

13 Sept., 2026 – 24th Sunday in Ord. Time (A Cycle)

Sir 27:30–28:7; Rom 14:7–9; Mt 18:21–35

“How God forgives us, so we must forgive one another.”

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once asked her students to carry a bag of potatoes for every person they refused to forgive. After a few days, the potatoes began to rot. The smell became unbearable, and the children complained. The teacher quietly said: “That is what unforgiveness does to the heart.”

In today’s Gospel, Peter asks Jesus how many times he must forgive. Jesus answers not with a number, but with a way of life: “seventy-seven times.” God’s mercy toward us is without limit, and Jesus invites us to let that mercy flow through us to others.

The tragedy is that we often carry old hurts for years. We imprison ourselves with resentment, pride, and bitterness. Yet the Gospel reminds us that forgiveness is not

weakness; it is freedom. God does not merely postpone our debt — He cancels it through Christ.

As we gather around this altar, let us ask the Lord to free our hearts from anger, resentment, and hardness, and prepare us now to celebrate these sacred mysteries with sincere repentance.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you reveal the boundless mercy of the Father to sinners: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you forgive us even when we fail and deny you: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to forgive one another from the heart: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who in his great mercy cancels the debt of our sins and calls us to forgive one another from the heart, free us from bitterness, heal our wounded hearts, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Because God's mercy is greater than our sins and His forgiveness opens for us a new beginning, let us join the angels in praising the glory of God.

COLLECT

O God,
whose mercy is without measure
and whose forgiveness restores the dignity of your children,
pour into our hearts the grace
to receive your compassion with humility
and to share it generously with one another,
so that freed from anger and resentment,
we may live as witnesses of reconciliation and peace.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

HOMILY

A little boy once wrote a letter to his grandmother after a family argument. He wrote: "Grandma, I know you and Dad are angry with each other. But Christmas is coming. Please don't make me choose which house I should go to."

The grandmother read the letter and began to cry. She realized that two grown adults had allowed pride and resentment to become more important than love. That little child became the bridge that brought the family together again.

That is exactly the kind of world Jesus speaks into in today's Gospel — a world wounded by anger, hurt, pride, resentment, and broken relationships.

Peter comes to Jesus with what he probably thinks is a generous question: "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" In Jewish tradition, seven was the perfect number. Peter is already stretching himself.

But Jesus shatters every limit: “Not seven times, but seventy-seven times.” In other words: forgiveness is not mathematics. It is not bookkeeping. It is not a calculator. Forgiveness is a way of life.

And because Jesus knows how difficult that teaching is, he tells a story.

The Unpayable Debt

The Gospel speaks about a servant who owed his master ten thousand talents — an unimaginable amount of money. In today’s terms it would amount to millions and millions of dollars, an impossible debt.

The servant falls on his knees and pleads: “Give me time, and I will pay you back.” But everyone listening to Jesus would have known that no amount of time could ever repay such a debt.

And then comes the shocking moment in the parable.

The master does not merely postpone the payment. He cancels the debt entirely.

Justice is overwhelmed by mercy.

That is how God deals with us.

So often we imagine God as an accountant keeping records of our failures. Yet Jesus reveals a God whose mercy is beyond calculation. God does not merely tolerate us; He gives us a new beginning.

The German homily expresses it beautifully: “You are not thrown into prison. You are not condemned. You are not even reproached. Instead — complete cancellation of debt.”

That is the heart of Christianity.

And when we look at the life of Jesus, we see this mercy everywhere.

The woman caught in adultery deserved condemnation according to the law. The crowd was ready with stones in their hands. But Jesus says: “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and sin no more.”

A sinful woman weeps at Jesus’ feet while others point fingers at her. Simon the Pharisee says to himself, “If this man knew what kind of woman she is...” But Jesus sees not only her sin; He sees her wounded heart and her love. He restores not only her soul but also her dignity.

Peter loudly boasts that he will never deny Jesus. Yet a few hours later he swears three times: “I do not know the man.” And then Jesus looks at him — not with hatred, but with love. In that moment Peter experiences forgiveness so deeply that he goes out and weeps bitterly.

Even Paul, who persecuted the Church, later says with amazement: “He called me, the least worthy.” He spends the rest of his life preaching the mercy he himself received.

Brothers and sisters, all of us stand in need of that mercy.

Sometimes we minimize sin today. We pretend that guilt does not exist. But deep inside, we know that we fail one another, we wound one another, and we fail God.

Yet the Gospel assures us: no sin is greater than God’s mercy.

Forgiveness Is Not Easy

But now comes the harder part.

It is one thing to receive forgiveness from God. It is another thing to give forgiveness to others.

Forgiveness is not easy.

Someone once said, “Forgiveness is a lovely idea until you have someone to forgive.”

That is true.

Some wounds go very deep. Some people carry betrayal, abuse, rejection, humiliation, or broken trust for years.

Sometimes the other person does not even apologize.
Sometimes they show no remorse.

The Book of Sirach today speaks about anger, resentment, vengeance, and keeping strict accounts of another person's sins. Those feelings are deeply human.

Even Jesus experienced anger — anger at injustice, anger when the Temple was turned into a marketplace, anger when the weak were oppressed.

But there is a difference between passing anger and cherished resentment.

The danger is not that we become angry. The danger is that we begin to nurse our anger, feed it, protect it, and make it part of our identity.

And when that happens, anger becomes poison.

There is a modern example of this that we all recognize: road rage.

Sometimes a very small incident on the road suddenly releases enormous anger. A person cuts in front of another car, and within seconds people are shouting, cursing, even becoming violent. The reaction is far bigger than the offence.

Why?

Because often the anger did not begin on the road. The road merely revealed what was already boiling inside.

That is why unforgiveness destroys not only the other person; it destroys us.

The Torturers of the Heart

The German preacher speaks powerfully about the “torturers” mentioned in today's Gospel.

Jesus says that the unforgiving servant was handed over to the torturers.

What are these torturers?

The preacher says: they are real.

They are the bitterness, the inner poison, the joylessness, and the prison we create for ourselves when we refuse to forgive.

He tells the story of a farming family in Germany.

Two neighboring farms had been in conflict for generations because of an old land dispute. Nobody even remembered exactly what had happened anymore. Yet the families stopped speaking to each other.

