Every morning he sat at the kitchen table staring silently at unpaid bills. One day his young daughter placed a small drawing beside his coffee cup. It showed their family holding hands under a large cross. At the bottom she had written: "Dad, Jesus is still with us."

That simple childlike reminder changed something in him. The problems did not disappear overnight, but he later said, "That was the day I stopped carrying the burden alone."

The Canaanite woman refuses to carry her burden alone. But then comes the painful silence of Jesus. She cries out, and Jesus gives no answer.

Many believers know that experience. You pray for healing, and nothing changes. You pray for a loved one, and heaven seems silent. You pray for guidance, and only darkness remains. There are moments when it feels as though our prayers rise no higher than the ceiling.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta once spoke of long periods of inner spiritual dryness when she felt no emotional sense of God's presence at all. Yet she continued serving the poor faithfully. Faith is not always emotional certainty; sometimes it is persistence in the silence.

The woman in the Gospel does exactly that. She does not walk away offended. She does not conclude that God has forgotten her. She asks again: "Lord, help me."

That is the second lesson: do not give up when God seems silent.

Some of the deepest faith is formed precisely in waiting.

An elderly woman once said after praying for her son's return to the Church for over thirty years, "Every day I lit one candle and said one prayer. I told God, 'I will leave the door open for as long as you leave yours open.'" Shortly

before her death, her son returned to the sacraments. Persistent prayer changes not only situations—it changes hearts.

Then comes another difficulty. Jesus says that he was sent first to the lost sheep of Israel. Once again, the woman appears to be rejected.

And here we see another extraordinary aspect of her faith. She does not become angry or bitter. She does not accuse Jesus of unfairness. Instead, she humbly accepts the mysterious plan of God even when she does not fully understand it. Yet she also dares to appeal to something even deeper: the limitless mercy of God.

"Yes, Lord," she says, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the table."

What humility. What courage. What trust.

She accepts that she has no claim or entitlement before God. Everything is grace. Yet she also believes that God's mercy is so abundant that even the crumbs of divine compassion are enough to heal her daughter.

Perhaps she had heard about the multiplication of the loaves, where baskets of leftovers remained after thousands had eaten. In a sense she is saying: “Lord, your mercy is so abundant that surely there is enough even for me.”

And Jesus responds with admiration: “Woman, great is your faith!”

The miracle is not only the healing of the daughter. Something larger is happening. A boundary is being opened. Through this woman’s faith, the horizon of Jesus’ mission becomes wider and clearer. God’s mercy is moving outward toward all humanity.

Throughout the Gospels, outsiders often surprise people with their faith. A Roman centurion. A Samaritan leper. Tax collectors and sinners. Again and again, those considered “outside” become examples of trust and openness. The Gospel warns us never to assume that God works only within our familiar circles.

There is an old story about a monastery that had become cold and divided. The monks argued constantly. Few

visitors came anymore. One day, an elderly rabbi visited nearby and quietly told them, “One of you is the Messiah in disguise.”

The monks were puzzled. Could it be the elderly brother who prayed silently every day? Could it be the cook? The difficult monk everyone avoided? Gradually they began treating one another differently—with reverence, patience, and kindness. Over time, the atmosphere changed completely. People noticed peace there again and returned seeking prayer and wisdom.

Sometimes grace appears where we least expect it.

Saint Paul says in today’s second reading that God desires to “show mercy to all.” That is the direction of salvation history. God begins with Israel, but the promise opens outward through Christ toward every nation and people.

And we desperately need that vision today.

In recent years, Christians in northern Iraq suffered terrible persecution. Ancient communities were driven from their homes. Churches that had stood for centuries became empty. Yet in the midst of violence, something remarkable

also happened. Some Muslim neighbours protected Christian families, hid them in their homes, and publicly defended them.

One young Muslim man in Baghdad posted a photograph of himself wearing a crucifix beside the words: “Today, we are all Christians.” He did not mean he had changed religions. He meant that shared suffering had revealed a deeper shared humanity.

That is profoundly Gospel-shaped. Mercy breaks barriers. Compassion widens identity. Love refuses to let hatred have the final word.

The Canaanite woman teaches us four things.

First, bring your need to Jesus.

Second, do not give up when God seems silent.

Third, trust God even when you do not fully understand his ways.

And fourth, appeal always to the boundless mercy of God, which is greater than every human boundary and every human failure.

A teacher once asked her students to draw a picture of God’s love. One child simply drew a large table with extra chairs being added all around it. When the teacher asked why, the child answered, “Because God keeps making room.”

That is today’s Gospel.

The Canaanite woman believed there was still room for her at the table of mercy. Jesus revealed that she was right.

And perhaps, if we learn to trust with such persistence, humility, and courage, one day Christ may also say to us: “Great is your faith.”

Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREDO

United with believers from every nation and language, and trusting in the mercy that gathers all people into Christ, let us now profess our faith.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As the Canaanite woman placed her hope before the Lord with persevering faith, let us bring these gifts to the altar, trusting that God receives every prayer offered with humble and open hearts.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord,
the offerings of your people,
and through this holy sacrifice
teach us to trust in your mercy without fear
and to welcome one another with generous hearts.
May this Eucharist strengthen us
to become signs of reconciliation and hope
in a divided world.
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 revealed a mercy that reaches beyond every border
and division.
When the Canaanite woman cried out in faith for her
daughter,
your compassion opened wide the doors of hope,
showing that no sincere heart is far from your saving love.
In Christ you gather peoples and nations into one family,
breaking down the walls of fear and hostility,
and teaching us to recognize one another as brothers and
sisters.
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:

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With confidence in the Father whose mercy embraces every people and every human need, let us pray in the words our Saviour gave us.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by your mercy,
we may persevere in faith during times of trial
and overcome the divisions that wound our world.
Help us to recognize one another as members of your
human family
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you listened to the cry of the Canaanite woman and revealed a mercy stronger than every barrier;
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who welcomes all who hunger for mercy and healing.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Canaanite woman came asking only for crumbs, yet she encountered the abundance of Christ's mercy. In this Eucharist we have received not crumbs but the Bread of Life itself. May this sacrament widen our hearts, strengthen our faith, and teach us never to exclude anyone from the reach of God's compassion.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received the sacrament of salvation,
we humbly ask you, O Lord,
that through this heavenly gift
you may strengthen us in persevering faith
and make us witnesses of your universal mercy.
May we become instruments of reconciliation and hope
for all who suffer division, fear, or rejection.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord strengthen you with the faith of the
Canaanite woman,
teach you to persevere in love and prayer,
and widen your hearts with compassion for all people.
Amen.

May he help you recognize Christ
in the stranger, the suffering, and the excluded,
and make you instruments of peace in the world.
Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives of persevering
faith, generous compassion, and open-hearted mercy.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Faith does not give up easily, and mercy does not stop at
human boundaries. The Canaanite woman teaches us to
keep trusting, keep loving, and keep making room for
others—because God’s table is always wider than we
imagine.

17 August, 2026 – Mon., 20th Week in Ord. Time

Ezek 24,15-24; Mt 19,16-22

“Letting go to follow Christ more freely.”

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a man who spent years restoring an old house he had inherited. He repaired every wall, polished every surface, and filled it with beautiful furniture. Visitors admired it, and he felt a quiet pride. Yet one evening, sitting alone in the perfectly restored house, he felt an unexpected emptiness. Everything was in place, yet something essential was missing. The house was full, but his heart was not.

In much the same way, people can live good and respectable lives, yet still sense a deeper longing within. We may fulfil our duties, achieve our goals, and still quietly ask: “Is there more?”

Today’s Gospel reminds us that this longing is not a weakness but a grace. Jesus invites us beyond mere security and comfort into a deeper freedom of discipleship.

He calls us to let go of whatever prevents us from following him wholeheartedly.

As we stand before the Lord, let us acknowledge the times we have clung to our fears, our comforts, or our own plans instead of trusting fully in him. Let us ask for mercy and the courage to follow Christ more freely.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you look upon us with love and call us to follow you more closely: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you invite us to let go of whatever keeps us from true freedom and deeper trust: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you lead us beyond sadness and fear into the joy of life with you: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, free us from the attachments that hold us back from his love, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

COLLECT

Merciful and loving God,
you know the restless longing of the human heart
and you alone can satisfy our deepest desire.
Grant us the courage to let go of all that hinders us
from following your Son with freedom and trust,
so that, walking in the path of discipleship,
we may discover the joy and peace that only you can give.

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 professional once reached the height of what he had always wanted—success, financial security, and recognition. Yet, instead of satisfaction, he found himself restless. One evening he admitted to a friend, “I have everything I worked for, but it still feels like something is missing.” The reply came gently: “Perhaps because

success is not the same as purpose.”

In today’s Gospel, we meet a young man who is, in many ways, admirable. He is sincere, morally upright, and faithful. He has kept the commandments since his youth. And yet, he comes to Jesus with that searching question: *“What more must I do?”* It is a question that reveals a holy restlessness—a sense that even a good life can still be incomplete.

Jesus first affirms him. The commandments matter; the way we treat others is central to the path of life. Love of neighbour is not optional—it is essential. But the young man senses there is still more, and Jesus, looking at him with love, invites him further: *“Go, sell what you have, give to the poor... then come, follow me.”*

For this particular man, the “more” meant letting go of his wealth. It had become his security, perhaps even his identity. Jesus was inviting him to trust not in what he possessed, but in God alone—and to step into a deeper relationship by following him.

But the invitation proves too much. The Gospel tells us he

goes away sad.

It is a striking and human moment. He desires more, he asks for more, but when the answer comes, he cannot embrace it. His sadness reveals the tension within him—and within us. We, too, can long for a deeper life with God, yet hesitate when it requires real change or real surrender. Often, what holds us back are not bad things, but attachments—things we rely on for security or comfort. It may not be wealth, but it could be our plans, our fears, our need for control, or even unresolved hurts. And sometimes, these become obstacles to the freedom God desires for us.

There can even be a quiet connection between our sadness and our inability to let go. When we cling too tightly, we cannot move forward. When we hold everything for ourselves, we cannot fully receive what God wants to give.

Yet the Gospel is not a story of condemnation but of invitation. Jesus continues to look at each of us with love and to call us forward. The form of that call will be different

for each person, but it will always lead us toward deeper love, greater trust, and true freedom.

A woman once carried a long-standing resentment within her family. She felt justified in holding onto it, yet it weighed heavily on her heart. In prayer, she sensed a quiet invitation: “*Let it go.*” It was not easy, but when she finally chose to forgive, she discovered a peace she had not known for years. What she feared losing became the very place where she found new life.

That is the promise at the heart of today’s Gospel. When we let go for Christ, we do not lose—we gain. When we trust him enough to follow, we discover the “more” our hearts have been seeking all along.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we place these gifts upon the altar, we may also place before the Lord the burdens, fears, and attachments we struggle to surrender, and that our sacrifice may become acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord our God,
receive these offerings we bring before you
and teach us to offer not only bread and wine,
but also our hearts and lives.
Free us from whatever keeps us from following Christ fully,
so that, trusting in your grace alone,
we may become a people rich 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,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your Son Jesus Christ
you reveal the path to true freedom.
He looked with love upon those who sought him

and invited them beyond earthly security
into the joy of trusting completely in you.

