

18 October, 2026 – 29th Sunday in Ord. Time (A Cycle)

Is 45:1, 4–6; 1 Thess 1:1–5b; Mt 22:15–21

INTRODUCTION

A young man once asked an old sculptor, “How do you know which parts of the stone to remove?” The sculptor replied, “I keep looking at the image I want to reveal. Every stroke must serve that image; otherwise, I destroy what I am trying to create.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus asks us to remember whose image we bear. “Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar—and to God what belongs to God.” The coin carries Caesar’s image, but our hearts and lives bear the image of God.

The world constantly tries to stamp its own image upon us through the pursuit of money, power, success, and popularity. But no earthly power has the right to claim what belongs ultimately to God. As the Lord declares through Isaiah: “I am the Lord, unrivalled; there is no other God besides me.”

The question, therefore, is not simply what we owe to Caesar, but this: If we bear God’s image, are we giving God what belongs to him?

As we gather for this Eucharist, let us ask pardon for the times we have allowed worldly ambitions to shape our lives more than God’s truth and love. Let us now prepare our hearts to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call us to place God above every earthly power and possession: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you created us in the image of God and call us to give our hearts fully to the Father:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you strengthen us to remain faithful when the values of the world oppose the Gospel: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God free us from every false allegiance, forgive us the sins that divide our hearts, strengthen us in faithful discipleship, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Because God alone is Lord of history and the true King of every human heart, let us now lift our voices in praise and sing with joy:

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
whose wisdom guides the course of history
and whose image is engraved upon every human heart,
grant that we may remain faithful to you above all earthly powers,
serving the common good with honesty and courage
while giving ourselves entirely to your 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 little boy once accompanied his grandfather to vote during an election. On the way home he asked, “Grandpa, who really runs the world? Is it presidents, kings, rich people, or generals?”

The grandfather smiled and pointed to the evening sky. “When clouds cover the sun, it can look as if the sun has disappeared. But the sun is still there, above the clouds, giving light and holding everything together. So it is with God. Human rulers may seem powerful for a while, but history finally belongs to God.”

That simple conversation touches the heart of today’s readings.

Both the prophet Isaiah and the Gospel confront us with the same question:

Who truly rules our lives?

Is it political power? Money? Public opinion? Fear? Ideology? Or God?

God Writes History in Unexpected Ways

The first reading from Isaiah contains something astonishing. God calls the Persian king Cyrus “his anointed,” literally “his messiah.” For the people of Israel, this sounded scandalous. Cyrus was not Jewish. He did not worship the God of Israel. Yet God chose him as an instrument of salvation.

To understand how shocking this was, we must remember the situation of Israel. Jerusalem had been destroyed. The Temple lay in ruins. The people were dragged into exile in Babylon. Their enemies mocked them: “Where is your God now?” Israel felt abandoned, defeated, humiliated. Their songs had turned into lamentations.

Then, into this hopelessness, God spoke through the prophet: “Look at Cyrus. I will use him. Through him I will free you.”

And that is exactly what happened. Cyrus conquered Babylon and allowed the Jews to return home and rebuild the Temple.

What does this mean for us?

It means that God is never trapped by our expectations. He can work through people, events, and situations we would never imagine. God is not confined to churches or sacristies. He is Lord of history.

One preacher once recalled praying over this very text during the Cold War in 1984. At that time the Soviet Union seemed immovable, atheistic communism appeared invincible, and the world lived under the shadow of fear. While praying, a daring thought arose in his heart: “If God could use the pagan king Cyrus, could he not also change the leaders of our own age?”

For years he prayed. Then came dramatic changes no one had foreseen: the collapse of communist regimes, the reopening of churches, the rediscovery of faith by millions. History shifted in ways the world had considered impossible.

Again and again, God reminds us: “I am the Lord, there is no other.”

We often act as though the future lies entirely in the hands of politicians, economists, military powers, or technology. Today's readings challenge that illusion. Governments matter. Human responsibility matters. But the final word belongs to God.

The Trap Set for Jesus

In the Gospel, another kind of power struggle unfolds.

The Pharisees and the Herodians approach Jesus with a question:

"Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

It sounds innocent, but it is a trap.

If Jesus says "Yes," many Jews will reject him as a collaborator with Rome. If he says "No," he can be arrested as a political rebel.

Jesus asks for a coin. Holding it up, he asks, "Whose image is this?"

"Caesar's," they reply.

Then comes the famous answer:

"Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God."

At first this seems like a clever political compromise. But Jesus is saying something far deeper.

The coin bears Caesar's image, so give the coin to Caesar.

But you bear God's image. Therefore, give yourself to God.

That is the real issue.

Jesus is not merely speaking about taxes. He is speaking about allegiance. Human authorities have a limited claim on us. God alone has the absolute claim.

This was revolutionary in the Roman world because the emperor demanded divine honour. Caesar wanted not only taxes, but worship. Jesus rejects that claim completely. Only God deserves the total surrender of the human heart.

And the same struggle continues today.

We may no longer worship emperors, but modern culture constantly asks for our total allegiance: success, wealth, nationalism, pleasure, ideology, social approval. Many voices compete for our hearts.

The Gospel asks us:

Who owns your deepest loyalty?

Honest Questions and Dishonest Questions

The Gospel also teaches us something about the way we ask questions.

Some questions are sincere; they seek truth. Others are asked merely to embarrass, trap, or attack.

A teacher once told of a student who asked:

“If God is all-powerful, can he create a stone so heavy that he cannot lift it?”

The purpose was not really to understand God but to corner the teacher in a contradiction.

The Pharisees approached Jesus in the same spirit. Their flattery concealed hostility.