Then one day there was a wedding on the neighbouring farm. The bride personally came over and invited the other family, saying: "Let us end this quarrel and celebrate together."

But pride refused.

And so while the neighbouring farm celebrated with music, dancing, and laughter, the other family sat at home listening to the sounds of joy from a distance.

The preacher says: "The joy of the others became our torturers."

That is what resentment does.

It imprisons us.

Many people today live exactly like that.

A husband and wife stop speaking to each other because neither wants to say, "I am sorry."

Children walk away from parents.

Friends stop talking over a misunderstanding.

People leave the Church because years ago a priest hurt them or disappointed them.

Priests themselves sometimes become bitter toward their communities.

Behind so many broken relationships lies one tragedy: the inability to forgive.

And because forgiveness is difficult, we must also remember something important from today's reflections: forgiveness often takes time.

Healing is usually slow.

When relationships are deeply wounded, reconciliation rarely happens overnight. The deeper the hurt, the longer the journey.

The peace process in Northern Ireland is an example. Decades of pain and mistrust could not be healed instantly.

The same is true in families and communities.

Sometimes the most important gift we can give another person is the gift of time.

In today's parable both servants ask: "Give me time."

How often do people silently ask us the same thing?

"Give me time to change."

"Give me time to heal."

"Give me time to understand what I have done."

And perhaps sometimes we ourselves must pray those words before God and before one another.

A Child's Lesson

The German preacher also tells a simple childhood story.

As a boy he was a very bad loser when playing games. One day, while playing a board game, he became so angry that he swept all the pieces off the table and ruined the game.

His father sent him upstairs to his room.

While he sat there full of anger, he could hear the others downstairs laughing and continuing the game.

He later said: "I was not angry with them. I was angry with myself. I only needed to go downstairs and say, 'I am sorry.' But I could not do it."

Again, the torturers.

How many people today live trapped in pride because they cannot say those simple words: “I am sorry.”

And how many relationships could begin again if someone simply said: “I forgive you.”

How God Treats Us

At the heart of today’s Gospel is a profound truth.

God does not deal with us according to strict justice.

If God treated us only according to justice, who among us could stand?

Instead, God relates to us through mercy.

Saint Paul says: “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

God does not wait until we become perfect.

Christ took our debt upon Himself.

That is why every Mass points us again to Jesus with the words: “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”

That is the centre of our faith.

And if God treats us like that, then Jesus says we must treat one another in the same way.

Not: “As you did to me, so I will do to you.”

But rather: “As God has done to me, so I will do to you.”

Conclusion

Let me end with another story.

In the Spanish Civil War, a young man named Paco ran away from home after a bitter argument with his father. Months passed, and the father searched everywhere for him but could not find him.

Finally, in desperation, the father placed an advertisement in a Madrid newspaper. It read:

“Paco, all is forgiven. Meet me in front of the newspaper office tomorrow at noon. — Father.”

The next day, more than eight hundred young men named Paco showed up.

Why?

Because deep in every human heart there is a hunger for forgiveness.

And deep in every human heart there is also a longing to be able to forgive.

Today Jesus reminds us that forgiveness is not weakness.

Forgiveness is freedom.

It frees the sinner.

It frees the wounded.

It frees the heart.

So let us ask today for the grace not to live by the law of resentment, but by the mercy of God.

And may our lives proclaim not: “As you did to me, so I do to you,” but:

“As God has forgiven me, so I forgive you.” Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREDO

United in the faith of the Church and trusting in the mercy of God revealed in Jesus Christ, let us now profess our faith.

PROFESSION OF FAITH (for personal meditation only)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
whose mercy is greater than every human sin
and whose love never tires of giving us a new beginning.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who revealed the compassionate face of the Father,
who forgave sinners, welcomed the broken-hearted,

and from the Cross prayed: “Father, forgive them.”

By his Death and Resurrection

he cancelled the debt of our sins

and opened for us the path to reconciliation and peace.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who softens hardened hearts,

heals wounds caused by anger and resentment,

and gives us the strength

to forgive one another from the heart

as we ourselves have been forgiven.

I believe in the Church,

called to be a community of mercy and reconciliation,

where sinners find hope,

the wounded find healing,

and forgiveness becomes a new beginning.

I believe in the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and life everlasting in the fullness of God’s peace.

Amen.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we place these gifts upon the altar, let us also place

before the Lord every hurt, every burden, and every

resentment, and pray that our sacrifice may be acceptable

to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this oblation, O Lord, which we offer to celebrate the

boundless mercy of your Son, obtain for us the grace

to forgive as we ourselves have been forgiven,

and to live in peace and reconciliation with 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 great compassion

you did not abandon us to the prison of sin and

resentment, but sent your Son among us

to reveal the limitless depth of your mercy.

When we could never repay the debt of our sins,
Christ took upon himself our burden
through his Death and Resurrection,
opening for us the way to freedom, reconciliation, and
peace.

And through the gift of your Spirit,
you teach us to forgive one another from the heart,
so that your mercy received may become mercy shared.

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

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

For only hearts that know themselves forgiven can truly
pray: “forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who
trespass against 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,
especially from the bitterness, resentment, and pride
that imprison the human heart,
and 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,
who showed mercy to sinners
and prayed for forgiveness even from the Cross,
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,

In this Eucharist, Christ not only forgives our sins but also gives us the grace to forgive one another from the heart.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, you have fed us with the Bread of mercy and reconciliation. Teach us not to cling to old hurts or cherished resentments. Free us from the “torturers” of anger and bitterness, so that our hearts may become places of peace, healing, and new beginnings.

May we leave this Eucharist ready to say both:

“I am sorry,” and “I forgive you.”

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, take possession of our minds and bodies, so that the mercy we have received in this sacrament may bear fruit in lives marked by forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all mercy
free your hearts from resentment and anger,
teach you to forgive as you have been forgiven,
and fill your homes and relationships with peace.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives of mercy,
forgiveness, and reconciliation.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Do not live by the law of resentment, but by the mercy of God:

As God has forgiven me, so I forgive you.”

14 Sept., 2026 – Mon.,

(Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

Num 21:4b–9; Phil 2:6–11; Jn 3:13–17

“Lifted up in love, we are drawn into life.”

INTRODUCTION

A young boy once wandered into an old church where a large crucifix hung above the altar. He stood there for a long time, puzzled, and then tugged at his mother’s sleeve and whispered, “Why do we keep a statue of someone who looks like he’s losing?” The question was simple, but it touched the mystery we celebrate today.

