

30 August, 2026 – 22nd Sunday in Ord. Time

Jer 20,7-19; Rom 12,1-2; Mt 16,21-27

INTRODUCTION

A mountain guide once brought a group of climbers through a dangerous trail. At one difficult point, a young climber became frightened and wanted to turn back. The guide gently said to him, “The safest place is not always the place where you stop; sometimes the safest place is the path that leads upward.” Trusting the guide, the young man continued, and later discovered a breathtaking view waiting at the summit.

In today’s Gospel, Peter wants to stop Jesus from taking the difficult road to Jerusalem, the road that would lead to suffering and the cross. Peter speaks out of love, fear, and human instinct. Yet Jesus reveals that God’s way is often very different from our way. The path of faithful love is not always easy, but it is the path that leads to life.

Today we are invited to look honestly at ourselves. Like Peter, our faith can be strong one moment and weak the next. We love Christ, yet we resist sacrifice. We want the

glory of discipleship without the cost of discipleship. Yet Jesus does not reject weak disciples. He patiently forms them, strengthens them, and calls them to follow him.

As we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries, let us ask the Lord to forgive our fear, our selfishness, and our resistance to the cross, and to renew within us the fire of faithful love.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call weak and fragile people to become your disciples and your Church: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you invite us to take up our cross and follow you in love and faithfulness: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you never cease to love us even when our faith falters and our courage fails: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, strengthen us when we are weak, renew within us the fire of his love, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Because Christ continues to call and strengthen his imperfect disciples, and because his mercy is greater than our weakness, let us now raise our voices in praise to God as we sing:

COLLECT

O God, who teach us that true discipleship is found not in seeking ourselves but in following your Son with faithful hearts, grant us the courage to carry the crosses that come with love, truth, and service,
and renew within us the fire of your Spirit,
so that even in our weakness we may become living witnesses of your mercy.

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 watched his father teaching him how to ride a bicycle. The father ran beside him, holding the seat tightly. Again and again the child said, “Don’t let go, Dad!”

Finally, at one point, the father quietly released his hand. The boy wobbled, panicked, almost fell — but then discovered that he could ride. Later he asked his father, “Why did you let go?” The father replied, “Because if I held you forever, you would never become who you are meant to be.”

Love protects. But true love also knows when it must let another person walk the difficult road that leads to growth, truth, and mission.

That is exactly the painful moment we encounter in today’s Gospel.

Peter loves Jesus deeply. Only a few verses earlier, Peter had made that magnificent confession of faith: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus had praised him warmly: “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah.” But today, only moments later, Jesus says to the same Peter: “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path.”

What a shocking change.

One moment Peter is called “blessed”; the next moment he is called “Satan.” One moment he is the rock; the next he

is a stumbling stone.

Why such a harsh response from Jesus?

Because Peter, though motivated by love, was trying to prevent Jesus from embracing the cross. Peter could not bear the thought of Jesus suffering. “Lord, this must never happen to you!” It was the cry of affection, loyalty, fear, and human love. Yet Jesus recognized in Peter’s words the same temptation he had faced in the wilderness — the temptation of self-preservation, the temptation to avoid suffering at all costs.

And honestly, who among us cannot understand Peter?

We all try to protect ourselves and those we love from suffering. Parents would gladly suffer in place of their children. A husband suffers when his wife suffers. A daughter suffers when her elderly mother becomes sick. Love naturally wants to shield.

A doctor once spoke about accompanying terminally ill patients. He said one of the hardest things for families is accepting that they cannot control everything. They want another treatment, another hospital, another miracle.

Sometimes love desperately tries to prevent the inevitable.

Yet there are moments when the deepest love is not controlling, but accompanying — walking with someone through suffering instead of removing it.

Peter was not ready for that kind of love yet.

Jesus knew that fidelity to his Father’s mission would lead him to Jerusalem, to rejection, suffering, and the cross. Given the injustice and hardness of the world, there was no other path. To avoid the cross would have meant abandoning the mission.

And so Jesus says those difficult words: “If anyone wants to be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”

These words are often misunderstood. Jesus is not glorifying suffering for its own sake. Christianity is not a religion that seeks pain. Jesus healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the broken-hearted, defended the oppressed. He never told people to love suffering. Rather, he teaches that faithfulness to truth, love, justice, and the Gospel will sometimes bring suffering.

A teacher who stands for honesty may become unpopular.
A priest who speaks truth may be criticized.
A young person who refuses corruption may be mocked.
A parent who sacrifices for family carries a hidden cross.
Someone caring for a sick spouse for years carries a cross of love.
The cross is not meaningless pain; it is the cost of faithful love.
The prophet Jeremiah in today's first reading understood this well. He cries out to God almost in protest: "You duped me, Lord!" He is tired, mocked, rejected. Yet he says, "There seemed to be a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones." He could not walk away from God because the fire within him was stronger than his fear.
There are two kinds of fire burning in today's readings.
One is the fire of self-preservation — the fire burning in Peter.
The other is the fire of self-giving love — the fire burning in Jesus and Jeremiah.
The world constantly tells us: "Protect yourself first. Think

of yourself first. Preserve your comfort at all costs." But Jesus reveals another way — the way of generous love, sacrificial service, and fidelity even when costly.
A missionary once served in a remote village where there was no electricity or proper roads. Someone asked him, "Why stay here? You could have had a comfortable life elsewhere." He smiled and said, "Because somewhere along the way I discovered that comfort is not the same as joy."
That is the paradox of the Gospel: those who cling to life lose it; those who give their life away in love find it.
And this brings us back to Peter.
Perhaps the most astonishing sentence in the Gospel is this: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church."
Really? Peter the rock?
If Jesus had called Peter a wavering reed, we might have understood. Peter is impulsive, unstable, inconsistent. One moment courageous, another moment afraid. He promises loyalty and later denies even knowing Jesus. He is more a

caricature of a rock than a real rock.