And yet Jesus does not respond with anger. He responds with wisdom that exposes their dishonesty while opening a deeper truth.

How often our public conversations resemble these traps!

In politics, religion, even family life, people sometimes ask questions not to discover truth but to score points.

The Gospel invites us to greater honesty. God can work with sincere searching, even when mixed with doubt. But closed hearts cannot receive truth.

Rooted in Christ

Jesus’ words also force us to examine our conscience.

What happens when loyalty to God conflicts with loyalty to society?

History gives us many examples. The early Christians refused to worship the emperor and many were executed. In modern times figures like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Maximilian Kolbe, Martin Luther King Jr., and countless

unnamed believers chose fidelity to Christ over conformity to unjust systems.

What gave them such courage?

Not stubbornness. Not ideology. But a deep rootedness in Christ.

Saint Paul praises the Thessalonians today for their “faith in action, work of love, and perseverance in hope.” Their faith was not private sentiment. It shaped how they lived.

That is the challenge for us. Christianity cannot remain a Sunday identity while the rest of life belongs to the world. Every area of life—family, politics, work, finances, relationships, speech, conscience—belongs to God.

Caesar may receive the coin.

But God receives the heart.

A famous story is told about Saint Thomas More, who was executed because he refused to place the king above God.

As he stood on the scaffold, he declared:

“I die the king’s good servant, but God’s first.”

That sentence captures today’s Gospel perfectly.

We are called to be good citizens, responsible members of society, honest workers, and contributors to the common good. But above every earthly loyalty stands one greater loyalty.

For we bear not Caesar’s image, but God’s.

And when the powers of this world pass away, when coins lose their value and kingdoms disappear, one truth will remain:

“I am the Lord, there is no other.” Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CREDO

United in the faith of the Church, and trusting not in the powers of this world but in the Lord who alone reigns forever, let us now profess our faith.

PROFESSION OF FAITH (for personal Meditation only)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Lord of history and ruler of every nation,
who created all people in his image
and calls every human heart to belong to him alone.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who came into the world not to seek earthly power
but to reveal the Kingdom of God.
He taught us to give to the world what is due in justice,
but to give our hearts completely to God.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
so that no earthly power would ever have the final word
over humanity.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens believers to remain faithful
when truth is difficult and discipleship costly;

who gives courage to witness to Christ
in family life, society, work, and public life.

I believe in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church,
called to live in the world without belonging to the spirit of
the world. I believe in the communion of saints,
many of whom remained loyal to God above every earthly
authority. I believe in the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting in the Kingdom
where God alone reigns forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that by placing these gifts upon
the altar, we may learn to surrender to God not only what
we possess, but our very selves, so that our lives, marked
with his image, may be acceptable to God, the Father
almighty.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant us, Lord, we pray,
that these offerings we place before your majesty
may express our wholehearted devotion to you,
so that, freed from divided loyalties,
we may serve you faithfully in every area of life.
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 alone are the Lord of history
and the source of every good gift.

Though earthly kingdoms rise and fall,
your dominion endures forever.

You created us in your image
and called us to belong completely to you.

In your wisdom you guide the nations of the world,
often working through unexpected people and events,

so that your saving purpose may be fulfilled.
And in your Son, Jesus Christ,
you revealed the truth that no earthly power
can claim the worship that belongs to you alone.

Through his Death and Resurrection
you have made us a people faithful in hope,
courageous in conscience,
and steadfast in love.

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

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

As children created in God's image and called to place our
trust not in worldly power but in our heavenly Father, let us
pray with confidence:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the temptation to place our ultimate trust
in power, wealth, or human approval;
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us to give earthly things their proper place
while offering our hearts completely to God;
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 belong wholly to
the Father and to remain faithful amid the passing powers
of this world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the
Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, the world constantly competes for our attention, our
loyalty, and our hearts. Yet today you remind us that we
bear your image. Teach us to live as your faithful people —
courageous in conscience, honest in love, and steadfast in
hope. May this Eucharist strengthen us to serve
responsibly in the world while belonging completely to you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received the Sacrament of salvation,
we humbly beseech you, O Lord,
that, strengthened by this heavenly food,
we may remain faithful to you in every circumstance
and bear witness with courage
that you alone are Lord of our lives and history.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord guide your hearts in truth and faithfulness.
May he strengthen you to stand firm when the values of
the world oppose the Gospel.

And may he help you to live always as people who bear
the image of God.

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 rooted in
Christ and faithful to God above all else.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“The coin bears Caesar’s image — but you bear God’s
image. Give the world your service, but give God your
heart.”

19 October, 2026 – Mon., 29th Week in Ord. Time

(Sts John de Brébeuf & Isaac Jogues, Companions)

Eph 2:1–10; Lk 12:13–21

“True security is found in being rich in the sight of God.”

INTRODUCTION

A traveller once arrived in a remote village after a long
journey. Tired and hungry, he knocked on the door of a
modest home. The family inside had very little—just
enough food for themselves. Yet without hesitation, they
welcomed him in, shared their meal, and gave him a place
to rest. As the traveller left the next morning, he asked,
“Why did you give me so much when you have so little?”
The father simply replied, “Because what we have is given
to us, not just for ourselves.”

There is something striking about that kind of generosity. It
does not come from abundance alone, but from a certain
freedom of heart—a trust that what we give away is never
truly lost. It reveals a deeper kind of wealth, one that
cannot be measured in barns or bank accounts.

In today's Gospel, Jesus encounters a very different attitude. A man approaches him, asking for help in dividing an inheritance. But instead of settling the dispute, Jesus speaks about greed and tells a parable of a rich man who has more than enough, yet is still consumed with securing more for himself.

As we gather here, we might quietly ask: where do we seek our security? In what do we place our trust?