To the eyes of the world, the cross appears to be weakness and defeat. Yet in Christ, the cross becomes the clearest revelation of God’s love—a love willing to enter human suffering in order to bring healing and life. What seemed to be the end became the beginning of salvation. Today we celebrate not suffering itself, but the triumph of self-giving love. Jesus lifted up on the cross draws all people to himself, reminding us that God’s victory is revealed not through domination, but through compassion,

humility, and faithful love.

But there are moments when we resist that love, cling to resentment, or fail to trust God in times of trial. Therefore, with humble hearts, let us acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord for mercy and peace.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you were lifted up on the cross to draw all people into the healing power of God’s love:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you revealed the triumph of humble and self-giving love over sin and death: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the tree of life for all who place their trust in you: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who revealed through the Cross the victory of love over sin and death, forgive us our sins, heal us by his mercy, and draw us into the fullness of life.
Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who willed that your Only Begotten Son
should undergo the Cross to save the human race,
grant, we pray,
that we who have known his mystery on earth
may merit the grace of his redemption in heaven.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

HOMILY

There is a story told of a nurse who worked in a hospice. She noticed that one elderly patient, who had suffered much in life, always kept a small wooden cross in his hand. One day she asked him why. He replied quietly, “Because when I hold this, I remember that my pain is not the end of the story.” That simple faith captures something essential about today’s feast.

The cross and triumph do not seem to belong together. In human terms, triumph means success, victory, recognition. The cross, on the other hand, speaks of suffering, rejection, and loss. Yet the heart of our faith dares to put these two together: the triumph of the cross.

In the Gospel, Jesus says that he will be “lifted up,” just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert. Those who looked upon that serpent were healed. In the same way, those who look upon Jesus lifted up on the cross with faith are drawn into healing and life. What appears to be মৃত্যু becomes the source of salvation.

Saint Paul helps us understand why. In the letter to the Philippians, he speaks of Christ who humbled himself, becoming obedient even to death on a cross. Because of this, God highly exalted him. The exaltation of Jesus is inseparable from his self-giving love. His glory is not power imposed from above, but love poured out completely.

On the cross, Jesus reveals the full extent of God's love. Not a love that depends on being returned, not a love that withdraws when rejected, but a love that remains faithful even in the face of hatred. "God so loved the world..."—not a perfect world, but a wounded, sinful one. That is the world God embraces.

This means the cross is not only something we look at; it is something we are invited to live. The triumph of the cross becomes visible in small, often hidden ways: when someone forgives instead of holding a grudge, when a person remains faithful to a difficult commitment, when suffering is borne with quiet dignity, when love is given without recognition.

We often look for dramatic signs of God's presence, but the cross teaches us to recognize God's victory in humble, costly love. It is there—in patience, in endurance, in compassion—that the power of the cross continues to work in our world.

At the same time, the cross reminds us that we do not save ourselves. Jesus says, "When I am lifted up, I will draw all people to myself." Our task is not to climb up to God, but to allow ourselves to be drawn—drawn into a love that heals, restores, and gives life.

There is another story of a man who once carved a cross and placed it at the grave of his wife. Someone asked him why he chose that symbol. He answered, "Because this is not just where her life ended—it's where God promises it begins again." That is the paradox we celebrate today. The cross, once a sign of death, has become for us the tree of life.

And so we exalt the cross, not as a symbol of suffering alone, but as the sign of a love stronger than sin, stronger than death, stronger than anything that can break us. Lifted up in love, we are drawn into life.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, offered in gratitude for the saving love revealed on the Cross, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this oblation, O Lord,
which on the altar of the Cross
cancelled the offense of the whole world,
cleanse us, we pray, of all our sins
and draw us more deeply into the life won for us by 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 you placed the salvation of the human race
on the wood of the Cross,

so that, where death arose, life might again spring forth,
and the evil one, who conquered on a tree,
might likewise on a tree be conquered,
through Christ our Lord.

Lifted high upon the Cross,
your Son revealed the fullness of your love,
drawing all people to himself
through obedience, humility, and mercy.
In his suffering we see not defeat but victory,
for his faithful love has overcome sin and death
and opened for us the way to eternal life.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints,
we praise you, as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray to the Father who draws us into life through the
saving love of the Cross:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and graciously grant peace in our days,
that, sustained by the victory of Christ crucified and risen,
we may be free from sin and protected from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
who revealed upon the Cross
a love stronger than hatred and death,
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 was lifted up for the salvation of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Cross teaches us that love is stronger than suffering
and life stronger than death. In this Eucharist, the Lord who
was lifted up for us has drawn us again into his healing
presence. May we carry the power of that love into our
homes, our struggles, and our relationships, becoming
living signs of the triumph of the Cross through patience,
forgiveness, and faithful love.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having been nourished by your holy banquet,
we beseech you, Lord Jesus Christ,
to bring those you have redeemed by the wood of your life-
giving Cross to the glory of the resurrection.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you in the strength of his love. Amen.

May Christ crucified and risen draw you always into the fullness of life and hope. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit help you to recognize the victory of the Cross in acts of humble and faithful love. 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 shaped by the love of the Cross.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The Cross is not the end of the story. In Christ, what seemed like defeat became the triumph of love and the beginning of new life. Wherever love is lived with patience, sacrifice, and faithfulness, the power of the Cross continues to transform the world.

15 Sept., 2026 – Tuesday,

(Our Lady of Sorrows)

Heb 5:7–9; Jn 19:25–27 or Lk 2:33–35

Love that stands, even when it costs everything.

INTRODUCTION

A nurse once shared how, during the quiet hours of the night shift, she often noticed one recurring scene: a single chair pulled close beside a hospital bed. In that chair sat a mother, or a father, or a spouse—keeping vigil. Machines beeped, doctors came and went, but that person remained, sometimes saying nothing, sometimes just holding a hand. “They don’t fix anything,” she said, “but they refuse to leave.”

There is something deeply human about that kind of presence. When love is real, it does not disappear in the face of suffering. It stays. It waits. It endures, even when there are no words and no solutions.

Today, as we celebrate Our Lady of Sorrows, we are invited to contemplate that same kind of presence in Mary. She is not remembered today for doing something

extraordinary in the eyes of the world, but for remaining—standing close to her Son in his darkest hour.

