

6 Sept., 2026 – 23rd Sunday in Ord. Time

Ez 33:7–9; Rom 13:8–10; Mt 18:15–20

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a village in the mountains where people depended on a narrow bridge to cross a deep ravine.

Every evening an elderly man walked to the bridge carrying a lantern. Some laughed at him and said, “Why bother? Everyone knows the path.” But one foggy night the lantern revealed that part of the bridge had collapsed after heavy rain. Because the old man had continued his quiet duty, many lives were saved.

In today’s readings, God reminds us that faith is never a private affair. Like the watchman in Ezekiel, we are called to care for one another and not remain indifferent when others struggle or wander away from the path of life.

Saint Paul tells us that the only lasting debt is the debt of love. Christian love is not sentimental or passive; it seeks the good of the other person. Sometimes love comforts, sometimes it warns, sometimes it patiently speaks a difficult truth.

As we gather in the presence of the Lord who binds us together as one Body, let us acknowledge the times we failed to care for one another, the times we remained silent out of fear, or spoke without charity. Let us ask the Lord for mercy and healing.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call us to watch over one another with love and compassion: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you seek not to condemn but to win back those who have gone astray: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you gather us as one Body and remain present where two or three are united in your name: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the merciful Lord forgive our indifference, heal the wounds we have caused one another, strengthen us in truth and charity, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Because God continues to guide His people with patient love and calls us to live as one family in Christ, let us now raise our voices in praise and sing together:

Glory to God in the highest...

COLLECT

O God, who call your people to live in mutual love and to care for one another as members of the Body of Christ,
grant us the courage to speak the truth with humility,
the wisdom to correct with compassion,
and the grace to walk together in fidelity and peace.
May our lives become signs of your presence in the world so that none may feel abandoned or beyond the reach 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.

INVITATION TO THE CREDO

United as one people gathered in the name of Christ, and strengthened by the faith handed on to us by the Church, let us now profess our faith together:

HOMILY: “AM I MY BROTHER’S KEEPER?”

A few years ago, during the Covid pandemic, something remarkable happened all over the world. People who normally lived very independent lives suddenly became deeply aware of one another. We wore masks not only to protect ourselves but to protect others. Grandparents waved to grandchildren through windows. Volunteers cleaned churches after every Mass. Stewards stood at doors guiding people carefully to their seats. Neighbours checked on elderly people living alone.

One invisible virus taught humanity a spiritual truth that the Gospel had been teaching all along: what I do affects others. None of us lives alone. None of us sins alone. None of us believes alone. We belong to one another. That truth runs like a golden thread through all three readings today.

1. Ezekiel the Watchman

In the first reading, God says to the prophet Ezekiel:

“I have appointed you as sentry for the House of Israel.”

The German word used in one of the homilies is Wächter — a watchman, a guard, someone standing on the city wall scanning the horizon for danger.

In ancient cities, the watchman was essential. While everyone slept, he remained awake. While people carried on with ordinary life, he kept his eyes open. If an enemy approached and the watchman stayed silent, disaster followed.

One reflection compared this to the old Martello Towers built along coastlines as lookout stations against invasion. Others compared it to modern early-warning systems for earthquakes, storms, or aircraft failures. We build warning systems because danger ignored becomes catastrophe.

And God says to Ezekiel: “That is your role spiritually.”

The prophet is not called to condemn people but to warn them, awaken them, and call them back to life.

One of the German homilies wrestled deeply with a disturbing phrase in the translation:

“You must warn them against me.”

The preacher said he was shaken by that expression. Is God someone we must warn people against? But then he discovered that the Hebrew is better translated:

“Warn them in my name.”

That changes everything.

God is not a tyrant eager to punish. God is the loving Father who warns because He wants life, not destruction.

A few verses later Ezekiel says:

“I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he turn from his ways and live.”

God warns because God loves.

2. “Am I My Brother’s Keeper?”

After Cain killed Abel, God asked him:

“Where is your brother?”

And Cain replied:

“Am I my brother’s keeper?”

The Gospel answer is very clear:

Yes.

Not in a controlling way. Not in a judgmental way. But in a loving, responsible way.

We are connected.

Saint Paul says today:

“Owe nothing to anyone except the debt of mutual love.”

That is the one debt we never finish paying. One German preacher beautifully called love “a bottomless barrel.” You never reach the end of it. God’s love never says, “Enough! I’m done with you.”

And because God keeps loving us without measure, we are called to love one another with that same persevering love.

3. The Two Wrong Ways

The Gospel today speaks about correcting a brother or sister who has gone astray. But Jesus is very careful about how this is done.

One of the German reflections pointed out that we usually

fall into two opposite mistakes.

The first mistake: silence.

We see someone destroying themselves — perhaps through addiction, dishonesty, bitterness, infidelity, or moral compromise — and we say:

“It’s none of my business.”

But love cannot always remain silent.

A parent who sees a child walking toward danger will shout a warning. A doctor who discovers cancer cannot smile politely and say nothing. Real love sometimes speaks difficult truths.

The second mistake: gossip.

Instead of speaking to the person, we speak about the person.

The German preacher said something striking:

“By the end of the month, everyone in the village has spoken about it — except the person concerned.”

Gossip is cowardice disguised as concern.

Jesus gives another way:

- first, speak privately;
- then gently involve others if necessary;
- always seek not humiliation but healing.

Twice the Gospel says the goal is:

“to win back your brother.”

Not to defeat him. Not to shame her. But to save the relationship.

4. Love That Risks Speaking

A teacher once noticed one of his students becoming withdrawn and angry. Grades dropped. Friends disappeared. The easy thing would have been to ignore it.