Acknowledging the times we have clung too tightly to what we have, or failed to see the needs of others, we now turn to the Lord in the penitential act.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you teach us that life does not consist in the abundance of possessions, but in trusting the Father's care: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you call us to be rich in the sight of God through generosity and love: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you free our hearts from greed and open our eyes to the needs of others: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God free us from the false security of selfishness and greed, open our hearts to trust in his providence and to share generously with others, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Collect

O God,
you alone are our lasting treasure and true security;
teach us to place our trust not in earthly possessions
but in the riches of your grace,
that, following the example of the holy Martyrs
Saints John de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues and
Companions,
we may give ourselves generously in your service
and become rich in your sight.

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 successful businessman who spent his entire life building his wealth. He worked tirelessly, expanded his enterprises, and accumulated more than he could ever need. One evening, as he sat alone in his large house, surrounded by everything he had achieved, he received unexpected news of a serious illness. In that moment, all his carefully built security seemed to slip through his fingers. He reportedly said, “I spent my life securing everything—except the one thing that mattered most.”

That story echoes the parable Jesus tells today. The rich man in the Gospel is not condemned for being wealthy. His problem lies elsewhere. He already has plenty, yet when he receives an abundant harvest, his only concern is how to store it for himself. “I will pull down my barns and build larger ones,” he says. Everything revolves around “I” and “my.” There is no mention of God, and no thought of others.

What is striking is how narrow his vision has become. His abundance could have been an opportunity—for gratitude, for generosity, for service. Instead, it becomes a trap. His desire for security leads him inward, closing him off from both God and neighbour.

Jesus names the deeper issue very clearly: “Take care! Guard against all greed.” Greed is not just about having a lot; it is about the restless desire for more, the illusion that if we just accumulate enough, we will finally feel secure. Yet, as Jesus reminds us, “one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.”

The man in the parable believes he has secured his future: “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” But his security is fragile, even illusory. That very night, his life is demanded of him. All that he stored up cannot accompany him.

Saint Paul, in the first reading, offers a sharp contrast. He reminds us that everything is grace: “By grace you have been saved... this is not your own doing; it is the gift of

God.” If all is gift, then nothing is meant to be hoarded. What we have—our possessions, our time, our talents—is entrusted to us for a purpose beyond ourselves.

To be “rich in the sight of God” is not complicated, but it is demanding. It means recognizing that God is our true security. It means allowing what we have received to flow outward—to become a blessing for others. It means resisting the quiet temptation to build bigger “barns,” whether material or emotional, and instead building wider hearts.

In the end, the question is not how much we have, but what we do with what we have. Do our lives create space for others? Do they reflect trust in God, or anxiety about securing ourselves?

There is a simple story of an elderly woman who lived alone with very modest means. Each week, she would set aside a small portion of her pension to help someone in need—a neighbour, a struggling family, a charity. When asked why she gave so consistently, she said, “I’ve never

felt poor. As long as I have something to give, I know God has given me enough.” In her quiet way, she had discovered the secret the rich man in the Gospel never learned.

True security is found in being rich in the sight of God.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we place these gifts upon the altar, we may also offer to God hearts freed from selfishness and trust more deeply in him who alone is our lasting security, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God, accept the gifts we bring before you and teach us through this Eucharistic sacrifice to seek the riches that endure forever.

May these offerings free us from attachment to earthly things and deepen our trust in your loving providence. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PREFACE

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

For in your wisdom you remind us
that the treasures of this world pass away,
but the riches of your grace endure forever.
You call your people not to store up possessions for
themselves,
but to become rich in mercy, generosity, and love.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you revealed that true life is found not in what we possess
but in trusting completely in you.

And in the witness of Saints John de Brébeuf, Isaac
Jogues, and their companions,
you show us hearts made fearless by faith
and rich in the sight of heaven.

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

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting not in ourselves or in earthly security, but in the
loving providence of our heavenly Father, let us pray with
confidence in the words Jesus himself taught us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
especially from the greed and anxiety that close our hearts
to you and to one another. Graciously grant peace in our
days, that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us that life is worth more than possessions
and that true peace comes from trusting in the Father's
love. Free us from all selfishness and fear,
and make us generous in serving one another,
who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Blessed are those who trust not in earthly riches but in the Lord who gives himself completely for our salvation. Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The rich man in the Gospel stored up grain for himself, but never learned how to open his heart. In the Eucharist, Christ gives himself completely to us and teaches us a different way of living—a life rooted not in fear or accumulation, but in trust and self-giving love.

To be rich in the sight of God is to recognize that all is grace. Whatever we have received is entrusted to us, not merely for ourselves, but for the good of others. The saints we honour today understood this deeply. Their lives became a gift poured out in faith and love.

May this Communion free us from the illusion that possessions can save us, and teach us instead to find our security in God alone.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having shared in these sacred mysteries, we pray, O Lord, that nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son, we may grow in trust in your providence and become generous in love and service to others. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord teach you to seek the treasures that do not fade and to place your trust in him above all else. **Amen.**

May he free your hearts from every selfish attachment and make you generous toward those in need. **Amen.**

May the witness of Saints John de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues, and their companions strengthen you to live with courage, faith, and self-giving love. **Amen.**

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives rich in faith, generosity, and trust in God.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“True security is not found in what we keep for ourselves, but in trusting God enough to become a blessing for others.”

20 October, 2026 – Tuesday, 29th Week in Ord. Time

Eph 2:12–22; Lk 12:35–38

“Stay awake to the Lord who comes—and serves.”