As we enter this Eucharist, we might ask ourselves: how often have we failed to stand in love—before God or before one another? Let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you stood faithful in love even in the hour of suffering and rejection. Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you gave us Mary as our Mother at the foot of the Cross. Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you call us to remain beside one another with steadfast and compassionate hearts. Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us for the times we have turned away from the suffering of others, failed to remain faithful in love, and refused the call to stand beside those in need; and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who willed that,
when your Son was lifted high on the Cross,
his Mother should stand close by and share his suffering,
grant that your Church,
faithfully walking the path of love and sacrifice,
may share more deeply in the mystery of Christ
and come to rejoice in the fullness of his victory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY

There is an old story of a father who attended every court hearing of his troubled son. The son had made mistakes, serious ones, and each time he stood before the judge, he would glance back and see his father sitting quietly in the gallery. The father could not undo his son's actions, but his steady presence said one thing: "You are not alone." That

silent fidelity became, in time, the beginning of the son's return.

Mary, in today's feast, is that kind of presence. The ancient hymn *Stabat Mater* captures it in just two words: the Mother stood. At the cross her station keeping—she stood. Not fixing, not rescuing, not preventing—but remaining, loving, enduring.

Simeon's prophecy echoes through today's Gospel: "A sword will pierce your own soul too." Mary's sorrow is not accidental; it is the direct consequence of her love and her closeness to Jesus. To be near him is to share not only his joy, but also his suffering. Love binds their lives together so deeply that his pain becomes hers.

We know something of this from our own experience. When someone we love suffers, we suffer too. The deeper the love, the sharper the pain. There is no way to love and remain untouched. The only way to avoid sorrow is to refuse love—but that is not really living.

Mary chose love, fully and without reserve. From the moment she said "yes" at the Annunciation, she began a journey that would lead her not only to Bethlehem, but to Calvary. Her path was one of continual letting go—letting her Son belong first to the Father, not to her.

At the cross, that letting go reaches its deepest point. Yet even there, something new is born. Jesus entrusts Mary to the beloved disciple: "This is your mother." In that moment, her motherhood expands. Her sorrow becomes fruitful. Out of the darkness of the cross emerges a new family of faith.

This is why today's feast, though marked by sorrow, is not without light. Mary's standing at the cross is already touched by the promise of Easter. Her fidelity is not the end of the story; it is the path through which God's greater victory unfolds.

For us, Mary becomes both companion and teacher. She shows us that faith does not mean escaping suffering, but remaining faithful within it. She invites us to stand at the

crosses of others—not with easy answers, but with steadfast love.

A teacher once noticed a quiet student who had recently lost his mother. The boy struggled, his grades slipping, his attention wandering. Instead of pressing him with demands, the teacher simply stayed after class one day and said, “You don’t have to go through this alone.” Years later, the student would say that moment changed everything—not because his pain vanished, but because someone chose to stand with him.

That is the love Mary embodies today: love that stands, even when it costs everything. And it is the love we are called to live.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered with hearts willing to stand faithfully in love beside Christ and one another, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O merciful God,
the prayers and offerings of your people,
who recall with devotion the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and grant that, following her example of steadfast love, we may remain faithful beside the Cross of your Son and become signs of comfort and hope for one another.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PREFACE

It is truly right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your loving wisdom
you chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to stand faithfully beside the Cross of your Son.
As Simeon had foretold,

a sword of sorrow pierced her heart,
yet she remained steadfast in faith and love.

In her silent fidelity
we see the strength of a love that does not flee suffering,
a love that endures even when it costs everything.

At the foot of the Cross
she received all believers as her children,
and became for your Church
a mother of compassion and hope.

Through her example
you teach us to remain close to those who suffer,
to carry one another's burdens,
and to trust that even in sorrow
your saving victory is already at work.

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 never
abandons his children, even in their darkest hour:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and strengthen us to remain faithful in love
when we are faced with suffering, loss, and uncertainty.
Like the Blessed Virgin Mary standing at the foot of the
Cross,
may we learn not to run from the pain of others,
but to stay near with compassionate and steadfast hearts.
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,
who remained faithful in love even unto the Cross
and gave us your Mother as a source of comfort and unity,
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 remained faithful
in love even unto death and who strengthens us to stand
beside one another with compassion and hope.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Mary stood at the foot of the Cross, not because she could
change what was happening, but because love would not
allow her to leave. In this Eucharist, Christ has drawn close
to us in our weakness and sorrow. Strengthened by his
presence, may we learn to stand faithfully beside those
who suffer, carrying into the world the quiet courage of
steadfast love.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received the Sacrament of eternal redemption,
we humbly ask, O Lord,
that, as we honour the Blessed Virgin Mary in her sorrows,
we may imitate her faithful love,
stand firm beside the suffering,
and share more fully in the saving mystery of Christ.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May God, who gave the Blessed Virgin Mary strength to
stand faithfully beside the Cross of her Son,
grant you courage in every trial
and make you steadfast in love. Amen.

May Christ, who transforms suffering through the power of
his Cross and Resurrection,
fill your hearts with peace and hope. Amen.

And may the Holy Spirit teach you to remain close to those
who suffer with compassion, patience, and faithful hearts.
Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, glorifying the Lord by standing faithfully
beside one another in love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Love is proven not only by what it says or does, but by
where it chooses to remain. Like Mary at the foot of the
Cross, we are called to stand beside others with faithful
and enduring love, trusting that even in sorrow God is
bringing forth new life.

16 Sept., 2026 – Wed., Sts Cornelius and Cyprian

1 Cor 12:31–13:13; Lk 7:31–35

“Learning to dance to the music of God.”

INTRODUCTION

There is a story told of a violinist who once played in a
busy subway station during the morning rush. Thousands
of people hurried past. A few slowed for a second, but
most did not notice. Only a small child stopped, tugging at
his mother’s hand, wanting to listen. The mother pulled him
along, anxious not to be late. The music was beautiful, but
the crowd was too busy, too distracted, to hear it.

We can miss what is most beautiful, not because it is
absent, but because we are not attentive. The noise of life,
our expectations, even our habits can make us deaf to
what is quietly offered to us each day.

Today the Church remembers Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian,
shepherds of the early Church who, in a time of confusion
and division, learned to listen deeply to the voice of Christ.
Though they faced opposition, exile, and ultimately

martyrdom, they remained faithful to the “music” of God, guiding others to unity, mercy, and courage.