Even when we struggle to let go
of what binds our hearts,
you remain patient and merciful,
calling us always toward deeper love,
greater trust,
and the lasting treasure of your Kingdom.

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 Lord God of hosts...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray to the Father who asks us to trust him
completely and to seek first the treasure that never fades:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free our hearts from the attachments and fears
that keep us from following your Son with confidence and
joy. Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our
Saviour, Jesus Christ. For the kingdom, the power and the
glory are yours now and for ever.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you called your disciples to leave
behind all that hindered them
so they might follow you in freedom and trust.
Look not on our hesitations and fears,
but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who calls us beyond fear and attachment
into the freedom and fullness of life.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The rich young man walked away sad because he could
not let go. Yet Christ continues to look upon us with love
and to invite us forward. True freedom begins when we
trust him enough to release what we cling to most tightly.
In Christ, what we surrender is never lost; it is transformed
into new life, deeper peace, and lasting joy.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son,
we ask you, Lord, to strengthen us in the path of
discipleship. May this holy sacrament free our hearts
from all that keeps us from loving you fully,
so that, trusting in your providence, we may follow Christ
with generous and undivided hearts.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May he give you the courage to let go of whatever burdens
your heart
and the freedom to follow Christ with trust and joy.
And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by trusting him more
deeply and following him more freely.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

What we cling to most tightly may be the very thing
preventing us from receiving the deeper life God desires to
give us. When we let go for Christ, we do not lose—we
discover true freedom, lasting peace, and the “more” our
hearts have always sought.

18 August, 2026 – Tuesday, 20th Week in Ord. Time
Ezek 28,1-10; Mt 19,23-30

INTRODUCTION

There is a story told of a successful businessman who,
after years of tireless work, finally built the house of his
dreams. It was large, secure, filled with every comfort. One
evening, as he sat alone in his living room, he realised
something unsettling: everything he owned was within his
reach, and yet something essential was missing. In the
silence, he felt a strange emptiness he could not explain.

We often assume that having more will make life fuller—
more security, more comfort, more control. Yet experience
sometimes tells a different story. What we possess can
give us convenience, but it cannot always give us
meaning. In fact, the more we rely on what we have, the
less we may feel our need for anything—or anyone—
beyond ourselves.

The readings today gently but firmly challenge this illusion. They invite us to look at where our trust really lies. Is it in what we can accumulate and control, or in the God who gives life and sustains it? The question is not about having or not having, but about what holds our hearts.

As we begin this Eucharist, we are invited to acknowledge the ways we have relied more on ourselves than on God, the ways we have allowed other things to take God's place in our lives. Let us ask for mercy and for the grace to rediscover our need for Him.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You call us to trust not in ourselves but in the power of Your grace: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You free our hearts from attachments that keep us from following You fully: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You remind us that what is impossible for us is always possible for God: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, free us from the burden of self-reliance and sinful attachment, open our hearts to trust in His grace, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who alone are the source of our strength and salvation,
teach us not to place our confidence
in earthly riches or in ourselves,
but to rely always on Your grace and mercy.
Free our hearts from all that keeps us from You,
and make us open to the transforming power of Your love.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY

A traveller once tried to pass through an old city gate just before it closed for the night. He was leading a heavily loaded camel, piled high with goods from his journey. No matter how hard he tried, the camel could not pass through the narrow opening. Finally, in frustration, he began to unload the baggage piece by piece. Only when the load was removed could the camel kneel and pass through. What seemed impossible at first became possible—but only after letting go.

Jesus uses a striking image in today's gospel: a camel passing through the eye of a needle. It is meant to sound impossible—and that is precisely the point. He is speaking about the danger of being so burdened, so attached, that we cannot enter into the life God offers. It is not riches themselves that are the problem, but the way they can take hold of the human heart.

The disciples are understandably shocked. In their world, wealth was often seen as a sign of God's blessing. If even the rich—those thought to be favoured—struggle to enter

the kingdom, then who can be saved? Their question is honest, even desperate: "Who can be saved?"

Jesus' answer shifts everything: "For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible." Salvation is not something we achieve by our own effort or secure by our own resources. It is, first and foremost, God's work—a gift of grace.

This is where the deeper challenge lies. Wealth, possessions, or even our abilities can create an illusion of self-sufficiency. We begin to rely on what we have rather than on God. And when that happens, God can slowly become unnecessary in our lives. The issue is not what we own, but what we depend on.

The gospel invites us into what Jesus calls "poverty of spirit"—a recognition of our need for God. Without that inner openness, we cannot receive what God longs to give. If we do not feel thirst, we will not seek water. But when we become aware of our need, even in our weakness, we create space for God to act.

This is why Jesus' words are ultimately hopeful. What

seems impossible to us—change of heart, freedom from attachment, deeper trust—is always possible for God. God can work even in the most closed situations, even in hearts that seem completely occupied. No one is beyond the reach of grace.

In moments when we feel weak, burdened, or stuck, these words become especially powerful: “For God all things are possible.” Like Saint Paul, we can discover that strength comes not from ourselves, but from the One who works within us. Our task is not to achieve everything, but to open ourselves, even a little, to God’s action.