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a lighthouse keeper who lived alone on a rugged coast. Each evening he climbed the narrow stairs, trimmed the lamp, and kept watch through the night. One stormy season, ships kept arriving safely, and no one thought much about the quiet man who never slept. Until one night, he grew tired, skipped a round, and the light dimmed. The next morning, wreckage washed ashore. The keeper wept—not because he had done something dramatic, but because he had failed in something ordinary. Most of life is like that lighthouse—made up of small, faithful acts that seem unnoticed. We imagine that God will come to us in grand moments, but the Gospel suggests otherwise: the Lord comes quietly, persistently, in the ordinary rhythm of our days.

Saint Paul reminds the Ephesians that once they were “without hope and without God,” but now, in Christ, they

are brought near, made part of one household. We are no longer strangers watching from a distance; we are people of the house, entrusted with the lamp, the door, the welcome.

Yet how often we drift into forgetfulness—distracted, half-awake, inattentive to the One who stands at the door and knocks. As we begin these sacred mysteries, let us acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord to rekindle the lamp of faith within us.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you come quietly into the ordinary moments of our lives, yet we often fail to recognize you:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you serve your people with tenderness and love, yet we resist your grace and grow weary in faithfulness: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you call us to keep our lamps burning and our hearts awake for your coming: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and rekindle within us the light of vigilant faith, that we may remain ready to welcome the Lord who comes to serve his people, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

COLLECT

O God, who call your people to remain watchful for the coming of your Son, grant that, amid the ordinary duties and burdens of life, we may keep the lamp of faith burning brightly and recognize Christ present among us in those who seek our love and care.

May we who have been made members of your household remain steadfast in hope and joyful in service, until the day when the Lord himself seats us at his table in glory.

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 night security guard once worked in a quiet museum. Most nights, nothing happened. The halls were still, the paintings silent. But he walked his rounds faithfully, hour after hour. One night, a small sound—barely noticeable—caught his attention. Because he was alert, he discovered a break-in just beginning. His attentiveness saved what others would only later realize was precious.

Jesus' parable today speaks into that kind of watchfulness. "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit." It is not a call to anxiety, but to attentiveness—a steady readiness of heart. The Lord is not absent; he is coming, again and again, in ways easy to miss.

We often think of the Lord's coming as something far off—at the end of time or at the end of our lives. But the Gospel gently corrects us: the Lord comes daily. He knocks through a conversation, a need, a responsibility, a quiet prompting within. The question is not whether he comes, but whether we notice.

And then comes the surprising turn in the parable. When

the master returns and finds his servants awake, he does something unheard of—he serves them. He puts on an apron, seats them at table, and waits on them. This is not how the world works. But it is how God works.

Jesus reveals a God whose greatness is shown in service. We see it most clearly at the Last Supper, when he kneels to wash his disciples' feet. The Lord we wait for is already the Lord who serves. He does not come to demand, but to give; not to burden, but to bless.

This changes how we understand vigilance. We are not keeping watch out of fear of punishment, but out of love and desire for encounter. To stay awake is to remain open—to recognize his presence in the fabric of our ordinary lives.

Paul's words echo this transformation: we are no longer outsiders but members of God's household, "built together into a dwelling place for God." If that is true, then every moment becomes a doorway, every encounter a possible knock of grace.

Yet staying awake is not easy. Routine dulls us. Disappointments tire us. Sometimes the Lord seems delayed, and we are tempted to let the lamp go out. But the Gospel invites us to a quiet perseverance—small acts of faithfulness, repeated daily, that keep the flame alive.

And there is a promise: if we open the door, we will discover that we receive far more than we give. The Lord's service to us will always exceed our service to him. His generosity overturns our expectations.

A woman once kept a small candle burning in her window every evening for her son who worked late. One night, he returned exhausted and discouraged. Seeing the light, he said later, "That candle told me I still had a home." In ways we may not fully see, our watchfulness—our small, steady faith—makes space for the Lord to enter, and for others to find light.

So we keep the lamp lit, not because we know when he will come, but because we know who is coming—and how he loves to serve those who are ready to welcome him.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Keeping our lamps lit in faith and love, and trusting in the Lord who comes to serve his people, let us offer our gifts and our lives with confidence, and pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
accept the gifts we bring before you
as signs of our desire to remain faithful and watchful in
your service.

As you gather us into your household,
teach us to recognize your Son
in the ordinary moments of life
and to welcome him with hearts prepared in love.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PREFACE

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

For in your mercy you have drawn us near to yourself
and made us members of your household,
no longer strangers and wanderers,
but your beloved children in Christ.

He teaches us to remain awake in faith,
with lamps burning brightly,
ready to welcome the Lord who comes among us
in quiet and unexpected ways.

And when he finds his servants faithful,
he reveals the wonder of your love:
the Master himself serves those who wait for him.

Through him the weary receive strength,
the discouraged find hope,

and the faithful discover that your generosity
surpasses all expectation.

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

As members of God's household, watching in hope for the
coming of the Lord who never ceases to care for his
people, let us pray with trust to the Father in the words
Jesus himself taught us:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and keep the lamp of faith burning within your people.
Free us from the weariness and distraction
that close our hearts to your presence,
as we await in joyful hope
the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
you come among your people not as a master who
burdens,
but as the servant who brings peace and blessing.
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 comes to serve
and save his people. Blessed are those called to the
supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord whom we awaited has come among us once
again. He has served us with the Bread of Life
and rekindled the flame of his presence within us.

Now he sends us back into the ordinary rhythm of life—
to homes, workplaces, conversations, and
responsibilities—
not as strangers, but as members of God's household.