In the Gospel today, Jesus speaks of people who could not respond—whether to John the Baptist’s call to repentance or to his own invitation to joy. As we gather now, we might ask ourselves: have we become inattentive to the music God is playing in our lives? Let us acknowledge those moments and ask the Lord for mercy and openness of heart.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call us to listen to the melody of your love, yet we often remain distracted and unmoved:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you invite us to rejoice in the freedom and grace of the Gospel, yet we cling to our own ways and resist your rhythm: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you teach us that love is patient and kind, yet our hearts are often closed to reconciliation and unity:

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God open our hearts to hear the music of his grace, forgive us when we have remained unmoved by his call to love, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who gave Saints Cornelius and Cyprian
to your people as faithful shepherds and courageous
witnesses,
grant that, attentive to the voice of your Son,
we may learn to walk in the harmony of divine love
and respond generously to the grace you place before us
each day.

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 group of children once gathered in a village square. One began to play a lively tune on a flute, inviting the others to dance. Some laughed and joined in, but a few stood aside, arms folded, refusing. Then another child changed the mood and began a slow, mournful song, as if for a funeral. Again, some entered into the moment, but the same few remained unmoved. Whatever was played, they would not respond.

Jesus uses an image like this in today's Gospel. He sees in such children a reflection of his own generation. John the Baptist came with a serious, austere message—like a funeral song calling people to repentance—and many rejected him. Jesus came with a message of grace and joy—like music that invites dancing—and still many would not respond. Different melodies, same resistance.

It is striking to imagine Jesus as a musician, a piper playing God's tune. His life, his words, his actions, his death and resurrection—all together form a kind of divine

music. It is not a dirge of despair but a song of hope, a proclamation that God's favour rests upon humanity.

To be a disciple, then, is not only to understand teachings or follow rules. It is to listen—deeply—and to allow that music to enter into us. Like any music, it must be heard attentively before it can shape how we move. Without listening, there can be no dancing.

Saint Paul, in the first reading, gives us the clearest description of what this “music of God” sounds like: it is love. Patient love, kind love, love that is not jealous or self-seeking. Without love, Paul says, everything else is just noise—like clashing cymbals. Love is the melody that gives meaning to everything.

Sometimes, however, we resist this music. We prefer our own rhythm, our own tune. Like the children in the Gospel, we can become stubborn—unwilling to change, unwilling to be moved, unwilling to enter into what God is doing. The Lord plays, but we remain still.

Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian chose differently. In a time marked by persecution and internal division, they listened carefully for Christ's voice and worked for unity and reconciliation within the Church. They did not stand aside or close themselves off; they allowed their lives to be shaped by the Gospel, even when it led them to suffering and martyrdom. Their witness shows us what it means not just to hear the music, but to follow it faithfully.

Mary stands as another beautiful model. She listened attentively to God's word and allowed it to shape her whole life. Her Magnificat is not just a song she sang—it is the expression of a life fully in tune with God's music.

There is another story of an elderly man who used to sit on a park bench every afternoon. One day, faint music drifted from a nearby street performer. Slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, the man began to tap his foot. Then his hands moved, and eventually he stood and began to dance—awkwardly, freely, joyfully. People stared, some

smiled, some laughed. But he didn't mind. He had heard the music—and he responded.

That is the invitation given to us today. The music of God is already being played in our lives. The question is not whether it is there, but whether we will hear it—and having heard it, whether we will rise and dance.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,
that, listening more deeply to the music of God's love,
we may offer our lives with these gifts
in joyful obedience and faithfulness,
and that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS Receive, O Lord, the
prayers and offerings of your people,
and tune our hearts to the melody of your grace,
that, following the example of Saints Cornelius and
Cyprian, we may live in unity, charity, and steadfast faith.
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 every age you continue to call your people
to listen to the voice of your Son
and to enter into the joy of your kingdom.

When hearts grow distracted or resistant,
you do not cease to play the melody of your mercy,
drawing us again through the witness of the saints
and through the transforming power of love.

In Saints Cornelius and Cyprian
you gave your Church shepherds
who listened faithfully to Christ amid persecution and
division.

By their courage and steadfast charity,
they became instruments of unity and peace,
teaching your people to follow the Gospel's rhythm
even in times of suffering.

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

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command
and formed by the music of divine love that makes us one
family in Christ, we dare to say:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free us from the stubbornness that keeps us from
responding to your grace.

Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, attentive to the voice of your Son
and guided by the melody of love,
we may become instruments of reconciliation and joy in the
world, as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you came among us with the song of mercy and peace,
calling all people into the harmony of God's kingdom.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance
with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who calls us to listen to the music of divine love
and to enter the joy of his kingdom.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord continues to play his music quietly within our
hearts. In this Eucharist we have heard again the melody
of patient and faithful love. Like Mary, like Saints Cornelius
and Cyprian, may we not remain distant or unmoved.
May Christ teach us to rise, to follow, and to let our lives
become a song of love, reconciliation, and joy.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the sacred mysteries we have received, O Lord,
strengthen us in faith and charity,
so that, attentive to the voice of Christ,
we may live in harmony with your will
and bear witness to your love in the midst of the world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord open your hearts
to hear the music of his grace
and give you the courage to respond with joy. Amen.

May he teach you to live in patient and faithful love,
in harmony with one another and with his will. Amen.

And may the witness of Saints Cornelius and Cyprian
strengthen you to remain steadfast in faith and generous in
charity. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace,
listening to the music of God in your lives
and responding with the dance of love and faith.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The music of God is already being played in our lives.
The question is not whether God is speaking,
but whether we are listening—and having listened, whether
we are willing to rise and dance.

17 Sept., 2026 – Thursday, 24th Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 15:1–11; Lk 7:36–50

“Forgiven much, we love much.”

INTRODUCTION

There is a story told of a man who kept a small notebook in his pocket. Each evening, he would write down the names of people who had wronged him that day. Over time, the list grew longer and heavier—not only on paper, but in his heart. One day, an elderly friend noticed his habit and said, “Why don’t you try writing down instead the times you have been forgiven?” Reluctantly, the man began. To his surprise, that second list grew even faster—and slowly, his heart grew lighter.