Yet Jesus chooses him.

Why?

Because Peter represents every one of us.

There is greatness in us, and weakness too. There is generosity in us, and selfishness too. Faith and doubt live side by side in the human heart. The same contradiction that existed in Peter runs through the entire Church and through every human life.

The Church has done immense good through history — schools, hospitals, care for the poor, saints who radiated holiness, missionaries who served heroically. The world would be poorer without the Church.

And yet the Church also bears wounds, failures, scandals, and sins. Many people struggle because of these realities. Sometimes even believers suffer because of the Church.

But today's Gospel tells us something very important: Jesus founded his Church knowingly on weak human beings. He did not choose flawless angels; he chose

fragile disciples. He chose Peter precisely as he was — weak, impulsive, divided, yet capable of love.

That means the Church survives not because of human perfection, but because of divine grace.

There is an old story about a priest who was once asked, "Father, what is the greatest proof that the Catholic Church is guided by the Holy Spirit?" He smiled and answered, "The fact that it has survived two thousand years with people like us running it."

There is truth in that humour.

Jesus does not love the sins and failures of the Church, but he continues to love the Church despite its weaknesses — just as he loves us despite ours.

Imagine if the Church were made up only of perfect people. None of us would belong here. We would all feel condemned. But the Church is a home for sinners learning slowly to become saints.

Peter gives hope to all of us because he reminds us that weakness is not the end of discipleship.

The same Peter who was called “Satan” today would one day become courageous enough to die for Christ. Grace transformed him slowly.

That is why Saint Paul says today: “Do not conform yourselves to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.” Christian life is a lifelong conversion into the mind and heart of Christ.

A sculptor was once asked how he could create such a beautiful statue from a rough block of marble. He replied, “The statue was already inside. I only chipped away everything that did not belong.”

That is what Christ does with us.

He sees beyond our contradictions, fears, sins, and failures. He sees the saint hidden within the struggling disciple.

And so today the Lord asks each of us:

Will you follow me only when the road is easy?

Or will you trust me enough to follow me even through the cross? At the end of his life, the same Peter who once tried to prevent Jesus from suffering finally understood.

Tradition tells us that when Peter himself was condemned to crucifixion in Rome, he requested to be crucified upside down because he did not consider himself worthy to die in the same way as his Master.

The fearful Peter became faithful Peter.

The stumbling stone became the rock.

The man who once said, “This must never happen to you,” finally learned that love sometimes must pass through the cross before reaching resurrection.

And perhaps that father teaching his child to ride the bicycle understood something of God’s own heart. God does not promise that we will never wobble or fall. But he does promise that he will never stop walking beside us.

Even when faith shakes.

Even when suffering confuses us.

Even when we struggle with the Church, with others, or even with ourselves.

Christ still says to us: “Follow me.”

And if we do, we will discover that beyond every cross there waits the grace of resurrection. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREDO

United with Peter who confessed Jesus as the Christ, yet struggled to understand the way of the cross, let us now profess with humble faith the faith of the Church:

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

May the Lord teach us through these offerings to place our lives into his hands, trusting him even when the path of discipleship becomes difficult.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this sacred offering, O Lord,
be for us a sign of our willingness to follow your Son in
faithful love and self-giving service,
and may these gifts transform our hearts,
so that we may seek not our own will but yours.

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 you chose weak and fragile people
to become witnesses of your kingdom.

You called Peter, wavering yet faithful,
to be the rock of your Church,
revealing that your grace is stronger than human
weakness.

In your Son Jesus Christ, you showed us the path of
faithful love, a love willing to embrace the cross
for the salvation of the world.

Through his death and resurrection
you have taught us that whoever loses life for his sake will
find it. 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...

ADAPTED INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Jesus taught us that true discipleship means trusting the Father even when the road leads through the cross. With the confidence of children loved despite our weakness, let us pray together:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from fear that keeps us from following your Son,
from selfishness that closes us in upon ourselves,
and from discouragement when faith becomes difficult.

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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
when Peter resisted the way of the cross,
you patiently led him from fear to faithful love.
Look with mercy upon your Church,

often wounded and struggling, yet still loved by you.
Grant us the peace that comes from trusting your will,
the unity that grows through forgiveness,
and the courage to follow you faithfully.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who embraced the cross out of love for us and calls us to follow him.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, like Peter we are often divided between courage and fear, faith and doubt, generosity and self-protection. Yet you never stop calling us.

You continue to feed us with your Word and your Body, strengthening us for the journey of discipleship.

Keep alive within us the fire of your love.

Teach us to carry our crosses with trust,
to remain faithful when the road becomes difficult,
and to believe that your grace is greater than our weakness. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed by this heavenly sacrament, O Lord,
we pray that, strengthened by the Body and Blood of your
Son, we may persevere in faithful discipleship,
grow into the mind of Christ,
and become signs of your mercy and love in the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord strengthen you when faith is tested. Amen.
May he keep alive within you the fire of his love and truth.
Amen.
May he help you to follow Christ faithfully, carrying your
cross with courage and hope. 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 lives of faithful love and
courageous discipleship.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Jesus did not choose Peter because he was perfect.
He chose him because grace can transform weakness into
faithful love. The same grace is at work in us.”

31 August, 2026 – Mon., 22nd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 2:1–5; Lk 4:16–30

“God’s favour crosses every boundary and overturns our expectations.”

INTRODUCTION

A traveller once relied heavily on a navigation app while driving through unfamiliar countryside. When the route suddenly changed, leading him away from the highway onto winding village roads, he resisted at first. Yet by trusting the unfamiliar path, he discovered beauty and life he would otherwise have missed.

We too prefer familiar paths in life and in faith. We often want God to act according to our expectations, within comfortable limits that reassure us and leave us unchanged. Yet the Gospel continually leads us beyond what is familiar, inviting us to see God’s grace at work in unexpected people and places.