May our hearts remain awake,
our lamps continue to burn brightly,
and our quiet acts of faithfulness
become lights that guide others toward hope.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, O Lord,
that we who have been nourished at the table of your Son
may remain vigilant in faith and steadfast in love.
As Christ has served us in these holy mysteries,
teach us to recognize him in the daily moments of life
and to welcome him with joyful hearts.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord keep your hearts awake to his presence,
strengthen you in quiet faithfulness,
and make your lives a light for those who seek hope.

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

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, keeping your lamps lit for the Lord who
comes—and serves.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Keep the lamp lit in the ordinary moments of life, for the
Lord often comes quietly—and always with the heart of a
servant.”

21 October, 2026 – Wed., 29th Week in Ord. Time

Eph 3:2–12; Lk 12:39–48

INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a lighthouse keeper whose duty was simple but essential: every evening he had to keep the light burning for ships at sea. One night, several people from the village came asking for oil for their lamps and heaters. Wanting to help everyone, he shared what he had. By midnight, the lighthouse light went out, and a ship nearly crashed against the rocks. The keeper learned a painful lesson: what is entrusted to us must be guarded faithfully, because others depend on it.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus speaks about servants waiting for their master and remaining faithful in their responsibilities. The emphasis is not on fear, but on trustworthiness. The Lord entrusts each of us with gifts, duties, relationships, and opportunities to love. Christian readiness is not anxious waiting for the future, but faithful living in the present.

Saint Paul, too, speaks of being entrusted with the mystery of God's grace. He understands that grace is never a private possession; it is a responsibility meant to be shared. What God gives us is meant to bear fruit in service, compassion, and fidelity.

As we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries, let us recognize the times we have been careless with what God has entrusted to us, inattentive to his quiet presence, or slow to respond with faithful hearts. And so, we begin our penitential act.

Penitential Act with Kyrie Invocations

Lord Jesus, you come to us in unexpected moments and invite us to remain watchful in faith: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you entrust us with the riches of your grace and call us to faithful stewardship: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are patient with us when we fail and strengthen us to serve with love: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,
who calls us to be faithful stewards of his grace
and patient servants of one another,
have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

COLLECT

O God, who call your people
to remain watchful and faithful
in the responsibilities entrusted to them,
grant that we may recognize your presence
in the ordinary moments of life
and serve you with steadfast hearts and willing hands.
May we be found ready whenever you come to us,
through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

HOMILY

There is a story of a night watchman who took his job very seriously. Every hour, he walked the same route, checked the same doors, and noted everything in a logbook. One night, however, he noticed a faint light in a room that should have been empty. It was unusual, out of place. Because he was attentive, he investigated—and prevented what could have become a serious fire. His faithfulness in the ordinary made him ready for the unexpected.

Jesus' parables today move in that same space between the ordinary and the unexpected. A householder who does not know when the thief will come. A servant who does not know when the master will return. These are not just warnings about the end of life; they are about the daily rhythm of discipleship. The Lord comes to us not only at the end, but continually, often when we least expect it.

We tend to think of readiness as something dramatic—being prepared for a big moment. But in the Gospel, readiness looks very ordinary: a servant doing his work,

caring for others, remaining faithful to what has been entrusted. “Happy that servant if his master’s arrival finds him at his employment.” It is a quiet, steady faithfulness.

Paul, in the first reading, understood this well. He saw himself as a steward of grace, entrusted with the mystery of Christ. He did not claim greatness; in fact, he calls himself “the least.” Yet he recognized that what had been given to him carried responsibility. Grace is never just for ourselves—it is always meant to be shared.

That is where the Gospel becomes challenging. “From the one who has been given much, much will be required.” We have been given much: faith, the sacraments, the Word of God, the support of a community. These are not possessions to store away but gifts to live out. The question is not how much we have received, but how faithfully we respond.

The “unexpected” coming of the Lord often happens through very ordinary channels: a person who needs our patience, a situation that calls for courage, a moment that

invites forgiveness. These are not interruptions to our spiritual life—they are precisely where the Lord is present. Yet we can miss them if we are distracted or self-absorbed.

Jesus himself is the model of this faithful stewardship. He was faithful to his mission even when it led to suffering. He was faithful to people even when they failed him. He was faithful to love even in the face of rejection. His life shows us that readiness is not anxiety about the future, but fidelity in the present.

So the Gospel calls us to a double attitude: to be ready for the unexpected ways God comes, and to be faithful in the responsibilities already given to us. Not one or the other, but both together. A watchful heart and steady hands.

There is a final story of a teacher who, before leaving the classroom, told her students she would return “sometime.” Some students stopped working, thinking they had time. Others continued their tasks faithfully. When she returned unexpectedly, it was clear who had understood her trust.

The point was never about catching them out—it was about forming them in responsibility.

In the same way, the Lord’s coming is not meant to trap us but to shape us. If we live each day as faithful and wise stewards, attentive to his quiet, unexpected presence, then whenever he comes—whether in a moment of grace or at the end of our lives—he will find us ready.

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may express our faithful stewardship of God’s gifts and our readiness to welcome the Lord in every moment, and may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God, accept the offerings we bring before you as signs of our gratitude and trust. Teach us to use wisely all that you have entrusted to us, so that our lives may bear fruit in faithful service and generous love.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PREFACE

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

For you never cease to guide your people
with wisdom and mercy.

You entrust to us the gifts of faith, hope, and love,
and you call us to live as faithful stewards
while we await the coming of your Son.

In Christ, you have revealed the mystery of your grace
and taught us that true readiness is found not in fear of the
future but in fidelity to your will each day.

Through him, we learn to recognize your presence
in the ordinary duties of life
and in every opportunity to serve with love.

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

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray to the Father who entrusts us with the care of
one another and calls us to remain faithful in love:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and free us from the distractions and complacency
that keep us from recognizing your presence.

Graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of
your mercy, we may remain faithful in what you have
entrusted to us as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught your disciples
to remain watchful and faithful in love.

Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,
who comes to us often in quiet and unexpected ways,
calling us to faithful service and steadfast love.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord does not ask us to predict the future, but to be faithful today. Readiness grows in ordinary acts of love, patience, forgiveness, and responsibility. Every moment can become a place of encounter with Christ if our hearts remain attentive. The Eucharist we have received strengthens us to live as wise and faithful stewards until the Lord comes again.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God, through this holy Eucharist you renew us with the grace of your Son. Keep us watchful in faith, faithful in service, and generous in love, so that, strengthened by this sacrament, we may be ready to welcome Christ whenever he comes to us. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord make you faithful stewards of his grace,
attentive to his presence in the ordinary moments of life.

Amen.

May he strengthen you to serve with wisdom, patience,
and generous love in all that has been entrusted to you.

Amen.

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

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your faithful service and remaining watchful for his presence in daily life.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Readiness for the Lord is not anxious waiting for tomorrow, but faithful living today.”

22 October, 2026 – Thursday, 29th Week in Ord. Time

(St John Paul II – Optional Memorial)

Eph 3:14–21; Lk 12:49–53

“Kindled by Christ’s fire, we are called to a love that purifies, costs, and transforms.”

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once brought a small candle into a dark classroom. Without a word, she lit it. The room did not suddenly blaze with light, but something changed—faces became visible, outlines clearer, fear of the dark softened. Then she invited each student to light their own small candle from hers. Within moments, the room that had been dim was glowing with quiet warmth. No one spoke, but everyone understood: light shared is not diminished; it multiplies.

We gather today with that same quiet awareness—that something has been placed into our lives, a light, a fire, not of our own making. Yet unlike a candle that simply sits and burns, the fire Jesus speaks of in the Gospel is alive. It

moves, it transforms, it demands a response.

In today’s readings, we glimpse both the beauty and the cost of that fire. It is not a comfortable warmth alone; it is also a refining flame. It brings clarity, but sometimes also tension, even division. It calls us beyond ease into something deeper, truer, and more demanding.

And so, as we stand before this Word, we might ask: how have we resisted that fire? Where have we preferred comfort over transformation, silence over truth, or self-protection over love? Let us acknowledge our sins, and open our hearts to the mercy of God.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you came to cast the fire of divine love upon the earth: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you passed through the baptism of suffering to bring us new life: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you call us to be transformed by the power of your Spirit: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God, whose love purifies and renews every willing heart, forgive us for resisting the transforming fire of his Spirit, strengthen us to live courageously in truth and charity, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

COLLECT

O God,
who kindle within your faithful people
the fire of your love and truth,
grant that, inspired by the example of Saint John Paul II,
we may courageously embrace the Gospel,
remain steadfast amid trials and divisions,
and be transformed ever more fully into the likeness of Christ.

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

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, through which Christ pours into us the fire of his self-giving love, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
accept these gifts we bring before you,
and through this holy sacrifice
purify our hearts by the fire of your Spirit,
so that, freed from all that resists your grace,
we may become witnesses of courageous and
transforming love.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PREFACE

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

For in your Son, Jesus Christ,
you revealed the fire of your saving love,
a love that did not turn away from suffering
but embraced the Cross for the salvation of the world.

Through his Passion and Resurrection,
you poured out the Holy Spirit upon your Church,
that hearts once fearful and divided
might be renewed, purified, and made bold in faith.

In the witness of Saint John Paul II,
you showed us how this divine fire
can strengthen your servants
to proclaim truth with courage,
to defend the dignity of every human life,
and to lead your people with hope and fidelity.

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 Savior's command and formed by the fire 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 fears and attachments
that keep us from the transforming power of your love.
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, you brought to the earth the fire of a
love that purifies and renews; 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 gave himself completely in love so that the world might have life.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The fire of Christ is not meant to remain hidden or safely contained. In this Eucharist, we have received the love that passed through the Cross and conquered death. That love now burns quietly within us, asking to shape our thoughts, our choices, our relationships, and our witness. Like iron in the hands of the blacksmith, we are invited to yield to the transforming work of God, trusting that even the heat of sacrifice and struggle can become the path to deeper freedom and holiness.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son, we may be set ablaze with the fire of his love and strengthened to bear faithful witness to the Gospel in every trial and circumstance of life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord set your hearts ablaze with the fire of his love, that you may walk courageously in truth and holiness.

Amen.

May he strengthen you in every trial,
and transform your struggles into deeper faith and compassion. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit make you radiant witnesses of Christ, bringing light, hope, and peace to the world. **Amen.**

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives transformed through the fire of Christ's love.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“The fire of Christ does not destroy what is true in us; it burns away what prevents us from loving fully.”

23 October, 2026 – Friday, 29th Week in Ord. Time

(St John of Capistrano – Optional Memorial)

Eph 4:1–6; Lk 12:54–59

Reading the signs, responding without delay.

INTRODUCTION

A man once set his alarm very early because he wanted to witness a rare comet passing across the sky. He had read about it carefully, marked the date, and even reminded others not to miss it. But when the alarm rang, he turned it off, thinking, “Just five more minutes.” By the time he awoke, daylight had filled the sky, and the moment was gone.

We are often like that in our spiritual lives. We recognize what matters, yet we delay. We postpone reconciliation, put off prayer, or ignore the gentle invitations of grace, assuming there will always be another opportunity.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus reminds us that while people can read the signs of the weather, they often fail to recognize the signs of God’s presence and the urgency of responding

to him. The Lord continues to speak, invite, and call—but we must learn to notice and respond without delay.