Instead, the teacher asked him to stay behind after class.

At first the student was defensive:

“Why are you interfering?”

But eventually he broke down and admitted that his parents were separating and he was falling apart inside.

Years later that young man said:

“That conversation saved me. For the first time I realized someone noticed.”

Sometimes the most loving thing we can do is risk an uncomfortable conversation.

Saint Paul says:

“Love does no wrong to a neighbour.”

Real love is not sentimental softness. Love seeks the good of the other person, even when truth is painful.

Jesus Himself did this with Peter. Jesus loved Peter deeply, yet when Peter became a stumbling block, Jesus corrected him strongly.

Love and truth belong together.

5. We Influence One Another Spiritually

One of the English reflections says something very important:

“None of us journeys to God alone.”

That is profoundly true.

Some people helped bring us closer to God:

a grandmother who prayed,
a teacher who believed in us,
a priest who listened,

a friend who encouraged us.

Others perhaps discouraged faith by hypocrisy, harshness, or bad example.

Every one of us is influencing someone spiritually — for good or for harm.

The Samaritan woman met Jesus at the well and immediately brought others to Him.

Peter at one moment became a rock, and at another moment a stumbling stone.

We can become either:

- windows that help people see Christ,
- or walls that block Him from view.

6. The Church as a Living Body

Saint Paul understood the Church as the Body of Christ.

If one part suffers, the whole body suffers.

If one part is healthy, the whole body benefits.

That means:

- your prayer strengthens the Church;
- your kindness strengthens the Church;

- your fidelity strengthens the Church.

And likewise:

- hidden bitterness weakens the Church;
- selfishness weakens the Church;
- scandal weakens the Church.

We belong to one another spiritually.

That is why the saints matter so much. Holy people create space for God in the world.

One of the reflections put it beautifully:

“To the extent that we allow Christ to live in us, we create space for Him to live in others.”

7. A Story to End

There is an old story about a lighthouse keeper on a dangerous rocky coast. Every month he received a limited supply of oil to keep the lighthouse burning.

One night a neighbour came asking for oil for a lamp.

Another needed some for cooking. Another needed some for warmth. The keeper gave a little to each.

By the end of the month, the oil was nearly gone.

That night the lighthouse went dark.

A ship crashed on the rocks, and many lives were lost.

The investigation later concluded:

“The lighthouse keeper failed in his primary duty.”

Brothers and sisters, every Christian is called to keep a spiritual light burning.

We are called to watch over one another,
pray for one another,
encourage one another,
correct one another with humility and love,
and lead one another toward Christ.

Not harshly.

Not self-righteously.

But with the heart of Jesus.

For in the end, Christianity is not merely about “me and God.”

It is about becoming together the Body of Christ —
where no one walks alone,
no one is abandoned,

and no one is beyond the reach of truth and love.

And when we live that way, the promise of Jesus becomes real:

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Amen.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may become an offering of love and reconciliation, strengthening the unity of the Church and helping us to lead one another toward Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God, accept these gifts which we place upon your altar, and through this holy sacrifice
teach us to love one another with sincerity and truth.
May this Eucharist strengthen our communion as the Body of Christ
and make us faithful witnesses of your mercy in the 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,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Christ our Lord.

For in your wisdom and love
you did not create us to walk alone,
but gathered us into one people,
bound together in faith, hope, and charity.

You call us to watch over one another with compassionate
hearts,

to encourage the weak,
to restore those who stray,
and to bear one another's burdens in love.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
truth and mercy meet perfectly,
for He came not to condemn the sinner
but to lead all people back to life.

Through Him you make the Church a living Body,
where each act of kindness strengthens all,

each prayer supports the weary,
and each faithful witness becomes a light in the darkness.
And so, with Angels and Saints,
we praise you, as without end we acclaim:
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Gathered as one family in Christ, and trusting in the Father
who calls us to care for one another in love and truth, let us
pray with confidence in the words our Savior 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 never grow indifferent to the needs of others
but live as faithful disciples,
supporting one another in truth and love
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us to seek reconciliation
and promised to remain present
where even two or three gather in your name.
Look not on our sins,
but on the faith and charity 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 calls us into communion with Himself and with one
another,
who heals the brokenhearted and gathers us as one Body.
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
and reminded us that no one walks alone.
Teach us to become watchful in love,
gentle in correction,
faithful in prayer,
and generous in compassion.
May your presence among us
make our homes, our parish, and our hearts
places where others encounter your truth and mercy.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, O Lord,
that strengthened by this heavenly sacrament,
we may remain united in mutual love
and faithful in caring for one another as members of
Christ's Body.
May the grace we have received
shine forth in lives of compassion, truth, and reconciliation.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you watchful in faith.
Amen.

May He fill your hearts with compassion and courage
to guide and support one another in love. Amen.

May He make your lives a light for those who seek hope,
truth, and peace. 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 caring for one another
in truth and love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Christian love is more than kindness; it is the courage to
care enough to guide one another toward Christ.”

7 Sept., 2026 – Mon., 23rd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 5:1–8; Lk 6:6–11

*Christ the healer restores what is withered into hope of
glory.*

INTRODUCTION

In a quiet museum, a restorer once spent weeks working
on a painting that many believed was beyond repair.
Beneath layers of damage and fading colour, however, he
slowly uncovered a hidden beauty that had never
completely disappeared. What seemed ruined was
patiently restored by skilled and caring hands.

That image reminds us how easily we can dismiss what
appears weak, wounded, or incomplete. Yet God sees
differently. Where we see limitation, Christ sees the
possibility of healing and renewal. Saint Paul reminds us
today that “Christ among you” is already our “hope of
glory.”