There is a story of a woman who carried a heavy backpack every day on her long walk to work. One day, a kind driver stopped and offered her a lift. She gratefully accepted but kept the backpack tightly on her shoulders the whole time. When the driver asked why she didn’t put it down, she replied, “You are already carrying me; I didn’t want to burden you with my bag as well.” The driver smiled and said, “But I am carrying both of you anyway.”

We often do the same with God—holding tightly to our

burdens, our attachments, our self-reliance, even when God is ready to carry us. Today, Jesus invites us to let go, to trust, and to discover that what seems impossible for us is always possible for God.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we place these gifts upon the altar, we may also place before God the burdens, attachments, and self-reliance that weigh upon our hearts, trusting that He alone can renew and transform us.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the offerings of Your people,
and grant that, freed from dependence on passing things,
we may place our trust more fully in You.

May this sacrifice strengthen us to seek the treasures of
Your Kingdom above all else.

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 know the weakness of the human heart
and how easily we place our trust
in riches, power, and our own strength.

Yet in Your mercy You never abandon us,
but continually call us back
to the freedom of trusting in You alone.

In Your Son, Jesus Christ,
You have shown us that true riches
are found not in what we possess
but in hearts open to Your grace.

Through Him You teach us that what seems impossible for
us becomes possible through Your saving power.

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 Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray with humble hearts to the Father who knows our
needs and invites us to place our trust completely in Him.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free us from the illusion that we can save ourselves.
Graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of
your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from
all distress, as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You taught us to trust not in earthly security
but in the power of the Father's love.
Free us from the anxieties and burdens
that prevent us from resting in You,
and graciously grant peace and unity to Your Church in
accordance with your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who alone can free our hearts from every burden and lead us into the fullness of life.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, so often we carry our burdens alone, clinging to our fears, our possessions, and our need for control. Yet You remind us today that You are already carrying us. Teach us to let go of whatever keeps us from trusting You fully. May this Eucharist deepen in us the poverty of spirit that opens the heart to grace, so that we may live each day relying not on ourselves, but on You, for whom all things are possible.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May participation in these heavenly mysteries, O Lord,
detach our hearts from passing things
and strengthen our trust in Your unfailing grace.
Teach us to rely not on ourselves
but on the power of Your love at work within us.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord free your hearts from every burden that keeps you from Him. Amen.

May He teach you to trust not in yourselves but in His grace and loving providence. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trusting that what is impossible for us is always possible for God.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“The more we rely on ourselves alone, the heavier life becomes; the more we rely on God, the freer our hearts become.”

19 AUGUST, 2026 – WED. 20TH WEEK IN ORD. TIME

Ezek 34,1-11; mt 20,1-16

God's generosity goes beyond our calculations.

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once announced to her class that there would be no grades for a particular assignment—everyone who sincerely attempted it would receive full marks. Some students were delighted and relieved; others were quietly annoyed. “What’s the point of working hard,” one of them muttered, “if everyone gets the same?” The teacher smiled and said, “Because sometimes the lesson is not about earning, but about learning how to receive and how to grow.”

That reaction of quiet resistance is very human. We are shaped from an early age to think in terms of effort and reward, merit and recognition. When something disrupts that pattern, it can feel unsettling, even unfair. We instinctively measure, compare, and calculate.

Yet there are moments in life when we encounter a different kind of logic—when kindness is given without calculation, when generosity overrides strict fairness, when someone receives far more than they deserve. Such moments can confuse us, but they can also reveal something deeper about the heart.

Today’s readings invite us into that deeper place. As we stand before God, we recognize how often we measure and compare, how often we resist the wideness of God’s mercy. And so, acknowledging our need to be more open to God’s generous love, we prepare ourselves in the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you seek out the lost and gather the scattered with the tenderness of the Good Shepherd:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you give not according to our merits but according to the abundance of your mercy: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to rejoice in the blessings given to others and to live with generous hearts:

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God whose generosity surpasses all our calculations forgive us for our envy, heal our narrowness of heart, and teach us to rejoice in the gifts given to others; and may almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, whose mercy reaches beyond all human deserving and whose compassion seeks out the lost and forgotten, free our hearts from envy and comparison, that we may rejoice in your goodness, trust in your providence, and reflect your generous love in our dealings with one another. 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 hired several workers to help clear his land after a storm. Some came early in the morning, others drifted in later, and a few only arrived near the end of the day. When evening came, the man paid each of them the same amount. Those who had worked all day were outraged. “This isn’t fair,” they said. But the man replied, “I have not cheated you. I have simply chosen to be generous.”

That simple story captures the tension we feel in today’s Gospel. Like the workers who laboured from dawn, we instinctively side with what seems fair. We understand their complaint. It echoes our own inner voice whenever we feel overlooked or treated unjustly.

Yet Jesus deliberately tells a parable that unsettles our sense of fairness. He wants us to see that the kingdom of heaven does not operate according to the logic of human calculation. The landowner is not unjust; he gives the agreed wage. What disturbs us is his generosity—his refusal to limit his giving to what is strictly deserved.

In fact, the key question of the parable cuts to the heart: “Why be envious because I am generous?” It exposes something within us—a tendency to compare, to measure, to feel diminished when others receive more than we think they deserve. Envy can quietly take root when generosity is not directed toward us.

But Jesus is inviting us to shift perspective. Rather than identifying with those who worked all day, perhaps we are meant to see ourselves in those hired at the last hour. In truth, everything we have from God—life, grace, forgiveness, hope—is not something we have earned. It is gift. Pure, unmerited gift.