As we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries, let us acknowledge the times we have been slow to answer God’s call, hesitant to forgive, or inattentive to his presence, and let us ask for his mercy and grace.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you call us each day to live in a manner worthy of our vocation: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you invite us to recognize the signs of your presence and respond without delay: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you offer us reconciliation and peace while there is still time: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us for the times we have ignored his voice, delayed conversion, and failed to recognize the signs of his grace in our lives, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

COLLECT

O God, who continually reveal your presence
through the quiet signs of grace in our daily lives,
grant that we may live with attentive hearts,
ready to recognize your call
and respond without delay to your invitation of love and
reconciliation.

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 farmer once noticed dark clouds gathering in the distance. Having lived long on the land, he recognized the signs immediately—a storm was coming. Without hesitation, he gathered his tools, secured his animals, and prepared his home. His neighbour, however, saw the same clouds but shrugged them off. “It might pass,” he said. By nightfall, the storm had arrived, and only one of them was ready.

Jesus, in today’s Gospel, draws on a similar kind of experience. People know how to read the sky: a cloud rising in the west means rain; a wind from the south means heat. These are ordinary skills, learned through attention and experience. Yet Jesus points out something striking—while people can read the signs of the weather, they often fail to read the signs of God’s presence.

This is not just a criticism of those who first heard him; it is a word addressed to us as well. We, too, can be very perceptive in ordinary matters and yet strangely unaware of the deeper movements of God in our lives. We plan, analyse, and anticipate many things—but do we notice when the Lord is speaking, inviting, or calling?

Saint Paul, in the first reading, urges us to “live in a manner worthy of the call you have received.” That call is not something vague or distant. It is present here and now, woven into the fabric of our daily lives. The challenge is not that God is absent, but that his presence is often quiet, subtle, and easily overlooked.

Jesus also speaks about settling with an opponent on the way to court. At first, it sounds like practical advice, but beneath it lies a deeper spiritual urgency. Do not delay what needs to be addressed. Do not postpone reconciliation. Do not wait until it is too late. The “way” is now—the present moment where grace is offered. How often do we say, “I will deal with that later”? Later, I will forgive. Later, I will pray more seriously. Later, I will listen to that inner prompting. But the Gospel reminds us that the time of decision is always now. Grace is not something stored for the future; it is given in the present. To read the signs of God’s presence requires a certain kind of attentiveness—a contemplative heart. It means developing eyes that see beyond the surface and ears that can hear even the quietest whisper. God may come to us in the Eucharist, in Scripture, in a conversation, in a difficulty, or even in a person we find challenging.

There is also an element of expectation. If we do not expect God to be present, we are unlikely to recognize him. But if we live with a quiet readiness—an openness of

heart—we begin to notice that he is constantly drawing near, constantly inviting us into something more.

A woman once kept a small notebook in which she wrote down what she called “God-moments”—little instances during the day when she sensed grace at work: a kind word, a sudden insight, an unexpected encounter. Over time, she realized that what she had once considered ordinary was, in fact, filled with quiet signs of God’s presence. Her life had not changed dramatically, but her awareness had—and that made all the difference.

And perhaps that is where this Gospel leaves us: not with dramatic demands, but with a simple and urgent invitation—to pay attention, to read the signs, and to respond without delay.

Invitation to the Prayer over the Offerings

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice, offered with attentive and willing hearts, may help us recognize the signs of God’s presence and respond faithfully to his call, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
accept these gifts we bring before you,
and through this holy offering awaken within us
a deeper readiness to hear your voice,
to seek reconciliation without delay,
and to walk faithfully in the path to which you have called
us.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PREFACE

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

For you never cease to speak to your people
through the signs of your presence and grace.
In every age you call us to vigilance of heart,
to discern your saving action in our lives,
and to respond without hesitation
to your invitation of reconciliation and peace.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you have drawn near to us in mercy and truth.
He teaches us to recognize the present moment as a gift of
grace
and to live in readiness for your kingdom.

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

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray with trusting hearts to the Father who
continually calls us to live as his children and to respond
without delay to his grace.

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, attentive to the signs of your presence and sustained 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 Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you call us to reconciliation while we are still on the way and teach us to recognize the nearness of your kingdom. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

Behold the Lamb of God,
who comes among us in quiet and saving ways,
calling us to attentive hearts and ready response.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord continues to pass quietly through the ordinary moments of our lives.

He speaks in Scripture, in the Eucharist, in moments of grace, and in the people we encounter each day.

The question is not whether God is present, but whether we are attentive enough to recognize him.

May this Eucharist deepen within us a readiness of heart, so that we may respond to his call without delay.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, O Lord,
that through the mystery we have celebrated
we may grow in attentiveness to your presence
and readiness to answer your call.

May this holy Communion strengthen us
to seek reconciliation, walk in unity,
and live each day in a manner worthy of the vocation we
have received. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you with attentive hearts
to recognize the signs of his presence in your daily lives.

Amen.

May he give you the courage
to respond without delay to his call to conversion and
reconciliation. **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 living with attentive
hearts and responding faithfully to his grace.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Grace is always present, but it must be recognized and
answered.

The time to listen, forgive, pray, and respond to God is not
later—it is now.

24 October, 2026 – Saturday, 29th Week in Ord. Time

(St Anthony Mary Claret – Optional Memorial)

Eph 4:7–16; Lk 13:1–9

Given time by grace, we grow into Christ.

INTRODUCTION

A teacher once told of a boy in her class who never seemed to get anything right. His assignments were late, his answers unsure, his confidence almost gone. Many had quietly concluded that he simply wasn't capable. But the teacher refused to give up on him. Week after week, she stayed back after school, guiding him patiently. Months passed with little visible progress—until one day, something clicked. The boy began to understand, to respond, to grow. By the end of the year, he wasn't the best in the class, but he had come alive in a way no one expected.