We often remember wounds more easily than mercy. We carry memories of what others owe us, yet forget how deeply we ourselves depend on forgiveness. But the Christian life begins not with our goodness, but with God’s grace freely given.

In today's Gospel, a sinful woman approaches Jesus with tears, love, and gratitude because she has discovered that mercy is greater than her past. Saint Paul speaks with the same humility: "By the grace of God, I am what I am." Both remind us that forgiven hearts become loving hearts.

As we gather around the Lord's altar, we come not as people who have earned a place here, but as sinners welcomed by mercy. Let us now acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you welcome sinners and restore them through your mercy: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you forgive us generously and teach us to love generously in return: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you soften hearts that have become proud, distant, or judgmental: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who in his great mercy forgives our sins and teaches us to love with grateful hearts, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
whose mercy transforms sinners into disciples
and whose grace bears fruit in lives renewed by love,
grant that we who have received your forgiveness
may respond with generous and faithful hearts,
so that our lives may proclaim the greatness of your
compassion.

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 woman once brought a cracked jar to the market every day to fetch water. By the time she returned home, half the water had leaked out. Ashamed, she apologized to her master. But he smiled and said, “Have you noticed the flowers along the path? I planted seeds there, knowing your jar would water them.” What seemed like failure had become a quiet source of beauty.

Today’s Gospel places before us another striking and uncomfortable scene. A woman, known in the town as a sinner, enters uninvited into a Pharisee’s house. She disrupts the carefully ordered meal, weeping at Jesus’ feet, washing them with her tears, drying them with her hair, kissing them, and anointing them with costly perfume. It is excessive, even scandalous.

Simon the Pharisee, the host, watches with disapproval. He cannot reconcile this scene with his idea of holiness. If Jesus were truly a prophet, he thinks, he would know what kind of woman this is—and he would keep his distance. Simon’s problem is not only his judgment of the woman; it

is also his failure to recognize his own need.

In contrast, the woman knows exactly who she is. She comes not with excuses, but with tears; not with claims, but with love. Somewhere before this moment, she had encountered Jesus and received from him the gift of forgiveness. That experience changed her. What we see now is not a plea for mercy, but a response to mercy already given.

Jesus tells a simple parable: two debtors, one owing much, the other little. Both are forgiven. Which one will love more? The answer is obvious—and yet its implication cuts deep. “The one who is forgiven little loves little.” Simon has not allowed himself to receive forgiveness, and so his love remains small, measured, restrained.

Saint Paul, in today’s first reading, speaks from the same place as the woman. “By the grace of God, I am what I am.” He knows he did not earn his calling; he received it as mercy. Once a persecutor, he became an apostle—not by his own merit, but by grace. And that grace, he says, “has not been fruitless.” It overflowed into tireless service.

This is the pattern of the Christian life: receiving before giving. When we allow ourselves to be touched by God's forgiving love, something shifts within us. Gratitude replaces calculation. Generosity replaces caution. Love becomes less about obligation and more about response. Simon stands as a warning. It is possible to be close to Jesus, even to invite him into our lives, and yet remain untouched—distant, self-contained, unmoved. The woman, on the other hand, shows us the heart of a disciple: one who knows her need, receives mercy, and responds with everything she has.

There is a final story of a young boy who broke a valuable vase at home. Terrified, he expected anger. Instead, his father quietly said, "I forgive you—just be more careful next time." The boy never forgot that moment. Years later, he said, "That was the day I learned what love looks like." From then on, he tried not to avoid mistakes out of fear, but to live well out of gratitude.

"Forgiven much, we love much." That is the red thread running through today's readings. When we truly know

ourselves as forgiven, we cannot remain the same. Like the woman, like Paul, we begin to love in ways that may even seem excessive to others—but which, in God's eyes, are simply the natural fruit of grace.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we bring these gifts before the Lord, our hearts too may be offered with humble gratitude, trusting not in our merits but in the mercy that has forgiven and renewed us.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favour, O Lord,
upon the gifts we place upon your altar,
and as you accepted the tears and love of the repentant woman, so also receive the offering of our hearts.
May this sacrifice deepen within us
a grateful love that bears fruit in lives of 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.

For in your mercy you do not turn away from sinners,
but seek them with patient and faithful love.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you reveal a compassion that restores dignity,
heals wounded hearts,
and calls us into newness of life.

You teach us that those who receive much mercy
are moved to love much in return,
and that your grace, once welcomed,
is never without fruit.

Through the witness of forgiven sinners made holy,
you show the world the power of your redeeming love.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,
with Thrones and Dominions,

and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,
we sing the hymn of your glory,
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray with confidence to the Father whose mercy
forgives our sins and teaches us to forgive one another.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free our hearts from pride, resentment, and hardness
of heart.

By the power of your mercy,
teach us to live as people forgiven and renewed,
so that we may love generously and serve you faithfully as
we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you brought peace to sinners through the gift of
forgiveness and reconciled us to the Father by your
merciful love. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your
Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in
accordance with your will.
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world;
where mercy is received and hearts are renewed in love.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb,

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The woman in the Gospel left the house changed—not
because she defended herself, but because she
encountered mercy. Saint Paul spent his life proclaiming
the grace he himself had received. We too have come
before the Lord with empty hands, and he has filled them
with forgiveness and peace.

The Eucharist reminds us again that God's love is never
earned; it is received. And once received deeply, it cannot
remain hidden. Forgiven hearts become grateful hearts,
and grateful hearts learn how to love.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord,
take possession of our minds and hearts,
so that, transformed by your mercy,
we may bear lasting fruit in lives marked by gratitude,
compassion, and generous love.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord, who has forgiven your sins and nourished
you with his mercy, fill your hearts with grateful love.
Amen.

May he free you from pride and judgment, and teach you
to recognize his grace at work in your life. Amen.

And may you, like the woman in the Gospel and Saint Paul the Apostle, become witnesses of mercy through generous and faithful love. Amen.

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives shaped by mercy, gratitude, and generous love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

When we truly remember how much we have been forgiven, love stops being a duty and becomes a grateful response to grace.

18 Sept., 2026 – Friday, 24th Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 15:12–20; Lk 8:1–3

Graced to receive, called to give.