Today Jesus reveals a divine mercy that cannot be contained within human boundaries. The people of Nazareth struggle to accept that God’s favour reaches

beyond their own circle, while Paul reminds us that God’s power works not through human prestige but through the quiet strength of the Spirit.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us acknowledge the times we have resisted God’s wider vision, closed our hearts to others, or preferred comfort over conversion. Let us ask the Lord for mercy and forgiveness.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you came to proclaim good news to the poor and freedom to the oppressed: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you reveal a Father whose mercy reaches beyond every boundary and exclusion: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to trust the power of your Spirit rather than our own narrow expectations:

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us for the times we have resisted his wider vision, rejected his truth, and limited the reach of his grace, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

Almighty and ever-living God,
you reveal your saving love in ways that surpass our
human expectations
and call all peoples into the embrace of your mercy.
Open our hearts to welcome your word with faith,
that we may trust the power of your Spirit
and rejoice in the wideness of your grace.
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 man once returned to his hometown after years of study and work abroad. At first, people admired him—he spoke well, carried himself confidently, and seemed to bring a breath of fresh air. But when he began to challenge some of their long-held attitudes and assumptions, the mood changed quickly. Familiarity turned into suspicion, and admiration gave way to rejection. They could not accept that someone they thought they knew could speak

to them with such unsettling truth.

This is the very pattern we see in Nazareth. Jesus begins in the synagogue with goodwill around him. The people are impressed by his words. Yet admiration alone is not enough to sustain faith when God begins to stretch the boundaries of expectation.

At the heart of Jesus' proclamation is Isaiah's vision: good news for the poor, freedom for captives, sight for the blind, and liberation for the oppressed. This is not selective favour; it is a sweeping declaration of God's mercy reaching the places most marked by need and brokenness.

But Jesus does not stop there. He reminds his listeners of Elijah and Elisha—prophets who brought God's blessing beyond the borders of Israel, to outsiders and foreigners. With this, the message becomes more than they can bear. God's favour is no longer something they can contain or control.

The reaction is swift and violent. The same crowd that admired him now turns against him. What began as

approval becomes rage, because Jesus reveals a God who refuses to belong to any single group, system, or expectation.

Paul, in the first reading, helps us understand the deeper dimension of this moment. He insists that his preaching is not based on eloquence or human wisdom, but on the power of the Spirit. Faith, he reminds us, does not rest on what is impressive by human standards, but on the transforming action of God who often works through what appears weak or unacceptable.

This is where the tension lies: God's truth often comes to us in ways we do not anticipate, through voices we may struggle to accept, and in directions we would not choose. The question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are willing to hear him beyond our expectations.

There is a story of a small rural river that farmers once tried to contain with barriers and channels to serve only their own fields. But after heavy rains, the river broke through and spread across the land. At first it caused fear and frustration, but over time it was discovered that the water

had reached distant, dry soil that had long been neglected. What seemed like disruption became unexpected fertility, and what was resisted became a source of life far beyond its original boundaries.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts we bring before the Lord may help us to surrender our narrow expectations and open our hearts to the transforming power of God's grace, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord our God,
receive these offerings from your people,
and teach us through this sacred mystery
to welcome the breadth of your mercy
and trust the quiet power of your Spirit at work among 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 Son, Jesus Christ,
you revealed a salvation that reaches beyond every human
boundary.
He proclaimed good news to the poor,
freedom to the captive,
and hope to all who longed for healing and peace.
When many resisted his message,
he remained faithful to your will,
showing that your grace cannot be confined
by prejudice, fear, or human expectation.
Through the power of your Spirit,
you continue to call your people
to trust not in worldly wisdom or strength,
but in the transforming power of your 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

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to pray to the Father whose love reaches beyond
every border and whose mercy gathers all people into one
family:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the fear and narrowness
that prevent us from recognizing the breadth of your
mercy.
Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, trusting not in human wisdom but in the power of your
Spirit, 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 were rejected by your own people
yet continued to offer mercy and peace to all.
Free us from prejudice, fear, and division,
and make us instruments of your reconciling love.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the
world and invites all peoples to share in the banquet of his
mercy. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

God's grace is always wider than our expectations.
The Christ we receive in this Eucharist
calls us beyond familiar boundaries
into a life shaped by mercy, openness, and trust.
May we never resist the paths
through which God chooses to bring life to others and to
us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this heavenly sacrament, O Lord,
strengthen us in faith and widen our hearts in charity,
that we may recognize your saving presence
wherever your Spirit is at work
and faithfully follow the path your Son has shown us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord widen your hearts to receive his truth with
humility. Amen.
May he strengthen you to trust his Spirit beyond your own
expectations. 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 welcoming his grace
wherever it is found.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's favour cannot be confined by our expectations.

The challenge of faith is not simply to admire Christ, but to follow him beyond the boundaries where we feel comfortable and allow his grace to widen our hearts.

1 Sept., 2026 – Tuesday, 22nd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 2:10–16; Lk 4:31–37

“The Spirit within overcomes every inner storm.”

INTRODUCTION

During a severe storm at a crowded airport, anxious passengers watched as delays mounted and confusion spread. Yet amid the tension, the calm and steady voice of the air traffic controller guided every aircraft safely. His voice did not add to the panic; it steadied it.

We know how much our lives depend on such voices and presences. In moments of confusion, fear, or uncertainty, we long for someone who can restore calm and clarity. Yet often the greatest storms are not outside us, but within us—storms of anger, anxiety, woundedness, or fear.