We recognize that kind of patience when we see it, because it is rare. Ours is often a world of quick judgments and quicker conclusions. If results don't appear, we move

on. If people don't change, we write them off. Efficiency tends to matter more than endurance.

Yet the Scriptures today reveal a very different rhythm—the rhythm of God. Faced with human weakness, with failure, even with tragedy, God does not rush to condemn or discard. Instead, He waits, He invites, He nurtures.

And so, as we gather in God's presence, we are invited to look honestly at our own lives: where we have been impatient, where we have failed to grow, where we have not borne the fruit we could. Trusting in God's patient mercy, we now turn to Him and ask for forgiveness.

PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You are the patient gardener who never ceases to cultivate our hearts: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You call us to conversion and give us time filled with grace: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You lead us patiently toward the fullness of life in You: **Lord, have mercy.**

PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God who patiently tends the soil of our lives forgive our slowness to change, strengthen our desire to bear fruit, and lead us into the fullness of life in Christ; and may almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

COLLECT

O God,
whose patient mercy gives us time to grow
and whose grace continually forms us
into the likeness of Your Son,
help us to respond generously to Your call to conversion,
that our lives may bear the fruits of faith, hope, 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

There is a story told of a farmer who kept watering a patch of dry, stubborn ground. Neighbours laughed at him, saying nothing would ever grow there. But the farmer continued, day after day, quietly tending the soil. Then one season, after long waiting, green shoots finally appeared. What seemed lifeless had not been hopeless.

In today's Gospel, Jesus begins with two tragic events—violence inflicted by Pilate and the sudden collapse of a tower. His listeners were quick to assume that such tragedies must be punishment for sin. But Jesus firmly rejects this way of thinking. Those who died were no greater sinners than anyone else.

Instead of assigning blame, Jesus shifts the focus. He reminds us of the fragility of life. Tragedy is not a sign that others are worse; it is a reminder that all of us are vulnerable. Life is uncertain, and so the present moment becomes precious—a time to turn again toward God.

This call to conversion is not meant to frighten us but to awaken us. We are not given time indefinitely, yet the time we are given is filled with grace. Every day becomes an opportunity to realign our lives with God's presence.

Then Jesus tells the parable of the fig tree—a tree that has failed to bear fruit for three years. The owner has had enough: “Cut it down.” It is a voice we recognize—the voice of efficiency, of impatience, of final judgment.

But another voice speaks—the gardener's voice: “Leave it one more year... I will cultivate it... I will care for it.” This is the voice of hope, of patience, of invested love. This is the voice that reflects the heart of Christ.

In this gardener, we see how the Lord looks at us. He does not see only our past failures; He sees our future possibilities. He does not give up when growth is slow. Instead, He draws near, tending the soil of our lives, pouring grace where it is most needed.

Saint Paul, in the first reading, speaks of growing into “the fullness of Christ.” That growth does not happen overnight.

It takes time, patience, and cooperation with grace. God provides the grace abundantly—but He does not force the growth. We must respond.

We might ask ourselves: where in my life am I like that fig tree—slow to bear fruit? Where have I resisted change, or delayed conversion? And yet, the deeper question is this: will I allow the Lord to work in me now, while there is still time?

There is a final story of a man who planted a small tree in memory of his father. For years, it barely grew, and he was tempted to remove it. But he decided to wait. Over time, the tree took root, strengthened, and eventually gave shade and fruit. What patience made possible, haste would have destroyed.

God is patient with us in just that way. He gives us time—not to remain as we are, but to become what we are called to be. If we open our hearts to His grace, our lives too will bear fruit. For indeed, *given time by grace, we grow into Christ.*

INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that these gifts, offered with humble hearts and trusting in God's patient mercy, may help us grow into the fullness of Christ, and that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,
receive these offerings we place upon Your altar,
and through this sacred exchange
continue to cultivate within us hearts open to Your grace,
so that, renewed by Your mercy,
we may bear lasting fruit in 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,
through Christ our Lord.

For in Your patience and mercy
You never abandon the work of Your hands.
When we wander, You call us back;
when we grow slowly in faith,
You continue to nurture us with grace.
In Your Son, the true gardener of our souls,
You cultivate within us the life that leads to holiness
and guide us toward the fullness of 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:

INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
let us pray with confidence to the Father who patiently
leads His children toward fullness of life:

EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
and graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of Your mercy,
we may never lose heart in the journey of conversion,
but continue to grow through the grace You generously
provide, as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,
You never cease to cultivate peace within the hearts of
those who trust in You.
Look not on our sins and failures,
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 patiently calls us to conversion
and nourishes us with the grace that helps us grow into His
life. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Lord does not tire of working within us.
Even when growth seems slow and fruit unseen,
His grace continues quietly, faithfully, patiently.
Today He has nourished us with His own life,
that we may become what we receive—
men and women growing into the fullness of Christ.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by these holy mysteries, O Lord,
we ask that, through the grace we have received,
You may continue to strengthen and transform us,
so that our lives may bear abundant fruit in faithfulness to
Your Son. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord, who patiently tends the soil of your lives,
strengthen you with His grace and help you grow each day
into the fullness of Christ. **Amen.**

May He give you courage in times of weakness,
hope in moments of delay,
and perseverance in the path of conversion. **Amen.**

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

DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, trusting in the patient mercy of God,
and bear fruit through lives transformed by His grace.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's patience is not permission to remain unchanged; it is
grace-filled time given so that we may grow into the
fullness of Christ.