In the Gospel, Jesus encounters a man with a withered hand. While others focus on rules and judgment, Jesus focuses on restoring life. He refuses to leave suffering untouched and reveals that mercy is always at the heart of God's law.

As we gather before the Lord, we recognize the ways we resist his healing work within us. We ask pardon for the times we have judged harshly, ignored the suffering of others, or allowed our hearts to grow hard. Let us now turn to the Lord and seek his mercy.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you see beyond our wounds and restore what is broken: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you heal with compassion and bring hope where hearts have grown weary: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to live in sincerity, truth, and the freedom of your love: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who sent his Son to heal what was wounded and restore in us the hope of glory, forgive us our sins, soften what has grown hard within us, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
whose Son revealed your mercy
by restoring the broken and giving hope to the wounded,
grant that we may welcome the healing presence of Christ
in our lives
and become renewed in sincerity, truth, and
compassionate 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 young emergency nurse once recalled a night shift when a man was rushed in with a severely injured hand after an accident. The damage looked hopeless at first glance. Some bystanders assumed it would never function again. But the surgeon saw differently. With precision and patience, he worked through the night to restore circulation, repair tissue, and preserve what others thought was lost.

That scene echoes the Gospel today, where Jesus enters the synagogue and encounters a man with a withered hand. There is no hesitation in him, no calculation about consequences. He simply sees a life that can be restored, and he restores it.

Saint Paul speaks of Christ as “our hope of glory,” but also as a living presence already among us. This is not a distant hope. It is a present power—Christ at work within what is broken, not waiting for ideal conditions but entering the reality of human suffering.

Yet the reading from Corinthians also warns of “old yeast,” the subtle corruption that spreads when sin is left unchallenged. Paul calls the community to become fresh dough, new in sincerity and truth. The contrast is striking: where Christ heals and renews, sin quietly hardens and distorts.

The Pharisees in the Gospel are caught in that hardening. They are watching not to understand but to accuse. Their lens is suspicion. And through that lens, even mercy looks like wrongdoing.

Jesus, however, refuses to be shaped by their judgment. He steps forward and heals on the Sabbath, revealing that love is never suspended by legal boundaries. The law finds its fulfilment in life restored, not life restricted.

This is where the Gospel becomes deeply personal. Christ continues to enter the “synagogues” of our lives—those interior spaces where habits, fears, and wounds gather. He is present not as observer but as healer, touching what we often keep hidden or declare beyond repair.

And this presence is not only about the present moment; it is also our hope of glory. What Christ begins in healing, he will bring to completion in eternal life. Every act of restoration now is a foretaste of what we are called to become fully in him.

A final image remains: an old clockmaker once received a broken timepiece that had stopped years earlier. Many said it was worthless. But he opened it carefully, cleaned each part, replaced what was missing, and set it running again. When it finally ticked steadily, it was not just a machine restored—it was time itself given back its rhythm.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered with humble and open hearts, may become for us a sign of Christ's healing presence and be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
receive these offerings we place upon your altar,
and through the power of this sacrifice
heal what is weakened within us,
renew us in the truth of your love,
and strengthen our hope in Christ,
who restores all things.
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 and restorer of all that sin had wounded.
When hearts were hardened and compassion forgotten,
he revealed the fullness of your love

by restoring the weak, lifting up the broken,
and giving hope to those who felt beyond repair.

In him, your people discover the hope of glory,
for he does not abandon what is fragile
but patiently renews it through grace and truth.
Through his death and resurrection,
he makes all things new
and leads us toward the fullness of eternal 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

Gathered as children whose wounded hearts are healed
and restored by Christ, and trusting in the hope of glory he
places within us, let us pray with confidence to the Father
in the words our Saviour gave us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free our hearts from the hardness that keeps us from
your mercy.

Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by the healing presence of Christ,
we may live in hope and sincerity
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you restored the wounded and brought peace to troubled
hearts.

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 heals what is wounded
and restores in us the hope of glory.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Christ does not turn away from what is broken.
He enters patiently into the hidden wounds of our lives,
restoring what has withered and renewing hope where we
thought none remained. In every grace received,
he reminds us that no life is beyond his healing love.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by these holy mysteries, we pray, O Lord,
that Christ, who has touched us with his healing presence,
may continue to renew our hearts,
strengthen us in truth and compassion,
and lead us toward the glory you promise your faithful
people. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord Jesus Christ,
who restored the withered hand and renewed the broken-
hearted, heal what is wounded within you
and strengthen you in hope and peace.
And may almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by bringing healing, mercy,
and hope to all whom you meet.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Christ does not see us as beyond repair.
Where others may see weakness or failure,
he sees the possibility of restoration.
When we allow him to touch the wounded places of our
lives, what is withered can live again,
and hope begins to flourish.

8 Sept., 2026 – Tuesday,

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mic 5:1–4a (or Rom 8:28–30); Mt 1:1–16, 18–23

INTRODUCTION

A museum curator once received an old, worn quilt donated by a family clearing out a farmhouse. At first glance, it seemed ordinary—faded cloth, uneven stitching, nothing remarkable. But when examined carefully, hidden embroidery appeared beneath the surface: names, dates, and symbols woven quietly into the seams. What seemed insignificant was actually carrying a story across generations.

Today, as we celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we remember another hidden beginning. Mary's birth seemed unnoticed in the eyes of the world, yet within her God was preparing the coming of Emmanuel—God-with-us. In her quiet beginning, salvation was already being woven into human history.

The genealogy in today's Gospel reminds us that God works patiently through ordinary lives, imperfect families, and hidden moments. The Holy Spirit quietly guides history toward fulfillment, preparing Mary to become the Mother of the Savior.