Saint Paul reminds us today that we have received not the spirit of the world, but “the Spirit that comes from God.” Through that Spirit, the Lord forms within us the mind and

heart of Christ. The Spirit within us is stronger than every inner storm.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us acknowledge the moments when we have allowed agitation, pride, or fear to guide us more than the Holy Spirit. Let us ask the Lord to quiet every restless voice within us, and with humble hearts let us enter now into the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you speak with divine authority and bring peace to troubled hearts: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you free us from all that disturbs and fragments our lives: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you fill us with your Spirit and teach us to live with the mind of Christ: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the merciful Lord quiet every storm within our hearts, free us from all that separates us from his peace, strengthen us by the power of his Holy Spirit, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who have given us the Spirit of your Son to dwell within our hearts and guide us into your truth, grant that amid the anxieties and disturbances of this world we may remain rooted in the peace of Christ, so that, formed by his Spirit, we may become instruments of healing and hope for 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 schoolteacher once began a lesson in a particularly rowdy classroom. Nothing she said seemed to settle the students; voices rose, chairs scraped, and attention fractured. Instead of shouting over them, she quietly sat at her desk and played a single soft chord on a small keyboard she had brought. The unexpected sound cut through the noise. One by one, the students fell silent, drawn not by force but by an authority that did not compete

with chaos—it overcame it by peace.

In the gospel, Jesus enters a similar kind of disorder within the synagogue. A man, overwhelmed and agitated by an unclean spirit, disrupts the gathering with shouting and hostility. Yet Jesus does not respond with fear or aggression. He does not mirror the disturbance. Instead, with a calm authority, he speaks: “Be quiet! Come out of him!” His word is not reactive; it is liberating.

This authority of Jesus is not domination but restoration. It does not crush the human person; it frees him. The man who had been fragmented and agitated is brought back into himself, restored to dignity and peace. Those who witness this are astonished, because they encounter a power that does not destroy life but heals it from within.

Saint Paul gives us the key to this mystery when he speaks of the “Spirit that comes from God” and says, “We have the mind of Christ.” Jesus acts not from human agitation but from divine communion. His authority flows from the Holy Spirit, the very Spirit that searches the depths of God and is now given to us.

Yet the gospel also makes us reflect honestly on our own interior lives. We know that not every voice within us comes from the Spirit of God. There are moments when anger, fear, pride, or insecurity speak more loudly than grace. In such moments, we can find ourselves reacting rather than responding, speaking in ways that do not reflect the peace of Christ.

The Lord’s way with the possessed man becomes a revelation of how he deals with us as well. He does not abandon us in our inner confusion, nor does he condemn us for it. Instead, he works to free us from what distorts us, so that we may return to clarity, wholeness, and communion. His authority is always directed toward life, never toward harm.

And when that liberation takes place, something new begins to grow in us: a capacity to become instruments of the same peace for others. The Spirit we receive is not for ourselves alone. It is meant to flow through us, bringing calm where there is agitation, understanding where there is conflict, and hope where there is despair.

A few years ago, after a flood, a river had been held back by debris and broken branches. When the dam was finally cleared, the water did not rush out destructively; it flowed steadily, restoring life to the dry land downstream. So it is when the Lord clears the inner blockages within us. His Spirit flows through us freely once again, bringing life where there was stagnation.

And so we return to the beginning: the voice that calms chaos, the presence that restores order, the Word that liberates rather than overwhelms. When Christ speaks within us, even our most troubled places can become spaces of peace—until, transformed by his Spirit, we too become voices that help calm the storms of others.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that the Lord may receive these gifts we place before him, and through the power of his Spirit calm every unrest within us, so that our lives may become an offering pleasing to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May these sacred offerings, O Lord,
become for us a source of healing and peace,
so that, freed from all inner turmoil and strengthened by
your Spirit,
we may live with the mind and heart of Christ
and bring your consolation to those in distress.
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,
through Christ our Lord.

For in your great mercy
you did not leave humanity captive to fear, confusion, and
the power of sin,
but sent your Son among us
to speak words that restore, heal, and set free.
With authority born not of domination but of love,

he calmed troubled hearts,
freed those oppressed by darkness,
and revealed the peace that comes from your Spirit.

In him you have given us the mind of Christ
and poured your Holy Spirit into our hearts,
so that amid the storms of life
we may walk in confidence, hope, and communion.

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 divine Spirit
who calms every fear and teaches us to live as children of
God, we dare to say:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and calm the storms that trouble our hearts.
Free us from the fears, anxieties, and restless spirits
that keep us from living in the peace of Christ,
so that, guided always by your Holy Spirit,
we may remain steadfast in hope and generous in love,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you spoke with authority that brought peace to troubled
hearts
and freedom to those burdened by darkness.
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 whose word calms every storm within us and restores us to peace.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, your word has entered our hearts today not to condemn but to restore.

You know the hidden unrest we carry,
the fears we conceal,
and the voices within us that disturb our peace.

Yet you speak again with gentle authority: "Be quiet."
And through your Spirit,
you bring calm where there was turmoil,
light where there was confusion,
and hope where there was weariness.

Remain within us, Lord,
so that the peace we have received at this altar
may flow outward into every conversation, every
relationship, and every trial we face.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord,
bring peace and healing to our hearts,
so that, renewed by the Body and Blood of Christ
and guided by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we may overcome every inner storm
and become signs of your presence in the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord Jesus,
whose word brings peace to troubled hearts,
free you from every fear and strengthen you with his Spirit.

May he grant you the mind of Christ,
so that your words and actions may bring healing and hope
to others.

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 the calm strength of his Spirit and bringing peace to the storms of others.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The Spirit of Christ within us is stronger than every storm around us. When we allow his voice to guide us instead of fear, anger, or pride, we become instruments of peace in a restless world.

2 Sept., 2026 – Wed., 22nd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 3:1–9; Lk 4:38–44

“Becoming bridges of grace between Christ and humanity”

INTRODUCTION

A railway signal operator once saved hundreds of lives not through heroics, but through attentiveness. Seeing two trains unknowingly moving toward the same track, he calmly redirected one line in time. The passengers never realised how close they had come to danger; they simply arrived safely because someone quietly stood between risk and safety.