This is where the first reading from Ezekiel sheds light. God speaks as a shepherd who seeks out the lost, who gathers the scattered, who cares for the weak. God’s concern is not about rewarding the strongest or the earliest, but about reaching those most in need. Divine generosity flows not from calculation, but from compassion.

That means God relates to us not on the basis of what we

deserve, but on the basis of what we need. And that is good news. Because at different times in our lives, we all find ourselves among the “latecomers”—those who come with little to show, those who feel they have done less, those who simply hope for mercy.

The challenge, then, is not only to accept God’s generosity, but to reflect it. Can we rejoice when others are blessed, even if it seems disproportionate? Can we give without calculating? Can we move from comparison to gratitude?

A woman once volunteered at a shelter where meals were distributed each evening. One night, a newcomer arrived just as the food was nearly gone. Without hesitation, the woman gave him the same full portion as everyone else, even though others had been waiting longer. Someone nearby whispered, “He didn’t earn that.” The woman quietly replied, “Neither did I.” In that moment, she understood what the Gospel means: God’s generosity goes beyond our calculations—and we are called to live by that same generous heart.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we place these gifts upon the altar, we may also offer to God hearts freed from calculation and open to the generosity of his grace, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord our God,
accept the offerings we bring before you
and transform us by the mystery we celebrate,
so that, receiving your gifts with gratitude,
we may learn to share generously with others
and rejoice in the abundance of your mercy. 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 are a God rich in mercy and compassion.
You seek out the lost, strengthen the weak,
and welcome those who come to you at every hour.
In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you revealed a love that cannot be measured by human
standards, for you give not according to merit alone
but according to the abundance of your grace.
Even when we compare and calculate,
you continue to bless us with patience and generosity,
teaching us to rejoice in the good given to others
and to trust in your fatherly care.

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,
let us pray to the Father who gives us each day far more
than we deserve and whose mercy embraces all his
children:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant
peace in our days, that, trusting not in our own merits but
in the abundance of your mercy, we may be free from envy
and anxiety and rejoice in the blessings you pour upon all
your people, as we await the blessed hope and the coming
of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us by your life and your words
that true greatness is found not in comparison but in love.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who welcomes the weak, the latecomer, and the sinner
with generous mercy.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, how often we measure ourselves against others and
quietly resent the blessings they receive. Yet today you
remind us that all is gift. The grace we have received, the
forgiveness we enjoy, the hope we carry—none of it has
been earned. Teach us to live not with calculating hearts,
but with grateful hearts. May this Eucharist make us more
generous, more compassionate, and more joyful in the
goodness you show to all.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by these sacred mysteries,
we humbly pray, O Lord,
that, experiencing the richness of your generosity,
we may grow in gratitude and charity
and become living signs of your compassionate love in the
world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord,
whose mercy is greater than all our deserving,
free your hearts from envy and comparison
and fill you with gratitude and generosity.

May he teach you to rejoice in the blessings of others
and to trust always in the abundance of his grace.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by living with generous
and grateful hearts.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God does not love us according to our calculations, but
according to his compassion. What we have received from
him is gift, not achievement. A grateful heart rejoices not
only in blessings received, but also in blessings shared
with others.

20 August, 2026 – Thursday, 20th Week in Ord. Time

St. Bernard, Abbot ; Ezek 36,23-28; Mt 22,1-14

“Clothed for the invitation of grace.”

INTRODUCTION

A man once received an unexpected handwritten note in his letterbox. It was from a neighbour he barely knew, inviting him to a simple dinner at their home. He hesitated. It had been a long week; he felt tired, not particularly sociable, and unsure what to expect. Still, something about the warmth of the invitation moved him. He went. That evening turned out to be one of the most meaningful he had experienced in years—new friendships began, laughter was shared, and he went home strangely renewed.

Life is full of invitations like that—some we accept, others we ignore. Often, we do not realize what we are declining when we say “no.” At times, we imagine we are too busy, too distracted, or even unworthy. Yet behind many invitations lies not obligation, but a genuine desire for communion.

In today’s readings, God speaks to us not in the language of force, but of invitation. Through the prophet Ezekiel, He promises to cleanse us, to give us a new heart, and to place

His Spirit within us. In the Gospel, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a wedding banquet prepared with love and generosity for all.

As we gather around the Lord’s table, let us ask ourselves how we have responded to God’s invitations in our lives. Have we come with grateful and open hearts? Trusting in His mercy, let us acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You invite us again and again to the banquet of Your kingdom, yet we have often ignored Your call:
Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You clothe us with grace and give us a new heart, yet we have often remained unchanged and indifferent: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You gather people from every road and every condition into Your house of mercy, yet we have failed to welcome others with the same generosity:
Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the merciful Lord cleanse our hearts, renew us by His Spirit, and clothe us with the grace needed to share in the joy of His kingdom; and may almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who invite Your people to the wedding feast of Your Son
and renew us inwardly by the gift of Your Spirit,
grant that, clothed in the garment of grace,
we may respond wholeheartedly to Your call
and live worthily of the banquet prepared for us in Christ.
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

There is a story of a couple who spent months preparing for their daughter's wedding. Every detail was carefully arranged—the hall decorated, the meal prepared, the music chosen. When the day finally arrived, several of the invited guests simply did not turn up. Some sent last-minute excuses; others gave no response at all. The parents were not just inconvenienced—they were deeply hurt. The feast was ready, but the absence of those invited left a quiet emptiness.

Jesus' parable today echoes that experience, but on a much greater scale. A king prepares a wedding feast for his son, an event of immense joy and honour. Everything is ready. Yet those invited refuse to come. Some are indifferent; others even react with hostility. It is a puzzling and almost irrational refusal—because there is everything to gain and nothing to lose.