As we gather for this Eucharist, we recognize that God is also at work within the hidden places of our own lives. Yet too often we fail to trust his quiet presence or resist his grace. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are Emmanuel, the God who comes near to his people: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you were formed in the womb of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you continue to shape our lives quietly through grace and mercy: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who patiently weaves his grace through the hidden moments of our lives and calls us to become more like his Son, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
to become the Mother of your Son
through the quiet working of your Holy Spirit,
grant that we who celebrate her holy birth
may learn to trust your hidden grace at work within us
and become ever more open to your saving will.

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 high school teacher once asked students to trace their family tree as part of a history project. One student, initially uninterested, began asking questions at home. What started as a simple assignment soon uncovered a surprising discovery: an ancestor who had migrated under difficult circumstances, whose courage had shaped the entire family's present life. What seemed like a routine exercise turned into a revelation of identity.

Matthew's genealogy of Jesus works in a similar way. It is not just a list of names; it is a story of God patiently working through generations, including the unexpected, the forgotten, and even the broken. At the end of this long human line stands Mary—quiet, hidden, yet chosen as the one through whom God's promise enters history.

Mary's greatness lies not in visibility but in availability. Her "yes" to God is the moment when human openness meets divine initiative. Conceived by the Holy Spirit in today's gospel reflection, she becomes the living space where

God's Son takes flesh. Her life is entirely shaped by the Spirit who prepares her for this unique role.

The child born of her is given two names: Jesus, "the Lord saves," and Emmanuel, "God-with-us." These are not poetic titles but revelations of who God is entering our human story—not distant, not abstract, but saving and present. In Mary's arms, God's nearness becomes visible.

The same Holy Spirit who overshadowed Mary is the one who continues to shape the lives of believers. Her life becomes a pattern for every disciple: openness, trust, and surrender. She is not only the mother of Jesus but also the first to show what it means to be fully attuned to God's Spirit.

Saint Paul reminds us that God's purpose is to shape us into the image of his Son. That process is slow, often hidden, like growth beneath the soil. Yet it is real. Each act of faith, each moment of trust, each surrender to God's will becomes part of that transformation.

Mary's nativity, then, is not only about her beginning but about ours. In her we see what humanity can become when fully open to God. She shows that holiness is not sudden but woven quietly through grace-filled surrender over time.

A midwife once recalled attending a difficult birth in a remote village. The child arrived quietly, almost unnoticed compared to others she had assisted. Yet years later, that same child became a teacher who transformed the entire community. She often said she never forgot that night—not because of what was visible then, but because of what was hidden and would one day unfold.

Mary's birth is like that quiet beginning—unassuming, hidden, yet carrying within it the presence of Emmanuel. And in every hidden beginning touched by grace, God continues to draw near, still saying to the world: I am with you.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered in joy on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, may become for us signs of God's quiet and faithful work among his people, and that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the humanity of your Only Begotten Son come, O Lord, to our aid,
and may he, who at his birth from the Blessed Virgin did not diminish but consecrated her integrity,
by taking from us now our wicked deeds,
make our oblation acceptable to you.
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 the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
you revealed the quiet beginnings of your saving plan.
Through generations hidden within human history,
your Spirit prepared a humble daughter of Israel
to become the Mother of Emmanuel, God-with-us.

In her, your grace was already at work before the world
could see its fulfillment.

Through her faithful surrender,
your eternal Word took flesh among us,
bringing salvation near to all humanity.

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

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With confidence in the Father whose loving providence quietly guides all things toward salvation, and following the example of Mary who trusted completely in his will, let us pray together in the words our Savior gave us.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by the grace of your Holy Spirit,
we may trust your hidden work within our lives
and remain faithful to your saving will,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you are Emmanuel, God-with-us,
who entered our human story through the humble faith of Mary. 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 is Emmanuel, God-with-us,
born through the humble openness of Mary
to take away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

God often begins his greatest works quietly.
Mary's birth seemed hidden and ordinary,
yet through her the Savior entered the world.
The Holy Spirit continues to work in the same way within
us— through small acts of trust, hidden fidelity, and patient
surrender.
What may seem unnoticed today
can become the place where Emmanuel is revealed
tomorrow.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May your Church exult, O Lord,
for you have renewed her with these sacred mysteries,
as she rejoices in the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
which was the hope and the dawn of salvation for all the
world. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May God, who quietly prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
to become the Mother of his Son,
strengthen you in trust and openness to his grace. Amen.
May Christ, Emmanuel, God-with-us, remain close to you
in every hidden and difficult moment of life. Amen.
May the Holy Spirit, who shaped Mary into the dwelling
place of the Savior, continue to transform you into faithful
disciples of Christ. Amen.

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 trusting his quiet
work in your lives.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's greatest works often begin quietly.
Like Mary, we may not always see what grace is
accomplishing within us, but every act of trust and
surrender allows Emmanuel—God-with-us—to become
more visible in the world.

9 Sept., 2026 – Wed., 23rd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 7:25–31; Lk 6:20–26

God's reversal of values is revealed in the hidden dignity of human vulnerability.

INTRODUCTION

A commuter train was unusually crowded that morning, every seat taken, people standing shoulder to shoulder in quiet exhaustion. At one stop, an elderly woman stepped in, clearly struggling with her shopping bags. No one moved at first; eyes were fixed on phones, windows, anything but her. Then a teenager, barely noticed until that moment, stood up and offered his seat. What was ordinary to some became a small revelation of kindness breaking through indifference.

Moments like this quietly expose how we measure worth and comfort. We tend to notice strength, success, and self-sufficiency, while vulnerability is often overlooked or avoided. Yet, in the smallest gestures of attention and care, another way of seeing life begins to emerge.