His task was simple yet essential: to become a bridge that allowed others to continue their journey in peace. He neither created the trains nor controlled the destination, but his vigilance connected people to safety and life.

Our Christian vocation is very similar. In today’s readings, we see believers carrying others to Jesus, praying for them, interceding for them, and becoming instruments

through which Christ's grace reaches those in need. We are reminded that even small acts of prayer, encouragement, compassion, and faithful presence can become bridges of grace between Christ and humanity.

Yet there are times when we fail to intercede, fail to support, or fail to bring others closer to Christ through our words and actions. Therefore, acknowledging our sins and our missed opportunities to become channels of God's grace, let us now seek the Lord's mercy in the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You listened to the cries of the sick and brought healing to those who were brought before You:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You call us to carry one another in prayer and become bridges of Your grace and compassion:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You withdrew in prayer to seek the Father's will and to remain faithful to Your mission: Lord, have...

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our failure to bring others closer to His love, strengthen us to become faithful bridges of grace through prayer and compassionate service, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

Merciful and loving Father, You call Your people to share in the mission of Your Son by carrying one another in prayer, compassion, and faithful service.

Teach us to become bridges of grace between Christ and humanity, so that through our words, actions, and hidden sacrifices, others may encounter Your healing presence and saving love.

Grant us hearts attentive to the needs of others and spirits rooted in prayer and discernment.

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 nurse once stood in a hospital corridor as a young man's condition suddenly worsened. Without hesitation, she called the doctor on duty, described the symptoms with urgency, and prepared the patient for immediate intervention. Later she said, "I didn't heal him; I just made sure he met the one who could." In that simple act, she became a bridge between need and healing.

Something very similar unfolds in today's Gospel. People gather in the house of Simon Peter and intercede for his mother-in-law, who lies sick with a fever. Others bring their sick relatives and friends directly to Jesus. Some speak on behalf of others; some physically carry them. All of them, in different ways, act as mediators between human suffering and divine mercy.

This is the heart of Christian life: to bring others to Christ and to bring Christ to others. Intercessory prayer is not a passive exercise but a living participation in God's saving work. When we pray for someone, we are placing them before the Lord with confidence that He is already at work

in their lives.

Paul's mention of Epaphras in the first reading highlights this same mission. He laboured in prayer for the Colossians, wrestling for them so that they might stand mature in Christ. The early Church understood that spiritual growth is carried not only by personal effort but by the hidden strength of those who pray and intercede.

Yet the Gospel also shows Jesus immersed in work and then withdrawing into prayer. While the crowds wanted to hold Him in Capernaum, He knew He must move on, guided not by demand but by divine purpose. His prayer was not an escape from mission but the source of clarity for it.

There is a tension here we often feel ourselves. People's expectations can press heavily upon us, pulling us in directions that are not always aligned with God's will. Like Jesus, we need moments of prayer to discern not just what is good, but what is truly God's will for us.

This is where the red thread of today's message becomes clear: we are called to be bridges of grace. Not controlling

outcomes, not solving everything, but faithfully connecting people to God and God's presence to people through prayer, compassion, and truthful living.

A parishioner once quietly visited an elderly neighbour every week. She brought no great solutions, only conversation, groceries, and a steady promise: "I am praying for you." After the woman passed away peacefully, the family discovered a stack of handwritten notes—each one a simple prayer offered over years. No one had seen those prayers at work, yet everyone felt their fruit. In that hidden fidelity, she had become a bridge of grace.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that through these gifts we may offer not only bread and wine, but also our willingness to become instruments through whom Christ's grace reaches those who seek healing, hope, and peace.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
accept these gifts we place upon Your altar,
and through this sacred offering
make us faithful servants of Your compassion and mercy.
As Your Son welcomed the sick, the weary, and all who
sought Him,
teach us also to bring others closer to You
through prayer, charity, and lives rooted in Your will.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give You thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For in Your mercy You sent Your Son among us
as healer, teacher, and shepherd of souls.
He welcomed the suffering, listened to the cries of the
weak, and revealed that no human sorrow is beyond Your
compassion.

In Him You have called Your Church
to become a living bridge of grace in the world:
to carry one another in prayer,
to support the weary with compassion,
and to lead all people toward the light of salvation.

Through moments seen and unseen,
through hidden acts of fidelity and quiet intercession,
You continue to pour Your grace upon humanity.

And so, with Angels and Saints,
we proclaim Your glory,
as with one voice 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 calls us to
support one another as brothers and sisters and to
become bridges of His grace in the world.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by Your mercy,
we may become instruments of reconciliation, healing, and
hope for others,
bringing those who are burdened closer to Your loving
presence,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You healed the sick, comforted the suffering,
and welcomed all who were brought before You in faith.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,
which continues to pray and intercede for the world;
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 heals our weakness and strengthens us to
become bridges of His grace for others.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,
You have nourished us with Your Body and Blood
so that we may carry Your presence into the lives of
others.
Teach us to become quiet bridges of grace:
people who pray faithfully,
serve compassionately,
and lead others gently toward You.
May the hidden acts of love we offer each day
become channels through which Your healing and peace
reach the world.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by these sacred mysteries,
we humbly pray, O Lord, that through this communion
You may deepen within us the spirit of prayer, compassion,
and faithful service.
Make us attentive to the needs of those around us,
so that, strengthened by the grace of Christ,
we may become living signs of Your mercy in the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and strengthen you
to become faithful bridges of His grace and compassion.
May He deepen your spirit of prayer, guide you in His will,
and make your lives instruments of healing and hope for
others.
And may Almighty God bless you,
the Father, ✠ and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, glorifying the Lord by becoming bridges of grace, bringing Christ to others and others closer to Christ.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Every prayer offered for another person becomes a bridge through which God’s grace quietly enters the world.”

