

19 JULY 2020

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OPENING HYMN

Come into his presence with thanksgiving in your heart,
And give him praise. - 2
Come into His presence with thanksgiving in your heart,
Your voices raise. – 2

Give glory and honour and power unto him
Jesus, the name above all names. (2)

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

O Lord, show favour to Your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of Your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping Your commands. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING: Wis 12:13, 16-19

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 85:6, 9-10, 15-16

Our Response is: O Lord, you are good and forgiving

O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of love to all who call.
Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer
and attend to the sound of my voice. **R/**

all the nations shall come to adore you
and glorify your name, O Lord:
for you are great and do marvellous deeds,
you who are alone are God. **R/**

But you, God of mercy and compassion,
slow to anger, O Lord,
abounding in love and truth,
turn and take pity on me. **R/**

SECOND READING: Rom 8:26-27

GOSPEL: Mt 13:24-43

REFLECTION:

In today's society, we understand the word 'mastery' as the power a person has to control, dominate, force or manipulate others. In contrast, God's understanding of *mastery* is very different as described in today's reading.

In the gospel text Jesus announces the Kingdom of God in three parables. Jesus uses the phrase "*The kingdom of heaven is like ...*" to explain the three comparisons about the mystery of God's presence and reign. The three images speak of discernment, full growth, and transformation. Which of the three parables today appeals to you the most about the kingdom of God? What areas in your life does it reveal that you need to change? **Pause.**

In the first reading, God's work, His presence and His reign are visible in our lives. The gospel images of harshness "*blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding ...*" is balanced by the images in the first reading where God's judgment is "*mild... given your sons the good hope...that after sin you will grant repentance*". God exercises perfect justice. He governs us with leniency, kindness and protection. Today's psalm invites us to praise God who is abounding in love and truth as well as kind and forgiving. We are invited to grow in Christian maturity. Through the separation process, nothing impure can enter the Father's Kingdom. With the help of the Holy Spirit who is at work in the Church and world today we need to discern God's will in our lives, grow in Christian maturity and be open to allowing our lives to be transformed by Him. How will you try to practice being kind, loving, truthful and forgiving in your life? **Pause.**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader: Let us confidently bring our prayers to God who has Sovereign Power over all things.

Our response is: Loving Father, listen to your children praying.

We pray for all the members of the Church, that we may live the values of the Gospel thus making present the kingdom of God; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all the people in the world, that we may work for justice and uphold the dignity of all; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those who are sick and suffering that they may experience God's mercy and compassion from the community; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all baptised Christians, that we may be open to continual transformation in our lives by the working of the Holy Spirit; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

Leader: Loving Father, we place our hope and trust in You. Hear our prayers and strengthen us to do Your will at all times. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us together, at the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:
(*All say the Lord's Prayer together*) Our Father, ...

CLOSING PRAYER

Almighty God, graciously be present to Your people, and lead those You have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

To the King of all ages, immortal and invisible,

To the only wise God our Saviour,

Be honour and glory for ever and ever.

To the King of all ages, for ever and ever. Amen

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)