This parable reveals something essential about God: His generosity is boundless, but it never forces itself upon us. God invites; He does not coerce. The tragedy is not that

the banquet is lacking, but that people choose to stay away. How often do we do the same—allowing distractions, routines, or indifference to crowd out God’s invitation to deeper life?

Yet the story does not end with rejection. The king sends his servants out again—this time to the crossroads—to gather anyone they can find. Good and bad alike are welcomed. This is a striking image of God’s persistence. When faced with refusal, He does not withdraw; He widens the invitation. God’s desire is that the hall be filled, that life be shared, that no place remain empty.

The first reading from Ezekiel helps us understand how God makes this possible. God does not merely invite from a distance; He works within us. “I will give you a new heart... I will put my spirit within you.” The capacity to respond to God is itself God’s gift. He prepares us from the inside, shaping us so that we can say “yes.”

But the Gospel also adds a sobering note. One guest, though present, is not wearing the wedding garment. He has accepted the invitation, but without taking it seriously.

This reminds us that responding to God is not a one-time act or a casual gesture. To accept the invitation means to be transformed—to “put on Christ,” as Saint Paul would say, to let our lives reflect the dignity of the feast we have entered.

In practical terms, this means that our participation in the Eucharist is not just attendance. It is a commitment. We come to the table of the Lord, but we are also sent out to live what we celebrate—to carry Christ’s compassion, humility, and truth into our daily lives. The “wedding garment” is not about outward appearance, but about an inner disposition shaped by grace.

Each day, then, is a fresh invitation. God continues to call, to prepare, to open space for us at His table. The question is not whether the invitation is given—it always is—but whether we will recognize its value and respond with our whole heart.

There is a story of a homeless man who was once invited by a parish community to a festive meal. At first, he hesitated, feeling out of place. But he accepted. Before

entering, someone quietly offered him a clean jacket. He put it on, sat down, and shared in the meal. Later, he said that what touched him most was not just the food, but the sense of dignity—he felt seen, welcomed, and changed. In a simple way, he had been clothed for the occasion, and it made all the difference.

God offers each of us that same dignity. He invites us, clothes us with grace, and seats us at His table. To accept that invitation fully—to be truly “clothed for it”—is to enter into the joy of His kingdom, even now.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we bring these gifts to the altar, the Lord may purify our hearts, renew us by His grace, and make us worthy to share in the banquet of His kingdom.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, accept the offerings we place before You,
and through these sacred mysteries
clothe us ever more fully with the grace of Christ,
so that, renewed in heart and spirit,
we may faithfully live the invitation You continually extend
to us. 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 great love

You prepared for humanity the banquet of salvation
through Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though many turned away from Your call,
You never ceased inviting Your people,
but opened wide the doors of mercy
to gather all who would come to You.

In Christ, You cleanse us from sin,

give us a new heart,
and clothe us with the dignity of grace,
so that we may share already on earth
in the joy of the heavenly wedding feast.
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 Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray with confidence to the Father who invites us to
His table and calls us His children:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant
peace in our days, that, renewed by Your Spirit and
clothed with the grace of Christ, we may respond faithfully
to Your invitation and live in the hope of the eternal
banquet. As we await the blessed hope and the coming of
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You gather people from every nation and walk of life
into the peace and joy of Your kingdom.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with Your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who invites us to the
wedding feast of eternal life. Blessed are those called to
the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, You continue to invite us to Your table, not because
we are perfect, but because You desire to renew us. In this
Eucharist, You have clothed us once more with grace and
reminded us of our dignity as Your people. May we never
take Your invitation lightly, but live each day with hearts
transformed by Your love, carrying into the world the
compassion and joy we have received here.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the communion we have shared, O Lord,
transform our hearts and strengthen us in grace,
so that, clothed with the life of Christ,
we may walk faithfully in the path of Your kingdom
and joyfully bear witness to Your invitation in the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord who has invited you to the banquet of His
kingdom renew your hearts with His Spirit
and clothe you always with the grace of Christ. Amen.

May He strengthen you to live worthily of the Gospel you
have received and to reflect His love and mercy in your
daily lives. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your lives, and remain
always clothed in the grace and joy of His invitation.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's invitation is always open, but it asks for more than
mere attendance. He calls us to be transformed—to put on
Christ and live each day clothed in the dignity, grace, and
love of His kingdom.

21 August, 2026 – Friday, 20th Week in Ord. Time

St. Pius X Ezek 37,1-14; Mt 22,34-40

“Love that begins in God becomes love that reaches everyone.”

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once asked her students to write down the most important rule for a happy life. The answers varied—“work hard,” “be honest,” “help others,” “believe in yourself.” One quiet child simply wrote, “Remember who loves you.”

When asked to explain, the child said, “If you remember who loves you, you’ll know how to live.” There was a wisdom in that simple answer that surprised everyone.

In our own lives, we often juggle many “rules”—duties, expectations, responsibilities. Like the people in Jesus’ time, we can feel surrounded by countless demands. It is easy to lose sight of what really matters, to get caught up in details and forget the heart of it all.

The question asked of Jesus in today’s Gospel—“Which is the greatest commandment?”—is not so far from our own questions. What truly matters most? What holds everything

together? What gives meaning to all the rest?