Today's Gospel from Luke places before us a similar reversal of vision. Jesus calls blessed those who are poor, hungry, and weeping, and warns those who are rich, full, and self-satisfied. At first hearing, this unsettles us, because it contradicts the instincts by which society normally operates.

And so, as we enter into this Eucharist, let us ask the Lord to free us from the illusion of self-sufficiency, to open our eyes to His presence in the vulnerable, and to teach us where true blessing is found. With humble hearts, we now turn to Him and ask for mercy.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You became poor so that we might discover the riches of God's mercy: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You draw near to the hungry, the sorrowful, and the forgotten: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You warn us against hearts closed by comfort and self-reliance: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, free us from the blindness of pride and self-sufficiency, teach us to recognize His presence in the poor and vulnerable, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who reveal the riches of your kingdom through the humble, the poor, and the trusting of heart, free us from attachment to passing things and teach us to seek our security in you alone, that, attentive to the suffering and vulnerable, we may become witnesses to the enduring treasure 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 man once walked past a small street stall every morning on his way to work. The vendor, an elderly woman, sold simple fruit, often sitting alone in the cold. One day he noticed she was unwell, her hands trembling as she counted change. He began buying something small each day, not because he needed it, but because he wanted her to know she was seen.

Jesus' words in Luke's Gospel begin precisely here: what the world dismisses, God calls blessed. Poverty, hunger, and sorrow are not praised as goods in themselves, but as places where God's nearness becomes most real. In these spaces, self-sufficiency gives way to dependence, and the heart becomes open.

We often assume blessing is found in fullness and control. Yet Jesus unsettles that assumption. He insists that those who lack are not abandoned, but already being drawn into God's promise: "Yours is the kingdom."

A wealthy businessman once prided himself on never needing help. His calendar was full, his table always set, his laughter constant in public. Yet when illness struck suddenly, he discovered how fragile his certainties were. In that emptiness, he began to pray for the first time in years—not for success, but simply to be held.

The Gospel's "woes" are not condemnations of wealth or joy in themselves, but warnings about self-enclosure—when comfort becomes blindness, and abundance forgets dependence on God. The danger is not having, but no longer needing.

A young mother once sat beside her child in a hospital corridor through the night. She had nothing to offer except presence. Yet she later said that in those hours, stripped of distraction, she felt more deeply held by God than in all her earlier achievements combined.

Paul's reminder that "the world as we know it is passing away" is not despairing, but clarifying. It invites us to hold

life lightly, to invest not in what fades, but in what endures: love, mercy, and faith.

An elderly man once gave away most of what he owned after retirement. When asked why, he simply said he wanted to arrive "light-handed" before God. In his simplicity, others saw not loss, but freedom.

And so the Gospel leaves us with a question: where do we seek our blessing? In what we possess, or in the God who meets us most closely in our need? A final story remains.

A child once shared her lunch with another who had none, quietly breaking her bread in half without hesitation. When asked later why she did it, she said, "Because that's where the joy was."

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,
that these gifts, offered with humble and trusting hearts,
may be acceptable to God, the Father almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord, accept the offerings we bring before you
as signs of our dependence upon your grace.
As the world passes away,
teach us to hold lightly to earthly things
and to seek the lasting riches of compassion, mercy, and
faith.
May this sacrifice deepen within us
a love that recognizes your presence
in the poor, the suffering, and the overlooked.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For in your Son, Jesus Christ,
you have revealed the mystery of your kingdom
through those whom the world often overlooks.
He proclaimed blessed the poor, the hungry, and those

who weep, for in their openness and dependence
your grace finds room to dwell.
When human hearts cling to comfort and self-sufficiency,
he calls them back to the freedom of trust.
When lives are burdened by sorrow or need,
he draws near with mercy and hope.
Thus, in the passing realities of this world,
you teach us to seek the treasures that endure forever.
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

Jesus reminds us today that true blessedness is found not
in self-sufficiency, but in trusting the Father who cares for
the poor, the hungry, and all who depend on Him. With
hearts made humble by His word, let us pray together in
the confidence of children:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free us from the false security
that keeps our hearts closed to you and to one another.
Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by your mercy,
we may learn to trust not in passing riches
but in the enduring promise of your kingdom,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you revealed true blessedness
through humility, mercy, and trust in the Father.
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 became poor for our sake
and who calls the vulnerable and trusting blessed.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The world teaches us to cling tightly to what we possess,
yet Christ teaches us to receive life with open hands.
In the poor, the hungry, the sorrowful,
and in our own moments of weakness,
God quietly reveals His nearness.
What fades cannot sustain us forever,
but love, mercy, and trust endure before Him.
The deepest joy is often found not in having more,
but in sharing, depending, and being held by God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed by the Bread of Life, O Lord, we ask that this sacrament may loosen our attachment to passing things and deepen within us a heart of compassion and trust.

Teach us to recognize your Son
in the vulnerable and forgotten, and to seek our lasting joy
in the riches of your kingdom.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord teach you to recognize His presence in the
poor and vulnerable. Amen.

May He free your hearts from every false security
and strengthen you in trust and compassion. 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 seeking Him
in the vulnerable, the forgotten, and the needy.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

True blessing is not found in possessing more, but in
discovering that God is closest where the heart learns to
depend, to share, and to love.

10 Sept., 2026 – Thursday, 23rd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 8:1–7, 11–13; Lk 6:27–38

“God’s merciful love received becomes merciful love lived.”

INTRODUCTION

A young schoolboy once stood before his class holding a small, crumpled lunchbox. Another boy had been taking food from it for weeks, quietly and without permission.