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a small country clinic that struggled to stay open. The doctor was dedicated, but funds were always short. One day, a quiet woman in the town began leaving envelopes at the reception desk—no name, no note, just enough each time to keep the clinic running for another week. For years, no one knew who the benefactor was. Only later did they discover that she had given quietly out of her own limited means, simply because she believed in the healing that was happening there.

Much of what sustains life often remains hidden from view. Families are held together by unnoticed sacrifices, communities survive because of quiet generosity, and the Church continues because many people serve faithfully without recognition.

In today's Gospel, Luke brings such hidden disciples into the light. The women who accompanied Jesus supported

his ministry from their own resources. They had first received healing and grace from the Lord, and in gratitude they shared what they had so that others too might encounter him.

As we gather around this altar, we recognize how much we ourselves have received from God and from others. Yet we have not always been grateful, humble enough to receive help, or generous in sharing our gifts. Let us now acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you received the loving service of those who followed you and taught us the humility to accept the care of others: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you have blessed us with countless gifts and call us to share them generously for the building up of your Kingdom: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, by your Resurrection you have opened for us the new life in which no act of love is ever wasted: Lord,

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the merciful Lord forgive us for the times we have taken others for granted, failed to share what we have received, or refused the humility of depending on one another. May he renew in us grateful hearts and generous spirits, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
source of every grace and giver of every good gift,
you teach us through the example of your Son
that true discipleship is found both in generous service
and in humble openness to receive from others.
Grant that, strengthened by the hope of the Resurrection,
we may gladly share what we have received from you
for the building up of your Kingdom.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY

A traveller once set out on a long journey across a desert. He carried only what he thought he would need. But as the days went by, he found himself sustained not only by his own provisions, but by wells dug by strangers, shelters built by unknown hands, and food left behind by those who had passed that way before him. He reached his destination not alone, but carried by the generosity of many he would never meet.

The Gospel today gives us a similar insight into the ministry of Jesus. We often imagine him striding from town to town with the Twelve, preaching and healing. But Luke widens the picture. Alongside the Twelve is a group of women—Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and many others—who provide for Jesus and his companions out of their own resources.

This is striking. In that culture, such public participation of women in a rabbi's ministry would have been unusual. Yet Jesus not only allows it—he welcomes it. He forms a

community where each person, regardless of status, has a place and a role.

Even more striking is this: Jesus, the one who came “not to be served but to serve,” allows himself to be served. He receives from others. The Son of God, who gives everything, also accepts the care, support, and generosity of these women.

That tells us something important about discipleship. We are not only called to give; we are also called to receive. Giving requires generosity, but receiving requires humility—the humility to admit that we are not self-sufficient, that we need others, that God often reaches us through the hands and hearts of those around us.

Saint Paul, in the first reading, speaks of the resurrection—the heart of our faith. “If Christ has not been raised,” he says, “our faith is in vain.” But because Christ is raised, everything changes. Life is no longer closed in on itself. What we give is never lost; what we receive is never

meaningless. All becomes part of the new life of the risen Lord.

The women in the Gospel lived out that resurrection faith, even before they fully understood it. They had experienced healing and grace from Jesus, and in response, they gave. Not out of obligation, but out of gratitude. What they had received, they now shared.

Their example challenges us. What have we received—from God, from others, from the quiet generosity of those around us? And what are we doing with it? It is easy to think only in terms of material resources, but the Gospel invites a wider view: our time, our attention, our encouragement, our presence—all these are gifts we are called to share.

At the same time, we are reminded to notice and give thanks for those who have supported us—the “hidden” disciples in our own lives. Many of us are here today because someone, often quietly and without recognition,

helped us along the way, sustained our faith, or showed us the face of Christ.

The Church itself is built not only on great leaders and visible figures, but on countless acts of hidden service. Without them, the mission of Christ would falter. With them, it continues to flourish.

There is a story told of a cathedral that was admired for its beauty. When visitors asked who designed it, they were told the name of the architect. But an old caretaker would quietly add, “It was also built by those who carried stones, mixed mortar, and worked in the shadows. Without them, there would be no cathedral.”

So too with the Kingdom of God. It is built not only by those who preach and lead, but by all who, like the women in today’s Gospel, give from what they have received. In God’s eyes, nothing given in love is ever small, and nothing received in humility is ever wasted.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that the gifts we bring before the Lord, offered in gratitude for all we have received from him and from one another, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord our God,
receive these offerings,
signs of the gifts you have first placed into our hands.
As the women who followed your Son supported his mission with generous hearts,
may we too offer ourselves joyfully in loving service to your people.
Grant that all we give in faith may bear fruit in the life of your Church.

Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For in your wisdom and love
you call each person to share in the work of your Kingdom.
You sustain your Church not only through visible leaders,
but also through countless hidden acts of faithfulness,
generosity, and care.
In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you revealed the humility that both gives and receives.
Though he came to serve,
he accepted the loving support of those who followed him,
teaching us that no gift offered in love is ever small
and no act of service is forgotten before you.
Through his Resurrection,
you have filled human life with enduring hope,
so that whatever is shared in charity
becomes part of the new creation brought forth in Christ.
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

Because we have received everything as gift from our heavenly Father, and are called in turn to share those gifts with generosity and love, let us pray with confidence in the words Jesus himself taught us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free us from the selfishness that closes our hearts to others. Teach us to receive with humility and to give with generosity, as we await in joyful hope the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you gathered around yourself disciples who served one another in love
and shared their gifts for the sake of your mission.
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 gives himself completely for the life of the world
and teaches us that all we receive is meant to be shared in love. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, today you have fed us with the Bread of Life.
You remind us that we are sustained not only by your grace, but also through the kindness, sacrifices, and prayers of others.

Teach us to recognize the hidden disciples in our lives—those who quietly carried burdens, offered encouragement, or kept faith alive when we were weak.

May we leave this Eucharist with grateful hearts, ready to share what we ourselves have received, trusting that in your risen life no act of love is ever lost.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, nourished by these holy mysteries, we may become more generous in service, more humble in receiving help from others, and more faithful in building up the Body of Christ through love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and strengthen you in every good work. May he teach you to recognize with gratitude all that you have received, and to share your gifts generously for the good of others.

May the risen Christ fill your hearts with hope, so that no act of kindness may ever seem small in your eyes.

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by sharing with others the gifts you have received.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

What we have received in grace is never meant to be kept for ourselves.

The Kingdom of God grows through countless quiet acts of generosity, humility, and love.