3 Sept., 2026 – Thursday, 22nd Week in Ord. Time

St. Gregory the Great; 1 Cor 3:18–23; Lk 5:1–11

Failure becomes a call to trust God’s word.”

INTRODUCTION

A chess enthusiast once shared how he kept losing repeatedly to a younger player. Frustrated, he nearly gave up the game altogether. Then the younger player told him, “You are playing only to avoid losing. Start playing to discover the game.” That simple insight changed the way he approached every move thereafter.

The story is not really about chess. It is about how failure can become a doorway instead of a dead end. Sometimes what appears empty or disappointing becomes the very place where a deeper wisdom begins to emerge. Often, the real change needed is not in our circumstances but in our openness.

Today’s Gospel presents Peter after a long and fruitless night of labour. Exhausted and discouraged, he encounters Jesus, whose word opens a possibility beyond human calculation. St Gregory the Great reminds us that true wisdom begins when

we allow God's word to guide us beyond the limits of our own certainty.

As we gather before the Lord, we bring our own empty nets, failed efforts, and moments of discouragement. Trusting that Christ does not reject our weakness but enters into it with mercy, let us now acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You come to us in moments of failure and call us not to fear: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You invite us to trust Your word when our own strength is exhausted: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You transform our weakness into mission and our emptiness into grace: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us the times we have trusted only in ourselves, strengthen us when discouragement overwhelms us, and lead us from fear into deeper confidence in His word, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who guided Saint Gregory the Great
to lead your Church with wisdom and humble trust,
teach us, amid our failures and uncertainties,
to listen attentively to the voice of your Son
and to cast our lives into the deep waters of faith.
May we never be imprisoned by discouragement,
but always discover in your word
the courage to begin anew.

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 fisherman once told of a night when nothing went right. He and his crew worked for hours, changing spots, adjusting nets, reading the water as they always had—but the sea remained empty. Just as they were about to return, a stranger on the shore called out a suggestion that went against every instinct of experience.

At first, they ignored it. Then, something in the voice—calm, unshaken, oddly certain—made them try once more. What followed was so unexpected that it nearly sank their boat. It was as if the sea had been holding back its abundance, waiting for a word they had not yet trusted.

That moment mirrors the Gospel scene where Peter, exhausted by fruitless labour, hears Jesus say: “Put out into deep water.” The red thread running through this encounter is simple yet demanding: the Word that meets us in our failure becomes the call that sends us forward.

Peter’s expertise told him to stop. Experience told him there was nothing left to gain. Yet the word of Jesus interrupts the logic of exhaustion. Faith often begins precisely there—when our certainty runs out and another voice quietly asks for trust. What is striking is that Jesus does not begin with correction but with direction. He does not scold Peter for failure; He invites him into possibility. In the logic of the Gospel, failure is not disqualification—it is often the very place where God begins to work.

Peter’s reaction, however, is not immediate enthusiasm but a deep awareness of unworthiness: “Leave me, Lord; I am a

sinful man.” This is the paradox of encounter with God—awareness of smallness does not repel Christ; it draws Him closer.

Jesus does not withdraw. Instead, He transforms both the fisherman’s emptiness and his self-judgment into mission: “Do not be afraid; from now on it is people you will catch.” The same hands that hauled empty nets are now entrusted with gathering lives into God’s kingdom.

We see here what St Gregory the Great often emphasized: that divine calling does not bypass human weakness but enters it. Grace does not wait for perfection; it works through availability. What matters is not the absence of failure, but the presence of willingness.

And so the Gospel ends not with fish or boats, but with a departure: “They left everything and followed Him.” A simple act, yet it changes the direction of their lives. One might say it began with a night of nothing—but ended with a lifetime of meaning, much like a fisherman who once thought the sea had nothing left to give, until one more cast revealed more than he could carry.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that bringing before the Lord the offerings of our labour, our disappointments, and our hopes, we may learn to trust His word more than our fears, and that our sacrifice may become acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the sacrifice we offer you, O Lord,
become for us a sign of renewed trust,
so that, like Peter,
we may not remain imprisoned by failure
but respond generously to the call of your Son.
Grant that these gifts, placed into your hands,
may draw us into deeper faith and faithful service.
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,
through Christ our Lord.

For in your wisdom
you do not abandon your people in their weakness,
but reveal your power through those who trust in you.
When human effort fails and hearts grow weary,
your Son speaks the word that restores hope
and calls us into deeper waters of faith.

In Peter and the apostles
you showed that grace does not wait for perfection,
but transforms weakness into mission
and fear into courageous discipleship.
And in Saint Gregory the Great
you gave your Church a shepherd
who taught by word and example
that true greatness is found in humble obedience to your
will.

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 calls us
beyond fear and teaches us to trust His word even in the
midst of our weakness:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every discouragement and
fear that keep us from following your call, graciously grant
peace in our days, that, trusting not merely in our own
strength but in the power of your word, we may be free
from despair and confident in hope as we await the
blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
who stood beside weary fishermen
and turned their discouragement into hope,
look not on our fears, failures, or hesitations,
but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant us the peace
that comes from trusting your word above our own
certainty.

Make us courageous in following your call
and steadfast in the mission you entrust to us,
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 comes to fill the emptiness of our hearts
and call us into deeper trust.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, so often we measure our lives by success and failure, by full nets or empty hands. Yet today You remind us that Your grace begins precisely where our certainty ends. Peter discovered that the night of failure was not the end of his story, but the beginning of his calling.

Teach us not to fear our weakness. When we feel exhausted, inadequate, or disappointed, help us to hear again Your quiet invitation: “Put out into deep water.” May Your word become stronger than our doubts, and Your presence greater than our fears.