When the teacher finally noticed and asked why he never complained, the boy simply said, “If I start hating him, I’ll lose more than my lunch.” The classroom fell silent, unsettled by a wisdom that did not come from textbooks.

We often assume that fairness and self-protection are the highest forms of wisdom. Yet life keeps confronting us with moments where strict justice alone cannot heal what is broken between people. Something deeper is required—something that touches the heart rather than merely balancing accounts.

Today’s readings lead us into that deeper place. They speak of love that does not calculate, mercy that does not exclude, and freedom that is measured not by what we are allowed to do, but by what builds up others in love.

And so, as we begin this celebration, we acknowledge the times we have loved selectively, judged quickly, or placed ourselves at the centre of our relationships. We turn to the Lord who is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked, and ask for mercy that we may learn His way of love in sincerity.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You loved even those who rejected and opposed You: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, You teach us to forgive as we ourselves have been forgiven: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You call us to be compassionate as the Father is compassionate: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God, who never ceases to show mercy to the undeserving and calls us to live the love we have received, forgive us our sins, heal what is wounded within us, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who reveal the fullness of your love
in mercy freely given and generously shared,
teach us to mirror the compassion of your Son
in our thoughts, words, and actions,
so that, built up in charity,
we may become signs of your kindness in the world.

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 firefighter once returned to the ruins of a house he had helped extinguish the night before. Amid the ashes, he found a photograph album. Instead of leaving it as debris, he carefully gathered what remained and spent hours trying to restore the images with water and patience. When asked why he bothered, he said, “Because people are still in these pages.” Even when the fire was gone, he refused to treat what was lost as worthless.

The red thread running through today’s Word is simple yet demanding: “God’s merciful love received becomes merciful love lived.” Everything begins not with what we are told to do, but with what we are first given—God’s unearned kindness.

Saint Paul reminds the Corinthians that knowledge without love can become pride. Some were insisting on their freedom to eat what they pleased, forgetting that their actions could wound the conscience of others. For Paul,

Christian life is not the defence of personal rights, but the building up of brothers and sisters for whom Christ died.

This is where freedom is redefined. What is lawful is not always what is loving. What is permissible is not always what is life-giving. Paul's warning is clear: if my behaviour destroys the faith or peace of another, then I have misunderstood what it means to belong to Christ.

Jesus in the Gospel brings this even further into the heart. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you."

These are not poetic ideals but concrete disruptions of normal human instinct. The world teaches us to respond in kind; Jesus teaches us to respond in mercy.

And He grounds this impossible demand in the very nature of God: "Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate." We are not asked to manufacture divine love from human effort alone. We are invited to mirror what we have already received—love that reaches even the undeserving.

That is why judgement is forbidden not because truth does not matter, but because only God sees fully. When we judge quickly, we close the door to mercy. When we forgive generously, we reopen that door and allow God's own life to flow through our relationships.

To give without expecting return, to bless those who oppose us, to refuse retaliation—this is not weakness. It is the strength of one who has discovered that life is not secured by defending oneself, but by trusting the abundance of God.

And yet, this teaching is not lived in abstraction. It appears in the small daily decisions: whether to answer harshness with harshness, whether to exclude or to welcome, whether to withhold kindness until it is deserved. In each moment, the Gospel quietly asks: what would mercy do here?

A doctor once treated a prisoner who had assaulted him years earlier in a robbery. The man did not recognise the doctor at first. But the doctor, while stitching his wounds,

simply said, “You are safe here.” Later, when the prisoner realised who he was, he wept—not because he was punished, but because he was not repaid in kind. In that room, mercy quietly overcame what violence had begun.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may become an offering of mercy and reconciliation, and be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May these sacred offerings, O Lord,
become for us a school of compassionate love,
that, nourished by the sacrifice of Christ,
we may learn to seek not our own advantage
but the good and peace of 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 mercy you loved us first
while we were still far from you,
and in your Son you showed the world
that compassion is stronger than hatred
and forgiveness more powerful than revenge.
Through Him you teach us
not merely to defend our rights,
but to build one another up in love,
to bless rather than curse,
and to give without counting the cost.

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,
we dare to pray for the grace to forgive as we have been
forgiven, and to love as the Father loves:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free our hearts from bitterness, retaliation, and pride.
Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by the abundance of your mercy,
we may become instruments of reconciliation and
compassion in the world, as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us to love our enemies
and to forgive without measure,
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 reveals the mercy of the Father
and gives Himself for the life of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Mercy does not erase truth; it transforms the heart that
receives it.
In Christ, we discover that love becomes real not in grand
words, but in quiet choices:
to forgive instead of retaliate,
to bless instead of wound,
to protect rather than destroy another's dignity.
Having received the compassion of God at this table,
we are now sent to let that same mercy take flesh in our
daily lives.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord,
transform our hearts in charity, so that, strengthened by
the Body and Blood of your Son, we may reflect in our lives
the mercy we have received from you.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord fill your hearts with His compassionate love,
teach you to forgive as you have been forgiven,
and make you witnesses of mercy in a wounded world.

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 generous love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Mercy becomes real when the love we have received from
God is the love we choose to give to others.

11 Sept., 2026 – Friday, 23rd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 9:16–19, 22b–27; Lk 6:39–42

“Mercy that heals our sight and humbles our judgment.”

INTRODUCTION

A museum once received what looked like a ruined
painting from a parish storeroom. Darkened by smoke and
covered with years of dust, it seemed lifeless and beyond
repair. Yet when a skilled restorer carefully cleaned it, layer
by layer, hidden beauty slowly emerged beneath the grime.