As we gather now, we might recognize that we have not always kept that centre clear. We have sometimes loved half-heartedly—God, others, even ourselves. And so, preparing to celebrate these sacred mysteries, we turn to the Lord and ask for mercy and renewal.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call us to love the Father with all our heart, mind, and soul: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you teach us that love of neighbour reveals the truth of our love for God: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you pour out your Spirit to make us instruments of your faithful and generous love: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who calls us back to the heart of the Gospel whenever our love grows weak or divided, forgive our sins, renew us in the power of his Spirit, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who taught Saint Pius X
to guard the faith with wisdom
and to lead your people with a shepherd's love,
grant that, rooted deeply in your love,
we may seek you above all things
and show your compassion in generous service to others.
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 inherited a large, old house filled with furniture, books, and countless objects collected over generations. Determined to bring order, he began cataloguing everything—labeling, sorting, organizing. After months of work, he proudly showed a friend his detailed system. The friend listened patiently and then asked, “But is this house a home?” The man paused. In all his effort to manage everything, he had forgotten the simple purpose of the house—to be lived in and loved.

Something similar was happening in the religious world of Jesus’ time. There were hundreds of commandments—over six hundred—carefully observed, debated, and discussed. When the Pharisee asks Jesus which commandment is the greatest, it is not just curiosity; it is also a test. Yet Jesus cuts through the complexity with striking clarity: the heart of everything is love.

But Jesus does something more. He does not give just one commandment. He gives two—and binds them together. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind,” and “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” What is remarkable is not only the choice of these commandments, but their inseparability. For Jesus, they stand or fall together.

The first comes first for a reason. God is to be loved with our whole being—not partially, not occasionally, but totally. This means recognizing that our life is not self-made, that everything we are and have is gift. To love God is to place Him at the center, to allow our lives to be shaped by that relationship.

Yet this love of God does not remain hidden or abstract. It necessarily flows outward. If we truly love God, we begin to love as God loves. And God's love is never exclusive or selective—it reaches outward, especially toward the vulnerable, the difficult, even the enemy. Love of neighbour is not an optional extra; it is the visible expression of our love for God.

This is why Jesus is so clear: we cannot claim to love God while wounding others. Any devotion that ignores or diminishes our neighbour becomes hollow. The way to God always passes through the people around us—the family member, the stranger, the colleague, the one we struggle to understand.

We see a beautiful example of such love in the story of Ruth, who says to Naomi, “Wherever you go, I will go... your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” It is a human love, faithful and generous, but it reflects something deeper—it echoes God's own steadfast love. This is the kind of love Jesus calls us into: rooted in God, expressed in commitment to others.

Of course, this kind of love is not easy. It stretches us. It asks us to move beyond comfort, beyond preference, beyond self-interest. We cannot sustain it by our own strength alone. That is why Jesus not only teaches this love but gives us his Spirit—the Holy Spirit—so that his way of loving may become ours.

A woman once noticed her elderly neighbour struggling to carry groceries every week. At first, she hesitated—she was busy, and the neighbour seemed distant. But one day she offered help. That small act became a habit, then a friendship. Later, she said, “I thought I was just helping her, but somehow, it brought me closer to God.” Without realizing it, she had discovered the truth of Jesus' teaching: love of neighbour had deepened her love of God. In the end, everything hangs on this. Not our achievements, not our knowledge, not even our religious practices in themselves—but love. Love that begins in God and flows outward to others. Love that quietly transforms ordinary moments into encounters with grace.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,
that our sacrifice, offered with hearts seeking to love God
above all things and our neighbour with sincerity,
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the gifts we place upon your altar,
and through these sacred mysteries
teach us to love you with undivided hearts
and to reflect your goodness in our care for one another.
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 wisdom and love
you created us not to live for ourselves alone,

but to find our life in loving you and in serving one another.
Again and again, through the Law and the Prophets,
you taught your people the path of covenant love,
and in the fullness of time
your Son revealed the greatest commandment:
to love you with all our heart
and to love our neighbour as ourselves.
In Christ, your love became visible among us.
He welcomed the weak, forgave sinners,
and stretched out his hands upon the Cross
to gather all people into your mercy.
Through the gift of the Holy Spirit,
you continue to form our hearts
so that our lives may become signs of your compassion
and peace.
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 Saviour's command and formed by the love that unites us as children of one Father, we dare to say:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free our hearts from all that keeps us closed in upon ourselves.

Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may learn to love generously and forgive readily,
as you have loved and forgiven us.

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

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us that love of God and love of neighbour can never be separated.

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who reveals the Father's love and teaches us to love one another. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, you have fed us with the Bread of Life
and reminded us that the heart of every commandment is love.

May this Eucharist draw us closer to you
and make us more attentive to the people you place before us each day.

Teach us to love not only in words,
but in patience, kindness, forgiveness, and faithful service.
May your Spirit transform ordinary moments
into living signs of your grace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord,
transform us ever more deeply into people of faith and
charity, so that, loving you above all things,
we may recognise your presence in those around us
and serve them with generous hearts.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord fill your hearts with his love,
strengthen you through the power of his Spirit,
and help you to recognise him in all whom you meet.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord
by loving God wholeheartedly
and serving one another with generous hearts.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

When love begins in God, it never remains closed within
us. The more deeply we love God, the more naturally we
begin to love, forgive, serve, and care for others.

Every ordinary act of kindness can become a meeting
place with God's grace.

22 August, 2026 – Saturday

The Queenship of the Bl. Virgin Mary

Ezek 43,1-7; Mt 23,1-12

“Greatness is found in humble service under one Teacher.”

INTRODUCTION

A young seminarian once proudly showed his spiritual director a notebook filled with beautifully written reflections. “I think I’m ready to teach others,” he said with a smile. The director quietly handed him a towel and pointed to the kitchen where dishes were piled high. Confused, the seminarian asked, “What has this to do with teaching?” The director replied, “Until your hands learn humility, your words will not carry truth.”