Like St Gregory the Great, may we learn the wisdom of humble trust. And nourished by this Eucharist, may we leave behind whatever keeps us from following You wholeheartedly.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that through the mystery we have celebrated we may grow in confidence in your saving word, so that, strengthened by the Body and Blood of Christ, we may not be overcome by failure or fear, but persevere joyfully in the mission you entrust to us. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord strengthen you when your efforts seem fruitless,
teach you to trust His word beyond your own understanding,
and lead you with courage into the deeper waters of faith.
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 His word even when the nets seem empty.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Failure in the Gospel is never the final word. When human certainty ends, Christ’s invitation begins: “Put out into deep water.” The empty nets of our lives may become the very place where God calls us to deeper trust and greater purpose.

4 Sept., 2026 – Friday, 22nd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 4:1–5; Lk 5:33–39

God's new work outgrows old judgments.

INTRODUCTION

A well-known symphony orchestra once introduced a young conductor for a season of performances. On opening night, he surprised the audience by slightly re-arranging the tempo and emphasis of a much-loved classical piece. Some critics left the hall muttering that he had “tampered with tradition,” while others found themselves unexpectedly moved by the freshness of what they had heard. The same music had elicited very different judgments.

That incident reminds us how quickly we can assess what we do not yet fully understand. What feels unfamiliar is often labelled as flawed before it is carefully listened to. Yet time sometimes reveals depth where first impressions saw disruption.

In today's readings, both Paul and Jesus encounter people who judge too quickly according to fixed expectations. Paul

entrusts himself to the judgment of God alone, while Jesus teaches that new wine requires new wineskins. God's work often stretches our categories and invites us into deeper openness.

As we gather in this Eucharist, let us ask ourselves whether our hearts are open to the newness of God's grace or closed by rigid judgments and narrow expectations. Acknowledging our need for renewal, let us now seek the Lord's mercy in the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you come as the Bridegroom who brings joy and new life to your people: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you call us beyond rigid judgments into hearts renewed by your Spirit: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the new wine of salvation who makes all things new: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God free us from hardened hearts and narrow judgments, open us to the renewing work of his Spirit, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
whose Son came among us as the Bridegroom of a new
and everlasting covenant,
grant that we may never cling so tightly to our own
expectations
that we fail to recognise the new work of your grace.
Renew our hearts by your Spirit,
that we may welcome your truth with humility and joy.
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 master wine maker (vintner) once introduced a new kind of supple wine container he had developed for transporting fresh wine across long distances. It was lighter and more flexible than the traditional skins used in his region. Yet the older winemakers dismissed it immediately, insisting that only the time-honoured containers could be trusted. When the new wine later burst several of the old skins during

storage, the vintner's point became clear in a way words alone had not achieved.

In today's first reading, Paul finds himself similarly judged by members of the Corinthian community. They assess his ministry from their own expectations and standards. Yet Paul refuses to be trapped by their verdicts, reminding them that ultimate judgment belongs not to human opinion but to the Lord who sees the heart.

In the gospel, the Pharisees likewise evaluate Jesus and his disciples through a fixed religious lens. They cannot understand why fasting practices are not being observed in the expected way. But Jesus is not simply adjusting an old system; he is introducing something radically new.

He speaks of himself as the bridegroom, and of his presence as a time of joy rather than mourning. New wine, he says, requires new wineskins. What God is doing in him cannot be contained within structures that have lost their capacity for openness.

At the heart of both readings lies a challenge about discernment. Not every judgment is rooted in

understanding. Sometimes what appears as fidelity to the past becomes resistance to the living movement of God's Spirit.

This does not mean that tradition is discarded. The issue is whether tradition remains alive or becomes rigid. Jesus himself is not rejecting Israel's story but bringing it to fulfilment in a way that requires renewed hearts and minds. For us, the invitation is to hold our convictions with humility, allowing God the freedom to surprise us. The Spirit may still be stretching our "wineskins," asking whether we can receive grace in forms we did not anticipate.

A story is told of an art curator who once dismissed a modern painting as meaningless and placed it in storage. Years later, a visiting expert recognised it as a rare masterpiece. What had seemed confused and unworthy of attention was, in fact, full of depth and intention. The judgment had not changed the painting; it had only revealed the limits of the judge's understanding.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, and the openness of our hearts to God's renewing grace, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, receive the gifts we place upon your altar
and renew us by the mystery we celebrate,
that we may become faithful disciples
whose hearts are flexible and open
to the transforming power of your Spirit.
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 you never abandon your people,
but continually renew them through the grace of your Son.

When hearts become hardened by fear or narrow judgment,
you call us again to openness and trust.

In Christ, the Bridegroom of the new covenant,
you reveal the joy of salvation
and pour the new wine of your Spirit into the world.
Through him you teach us
that your living grace cannot be confined
within rigid hearts or lifeless forms,
but seeks minds renewed in humility and faith.

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

Trusting not in our own judgments but in the mercy of the Father who continually renews us by his grace, and formed by the teaching of the Bridegroom who makes all things new, we dare to pray:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every rigidity of heart and narrowness of judgment, and graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may remain open to the guidance of your Spirit and free from the fear that resists your renewing grace, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you came as the Bridegroom of a new covenant
to reconcile humanity with the Father
and to renew hearts by your Spirit.
Look not on our sins or our resistance to your grace,
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 brings the new wine of salvation and renews all things.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, you continue to work in ways that challenge our assumptions and stretch our hearts.

Teach us not to cling fearfully to what is familiar, but to trust the quiet unfolding of your grace.

May this Eucharist renew us inwardly, so that we may become living wineskins capable of carrying the joy, mercy, and freedom of your Spirit into the world.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having been nourished by these sacred mysteries, O Lord, grant that we may be renewed in mind and heart, so that, freed from harsh judgment and spiritual complacency, we may welcome the ever-new work of your grace in our lives. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you with hearts open to his Spirit, free you from rigid judgments and fearful resistance, and renew you each day in the joy of his grace.

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives renewed in openness, humility, and trust.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's grace cannot always fit within our familiar expectations.