How often this happens in life as well. We can look at
others—or even at ourselves—and see only faults, failures,
or disappointment. Our vision becomes clouded by hurt,
assumptions, pride, or impatience, and we mistake what is
wounded for what is worthless.

Today the Lord reminds us that mercy heals our sight.
Saint Paul recognizes that he himself once judged wrongly
and acted in ignorance, yet God did not abandon him.
Instead, mercy transformed him. Jesus, too, warns us

against judging others while remaining blind to our own need for healing.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us ask the Lord to cleanse the lenses of our hearts, forgive the harshness of our judgments, and lead us into the humility that opens our eyes to truth. And so, we turn to him in the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you heal the blindness of hearts clouded by pride and assumption: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you teach us to see others with compassion rather than condemnation: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you remove the plank from our eyes and lead us into the light of truth: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who alone sees clearly the depths of every human heart, cleanse us of distorted judgment, heal the blindness caused by pride and sin, and restore in us the merciful vision of Christ, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

Merciful Father,
you sent your Son to heal the blindness of our hearts
and to teach us the humility that leads to compassion.
Remove from us the pride that clouds our judgment,
so that, seeing ourselves truthfully and others mercifully,
we may walk in the light of your wisdom and 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 man once went to an optometrist convinced that his eyesight was rapidly deteriorating. He struggled to read, misjudged distances, and blamed it all on aging eyes. After a thorough examination, the optometrist gently cleaned his glasses and handed them back. The man was embarrassed to discover that his vision problem had not been in his eyes at all, but in the layer of dirt he had stopped noticing on the lenses.

Jesus' image in the Gospel is much the same—striking, even humorous: a person trying to remove a splinter from another's eye while a plank blocks their own vision. It is not a denial that faults exist in others, but a reminder that our perception is often the real problem.

Saint Paul's life gives flesh to this teaching. He once saw himself as clear-sighted, even righteous, while persecuting the Church. Only later did he recognize the “plank” in his own understanding. Looking back, he does not excuse his actions, but neither does he condemn himself endlessly. Instead, he confesses a deeper truth: “Mercy was shown me.”

This is the first movement of healing—allowing mercy to reinterpret our past without denying it. Paul does not rewrite history; he allows God to enter it. In doing so, he learns not only to receive mercy but also to extend it. The healed eye becomes a merciful eye.

The Gospel pushes this further: we are not only mistaken about others—we are often unaware of how mistaken we

are. That is why Jesus warns against the blind leading the blind. Judgment without self-knowledge easily becomes distortion dressed up as clarity.

And yet, Jesus is not asking us to abandon discernment, but to purify it. When we are honest about our own fragility, we begin to see others not as objects of correction, but as fellow travellers also in need of mercy. What once looked like certainty becomes humility.

This is where faith becomes practical: not in grand declarations about others, but in the quiet discipline of examining our own vision first. The “plank” is often not malice, but assumption—our tendency to see without truly understanding.

In that light, Christian life becomes less about correcting the world and more about allowing Christ to correct our sight. And when vision is healed, judgment slowly gives way to compassion.

A small child once stood in front of a window after a storm, carefully wiping a tiny smear of dirt with their sleeve. “Now I can see the garden properly,” they said with delight, though the glass had been almost entirely clouded before. Sometimes, what changes everything is not the world outside—but the clarity with which we finally begin to see it.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered with humble and repentant hearts, may be acceptable to God, the Father who heals our blindness and teaches us mercy.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God, receive these offerings placed before you, and cleanse the vision of our hearts through this sacred mystery, that we may no longer judge according to appearances but learn to see with the compassion of Christ. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. For in your mercy you do not abandon us to the blindness of pride and self-righteousness, but through your Son you call us into the light of truth. He teaches us to remove the plank from our own eyes before seeking to correct our neighbour, so that judgment may give way to compassion and humility may open our hearts to grace. Through Christ, you restore clarity to those whose vision is clouded by sin, and you teach us to see one another as fellow travellers in need of mercy. 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,
we dare to pray to the Father who looks upon us not with
condemnation but with merciful love:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the blindness that keeps us from seeing
ourselves truthfully and others compassionately.
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 to walk in
humility and mercy, removing judgment from their hearts
so that they might live in peace with one another.
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 heals the blindness of our hearts
and teaches us to see with mercy and truth.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, so often we have looked at others through the
clouded glass of assumption, impatience, or pride. Yet you
have looked upon us with mercy. In this Eucharist, you
have not only fed us—you have begun to heal our sight.
May the clarity we receive from you teach us to judge less,
to understand more deeply, and to walk gently with one
another. For when the heart is cleansed, the world itself
begins to look different.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this heavenly sacrament, O Lord,
restore clarity to our hearts
and deepen within us the spirit of humility and compassion,
so that, transformed by your mercy,
we may see others with the eyes of Christ
and live as faithful witnesses to your love.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord heal the blindness of your hearts
and grant you the humility that leads to wisdom. Amen.

May he teach you to see others with mercy,
patience, and compassion. 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 seeing others with the
mercy you yourselves have received.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Often the greatest obstacle to seeing others clearly is not
their faults, but the “plank” we have stopped noticing in
ourselves. Mercy begins when we allow Christ to cleanse
the lenses of our hearts.

12 Sept., 2026 – Saturday, 23rd Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 10:14–22; Lk 6:43–49

Christ our reliable foundation—heard in the Word, lived in truth, and celebrated in the Eucharist.

INTRODUCTION

A concert hall was once filled with anticipation as a world-class pianist prepared to perform. The instrument appeared flawless—polished wood, gleaming keys, perfectly placed before the audience. Yet hidden within, several strings had not been properly tuned after transport. When the performance began, what should have been harmony became dissonance, and the beauty of the music was weakened by an instability no one could see.