There is something in us that wants to be seen, to be acknowledged, even to be admired. It is not always wrong—but it can quietly grow into a desire for importance, for recognition, for titles that place us above others. Today’s Gospel touches precisely that nerve.

Jesus speaks strongly about leaders who say the right things but fail to live them, who place burdens on others without lifting a finger to help, who enjoy honour more than service. His words are not meant only for religious leaders; they are meant for all of us who, in one way or another, influence others—at home, at work, in the community. As we gather in God’s presence, we may recognize moments when we have sought recognition more than service, when we have failed to live what we believe, or when we have made life heavier for others instead of lighter. With humble hearts, we ask the Lord for mercy and the grace to begin again.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are our one Teacher, gentle and humble of heart: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you call us to serve one another with humble love: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you lift the burdens of your people and lead us in the way of mercy: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who calls us to greatness through humble service, forgive us for the times we have sought honour instead of love, placed burdens on others instead of helping them, and failed to live what we profess. May he renew in us the humble heart of Christ and lead us into everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who raised the Blessed Virgin Mary above all creatures as Queen, because she humbled herself completely before your will, grant that we too may learn from your Son to serve with gentle and generous hearts, seeking not our own glory but the good of others. 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

There is a story told of a village where a respected teacher would gather people each evening to speak about God. His words were inspiring, and many admired him. One day, however, a child noticed that after speaking about kindness and generosity, the teacher would ignore a poor man sitting nearby. The child asked him, “Why don’t you help him?” The teacher was silent—for the first time, his own words had confronted him.

That story echoes today’s Gospel. Jesus says, “Do what they tell you, but do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.” It is a hard saying, especially for anyone who teaches, preaches, or guides others. But it is also a gentle mirror held up to all of us. There is often a gap between our words and our lives.

Jesus is particularly critical of those who place heavy burdens on others without helping them carry those burdens. The Gospel, however, was never meant to weigh people down. Jesus himself says, “Come to me, all you

who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.” His message is demanding, yes—but it is also life-giving. It calls us to love deeply, but it also gives us the grace to do so.

And that grace comes from recognizing a simple truth: we have only one Teacher—Jesus. No matter how much we know or how long we have followed him, we remain his students. We do not stand above others; we stand alongside them, all of us learning, all of us growing. The moment we forget this, we begin to drift into pride.

To learn from Jesus is to learn humility of heart. “Learn from me,” he says, “for I am gentle and humble in heart.” This humility is not weakness; it is strength under control, love poured out without seeking recognition. It is the quiet strength that lifts others up rather than pushing them down.

Jesus also reminds us that we have only one Father, and so we are all brothers and sisters. This vision of the Church is deeply egalitarian. It leaves no room for superiority or self-importance. Whatever roles we have,

whatever responsibilities we carry, they are meant to serve—not to elevate us above others.

That is why Jesus redefines greatness so simply and so radically: “The greatest among you must be your servant.” In God’s eyes, greatness is not about status or titles; it is about love in action. It is about making life lighter for others, not heavier. It is about quietly giving oneself, as Jesus did.

We see this lived perfectly in Mary, whose Queenship we celebrate today. She is Queen not because she sought honour, but because she said “yes” in humility. Her greatness lies in her service, her openness, her willingness to let God lead. She never placed herself above others; she stood among them as a servant of the Lord.

A final story: a well-known bishop once visited a small parish. After Mass, people searched for him to thank him, but he could not be found. Eventually, someone discovered him in the kitchen, drying dishes with a few

volunteers. When asked why he was there, he simply said, “This is where I remember who I am.”

That is the heart of today’s Gospel. Under one Teacher, as children of one Father, we find our true greatness not in being served, but in serving—with humble, generous love.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, offered with humble hearts under Christ our one Teacher, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we offer you, O Lord, the sacrifice of reconciliation and praise on this feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, grant that, following her example of humble service, we may place our gifts and our lives entirely in your hands for the good of our brothers and sisters. 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 have given us in the Blessed Virgin Mary a radiant example of humble discipleship and loving service. Though chosen above all women to be the Mother of your Son, she did not seek honour for herself, but called herself your servant and trusted completely in your word. \

In her Queenship, we see the fulfilment of Christ’s teaching that the greatest is the one who serves. Through her quiet obedience, her compassion, and her steadfast faith, she shows your Church the path of true greatness—a life poured out in 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 Lord God of hosts...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With humble confidence, and as brothers and sisters under one Father and one Teacher, let us pray in the words Jesus himself has given us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and free our hearts from pride and self-seeking. Grant us the grace to serve one another with humility and love, as Mary did in faithful obedience to your will, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us that true greatness is found in humble service and love. Look not on our failures and divisions, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.
Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life for many. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

In this Eucharist, Jesus has again taught us not with words alone, but with the gift of himself. The Lord who is Master and Teacher becomes bread broken for others. Mary, Queen and servant of the Lord, teaches us to receive this gift with humble hearts and to carry it into daily life through quiet acts of love, kindness, and service. True greatness is not found in being noticed, but in helping others to feel loved, supported, and lifted up.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received the Sacrament of salvation, we ask you, O Lord, that, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may learn to serve you faithfully in serving one another with humility and love. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord teach you the humility of Christ, that you may seek greatness not in honour but in loving service.

Amen.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen and servant of the Lord, guide you to live with gentle and generous hearts.

Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by serving one another with humble love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“True greatness begins when we stop asking to be noticed and start helping others carry their burdens.”