19 Sept., 2026 – Saturday, 24th Week in Ord. Time

1 Cor 15:35–37, 42–49; Lk 8:4–15

“Becoming good soil for the generous Word.”

INTRODUCTION

A traveller once noticed two orchards growing side by side. One was green and full of fruit, while the other looked dry and lifeless. Curious, he asked the gardener why there was such a difference. The gardener answered, “Both receive the same sunlight and rain. But one ground is cared for, softened, and cleared of weeds; the other has been left unattended.”

That simple observation reflects something very true about the spiritual life. God never stops giving. His grace, his mercy, and his Word fall upon every heart. Yet the fruitfulness of that gift depends greatly on whether we allow our hearts to remain open and receptive.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus speaks of the seed of God’s Word falling on different kinds of soil. The seed is always

good; the sower is always generous. What matters is the condition of the ground that receives it. The Lord invites us today not to judge others, but to look honestly within ourselves.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us ask the Lord to soften whatever has become hardened within us, to remove the stones and thorns that hinder his grace, and to make our hearts rich soil where his Word may take root and bear lasting fruit.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you generously sow the seed of your Word in every human heart: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you call us to persevere when faith is tested by trials and difficulties: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you invite us to clear away the thorns of distraction, anxiety, and selfishness so that we may bear fruit in love: Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who never ceases to sow the seed of his mercy soften our hardened hearts, free us from all that chokes the life of grace within us, and make us fruitful in faith, hope, and love; and may almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

COLLECT

O God,
who continually sow the seed of your Word
in the hearts of your faithful people,
grant that, freed from all that hardens or distracts us,
we may receive your truth with generous hearts,
persevere in faith through every trial,
and bear abundant fruit for your Kingdom.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY

There is a story of an old farmer who, year after year, would sow his seeds with remarkable generosity. A neighbour once asked him, “Why do you scatter so much seed on the edges of your field where it may not grow?” The farmer replied, “Because I have learned that if I only sow where I am certain, I will never discover where life can surprise me.”

That image helps us enter into today’s Gospel. Jesus presents God as that kind of sower—lavish, uncalculating, almost reckless in generosity. The seed, which is the Word of God, is not rationed out carefully. It is scattered everywhere: on the path, on rocky ground, among thorns, and on good soil. God does not hold back his grace until conditions are perfect. He gives freely, abundantly, to all. Yet the parable is also honest. Not all the seed bears fruit. Some is lost, some withers, some is choked. The problem is never the seed, nor the sower—it is the condition of the soil. In other words, the question is not whether God is speaking to us, but whether we are able and willing to

receive what he gives.

Jesus names some of the obstacles with great realism.

There is the hardness of the path—those moments when the heart becomes closed, perhaps through hurt, routine, or indifference. There is the rocky ground—initial

enthusiasm that cannot withstand trials and difficulties.

There are the thorns—the worries, riches, and pleasures of life that slowly suffocate what is good. These are not abstract ideas; they are experiences most of us recognize in our own lives.

The first reading adds another dimension. Saint Paul speaks of the transformation from what is perishable to what is imperishable, from the earthly to the heavenly. The seed that is sown seems small, fragile, even destined to disappear—but within it lies a greater life. In the same way, the Word of God planted in us may seem insignificant at first, yet it carries within it the promise of a transformed life.

If that is so, then our task is clear: to become good soil.

And good soil does not happen by accident; it is cultivated.

One of the most important ways we do this is through

prayer—not just speaking to God, but listening. The

Gospel describes good soil as those who “hear the word with a noble and generous heart, keep it, and bear fruit through perseverance.” Listening, holding, persevering—these are the marks of a receptive heart.

It also means being attentive to what is growing within us. Sometimes we need to clear away the stones of resentment or disappointment. Sometimes we need to cut back the thorns of distraction or anxiety. At other times, we simply need patience, trusting that growth is happening even when we cannot see it.

The encouraging truth in all of this is that the sower never stops sowing. Even when the soil is not ready, even when previous seeds have failed, God continues to speak, to offer, to give. His generosity is greater than our resistance. Each day, each moment, is another opportunity to receive his Word anew.

There is a final story told of a woman who inherited a neglected garden. It was overgrown, dry, and seemingly beyond recovery. But she began, little by little, to tend it—

loosening the soil, removing weeds, watering faithfully. For a long time, nothing seemed to change. Then, slowly, life returned. Flowers bloomed where there had once been only dust. When asked what made the difference, she simply said, “The ground was always capable—I just had to care for it.”

That is the hope of today’s Gospel. No matter what our past has been, no matter what condition our hearts may be in now, we can become good soil. For the Word that God sows within us is living and powerful—and, given space and care, it will bear fruit in ways beyond what we can imagine.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts we place upon the altar may express our desire to become good soil for the Lord’s generous Word, and that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the offerings of your people,
and as you nourish the earth with rain and sunlight,
so also nurture within us the life of grace
that your Word has planted in our hearts.
May these sacred mysteries strengthen us
to persevere faithfully and bear fruit that endures.
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 goodness you never cease to sow the
seed of your Word among your people.
Again and again you speak to the human heart,
calling us from hardness to openness,

from distraction to attentiveness,
from fear to trusting faith.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you reveal the patience of the divine sower,
who never abandons the field of our lives
but continually nourishes us with mercy and truth,
so that we may bear fruit in perseverance
and share in the new and imperishable life you promise.

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
teaching that cultivates our hearts in faith and trust, we
dare to say:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from whatever hardens our hearts
or chokes the life of your Word within us.
Graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may always be 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 never cease to sow peace, mercy, and hope
into the hearts of your people.
Do not look 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 continually sows the living seed of God's Word within us.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord has once again planted his Word within us through this Eucharist. Like seed hidden in the earth, grace often works quietly and patiently before fruit appears. We may not always see immediate change, yet God continues his work within receptive hearts. Let us ask for the perseverance to listen, to trust, and to remain open to the transforming life Christ places within us today.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, take possession of our minds and hearts, so that the seed of your Word planted within us may grow in perseverance and holiness and bear fruit that will last for eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and make your hearts rich soil for his Word.

May he remove from you all that hinders faith, hope, and love.

And may he strengthen you to bear lasting fruit through perseverance.

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 that bear the fruit of his Word.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

"The seed God sows is always good; the question is whether we will prepare our hearts to receive it."