New wine requires new wineskins: hearts humble enough to let God surprise them.

5 Sept., 2026 – Saturday, 22nd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 4:6–15; Lk 6:1–5

“Hope puts life before rigid rules.”

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once set a very strict rule for a final examination: no student was to leave the room under any circumstances until the three hours were completed. Midway through the paper, a student quietly raised his hand—not to ask a question, but because a classmate had fainted from anxiety and hunger. The teacher hesitated. The rule was clear, but so was the need in front of him.

In today’s readings, Saint Paul reminds us not to drift away from the hope promised in the Gospel. Hope is not naïve optimism; it is the conviction that God remains present, especially when life feels rigid, constrained, or even unfair. In the Gospel, that tension becomes visible in a field of grain where law and life seem to collide.

The Pharisees see a breach of Sabbath observance; Jesus sees hungry disciples. What is at stake is not merely interpretation of rules, but the deeper question of how God’s will is understood in the face of human need. The Gospel

consistently places life before legalism.

The red thread running through today’s Word is this: “hope that serves life, not law for its own sake.” When we measure ourselves against that thread, we quickly recognise how often we choose control over compassion, and regulation over relationship. And so we turn to the Lord, asking for mercy for the times we have preferred correctness over love.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you came not to burden humanity but to restore life and hope: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you place compassion above rigid judgment and mercy above empty observance: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are Lord of the Sabbath, teaching us to recognise the dignity and need of every person:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God, who calls us away from hardness of heart and teaches us to place love before legalism, forgive us our sins, heal what is rigid within us, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who sent your Son to reveal that your law is fulfilled in
mercy and your commandments lead always to life,
grant that your people may never cling to rules without
compassion, but, sustained by the hope of the Gospel,
may recognise Christ in the hungry, the weary, and the
wounded. 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 football referee once stopped play for a minor offside
infringement just as a player lay injured near the touchline.
The defending team insisted on the rule being enforced;
the attacking side pleaded for the ball to be put out so the
player could be treated. In that brief moment, the question
was not only about the rulebook, but about what kind of
game they were truly playing.

In today's Gospel, the disciples are walking through a
grainfield, picking heads of grain to satisfy their hunger.

For the Pharisees, this is a violation of Sabbath law—work
is forbidden. For Jesus, however, it is a moment where life
itself is asserting its priority over interpretation.

The tension is not new. Jesus responds by recalling David,
who once allowed his hungry men to eat the consecrated
bread. Even what is sacred, Jesus suggests, cannot be
understood apart from the demands of human need.

At the centre of this dispute stands a profound claim: “The
Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” Jesus is not abolishing
the Sabbath, but revealing its meaning. The Sabbath is not
meant to burden life but to bless it; not to restrict mercy but
to deepen it.

Saint Paul, in his own way, points to the same reality when
he reminds the community that everything they have is
given. If all is gift, then life cannot be reduced to control or
ownership. Gratitude opens the heart, while rigidity closes
it. Hope, as Paul insists, is born when we remember that
we are sustained, not self-made.

When law becomes detached from love, it loses its soul.
When religion forgets mercy, it forgets Christ. The

disciples' hunger is not an inconvenience to be regulated; it is a human reality to be received with compassion. Jesus does not argue against the Sabbath; he restores it to its purpose.

For us today, the question is subtle but real: where do we still place rules, expectations, or traditions above the actual needs of people before us? Faith becomes sterile when it no longer bends toward the wounded, the tired, or the hungry. Christ continues to stand with those whose need is immediate and unignorable.

A final scene brings it home. In a busy hospital emergency ward, a nurse notices a patient whose condition is rapidly deteriorating, even though another case is technically next in the queue. Without waiting for formal approval, she acts immediately. Later she is questioned for bypassing procedure. Her answer is simple: the patient was dying. In that moment, the rule had to yield to the person.

The Gospel ends not with the defence of a regulation, but with the revelation of a Lord: one who places life at the centre, and in doing so, calls us to do the same.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may become pleasing to God, the Father almighty, as we offer him not only bread and wine, but also our desire to place mercy before judgment and hope before fear.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord,
accept the gifts we bring before you,
and teach us through this holy sacrifice
that worship pleasing to you is never separated from
compassion for others.
May these offerings strengthen us
to serve life generously and to walk in the freedom of your
Son.

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 you gave the Sabbath
not as a burden upon humanity
but as a sign of your loving care and rest.
And when hearts became hardened by fear and rigid
judgment, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ,
to reveal the deeper meaning of your law.
In him, the hungry are fed, the weary are restored,
and mercy is lifted above sacrifice.
He teaches us that every commandment finds its fulfilment
in love
and that true holiness always serves life.
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

Our Father is a Father of mercy, not of harshness; a Father
who knows our hunger, our weakness, and our need.
Trusting in his compassion and hope-filled love, we pray
together:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the hardness of heart that places rules
above people and judgment above mercy.
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 your disciples that true
holiness is found in mercy and compassion.
Look not on our failures and rigidities,
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 feeds the hungry and restores the weary.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord of the Sabbath has fed us with the Bread of Life.
In Christ, we discover that God's holiness is never distant
from human need. The Eucharist we receive calls us to
become people whose faith is gentle, merciful, and attentive
to the suffering of others. Hope grows wherever compassion
is stronger than control, and love is greater than fear.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received these sacred mysteries, O Lord,
we pray that this heavenly nourishment
may soften whatever is rigid within us
and teach us to recognise your presence
in the needs of those around us.
May the hope we have received in Christ
lead us always to choose mercy, compassion, and life.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and teach you
to place compassion before judgment
and mercy before rigid observance. Amen.

May he strengthen you in the hope of the Gospel,
so that your faith may always serve life and never burden
it. 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 lives marked with
mercy, compassion, and hope.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

"Rules find their true meaning only when they serve life,
mercy, and love."