That moment became a quiet lesson: what sustains beauty is not merely what appears outwardly impressive, but what is securely ordered within. In life, too, appearances can conceal instability. A life may seem successful or religious on the surface, yet still lack the inner foundation that gives endurance and truth.

Today's readings lead us to examine that foundation. Saint Paul warns against divided loyalties, reminding us that those who share in the Eucharist are called to wholehearted communion with Christ. And Jesus teaches that the person who listens to his word and lives by it is like one who builds upon rock that no storm can destroy. As we come before the Lord, we recognize the times we have built on passing securities rather than on Christ himself. Trusting in his mercy, we ask him to steady our hearts and strengthen what is weak within us as we prepare now for the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are the rock on which your Church is built, yet we have often trusted more in ourselves than in your word. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you nourish us with your Body and Blood and call us into faithful communion with you, yet our hearts have been divided by competing loyalties.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you remain steadfast and merciful even when we wander from you, and you continually call us back to what is true and lasting. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who is our sure foundation and unfailing refuge, strengthen what is weak within us, forgive our sins, and lead us back to the steadfastness of life in Christ, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, you have given us your Son
as the enduring foundation of our lives and faith;
grant that, listening attentively to his word
and nourished by the mystery of his Body and Blood,
we may remain steadfast in truth,
faithful in communion,
and firm amid the trials of this passing world.
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 storm once swept through a coastal town, and after it passed, two homes stood side by side in very different conditions. One had withstood the winds and floodwaters with little damage, while the other had collapsed into ruin. To the casual observer, both homes had looked equally fine before the storm. Only afterwards did it become clear that what lay beneath the surface had made all the difference. Jesus uses a similar image in today's Gospel, reminding us that what is hidden determines what is revealed when life's storms come. The house built on rock stands firm because its foundation is secure; the house built on sand falls because it cannot endure pressure. The difference is not in appearance but in depth. The Lord is not speaking only about moral effort but about relationship. To build on rock is to listen to his words and let them shape our choices, our reactions, and our priorities. It is not enough to admire the Gospel or agree with it in principle; it must become the structure of daily life.

Saint Paul, in the first reading, brings this home in a striking way. He warns that participation in the Eucharist is not a private or divided reality. To share in the Body and Blood of Christ is to be drawn into communion with him and with one another. There can be no double allegiance—no “cup of the Lord” alongside other competing loyalties that weaken the heart’s integrity. In this light, idolatry is not only the worship of ancient gods, but anything that displaces Christ as our foundation. It can be subtle: the pursuit of success without truth, comfort without sacrifice, or religion without conversion. These are the “sands” that slowly erode spiritual stability. Yet Paul also speaks, implicitly, of mercy. The same Lord who calls us to fidelity is the one who patiently restores us when we fail. His patience is not indulgence, but the steady strength that keeps inviting us back to what is real and lasting. The rock does not move even when we have wandered. To build on Christ, then, is a daily decision: to let his word judge our choices, to let his Eucharist shape our unity, and to let his mercy restore us when we falter. This is the quiet work of discipleship, often unseen but decisive.

A story is told of a lighthouse keeper who endured countless storms over the years. Ships would sometimes lose their way in the darkness, but those who kept the lighthouse knew that its beam never failed. It did not calm the sea, but it gave direction through it. And many sailors later testified that what saved them was not their strength, but their ability to keep the light in view when everything else seemed lost.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, through which Christ strengthens us as our unfailing foundation and gathers us into one communion at his table, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the gifts we bring before you,
and through this holy exchange
make us steadfast in faith and sincere in heart,
so that, sharing in the cup of Christ,
we may live in undivided fidelity to him
and be firmly rooted in the truth of the Gospel.
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 you have established him
as the sure foundation that cannot fail,
the living Word who guides your people in truth
and the Bread of Life who strengthens them in communion.
Through his teaching, you call us to build not on passing
securities but on the enduring rock of faithful discipleship.
Through his Eucharist, you gather us into one body
and free us from every divided loyalty.
When we wander or build upon what cannot last,
your mercy patiently calls us back
to what is true, lasting, and life-giving in your Son.
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 the divine
teaching that strengthens us upon the rock of Christ, we
dare to say:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and graciously
grant peace in our days, that, sustained by your mercy
and firmly grounded in your truth, we may be always free
from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed
hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you remain the steadfast rock of your Church
and the unfailing light that guides us through the storms of
life; look not on our sins and divided loyalties,
but on the faith of your people
who seek to build their lives upon your word.
Graciously grant us the peace that comes from hearts
rooted in you and the unity born of sharing one Bread and
one Cup. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who remains our steadfast foundation and faithful guide through every storm. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Eucharist we have received is not only a sacred gift but a call to deeper integrity of life. Christ gives himself to us so that our hearts may no longer be divided and our lives may rest securely upon him. Like the lighthouse that guides ships through darkness, his presence does not remove every storm, but it gives light and direction within them. Strengthened by his word and nourished at his table, we are sent forth to live with steadiness, fidelity, and trust.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, take firm root within our hearts, so that, strengthened by the Body and Blood of your Son, we may persevere in faithful discipleship, remain united in truth and charity, and stand secure upon Christ, our lasting foundation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord strengthen you upon the rock of Christ, steady you in every trial, and keep your hearts faithful to his word and his Eucharistic presence. Amen.

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 firmly grounded in Christ and faithful to the communion you have received.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

What sustains us in life is not what merely appears strong outwardly, but what is firmly rooted in Christ within. His word, his mercy, and his Eucharist are the rock that enables us to endure every storm with faith and integrity.