

## 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year A

### Faith Formation Sunday

**Introduction:** Today is the 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in ordinary time and being the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, we observe it as Faith Formation Sunday. While we profess and try to live out our Faith every day, we are called today to reflect on this gift of Faith that has been presented to us by God through the saints, our grandparents and parents, our priests and catechists. Let us then rejoice for having received this gift through which we can call God our Father.

#### Prayer of the Faithful:

**Celebrant:** Since God wills the salvation of all, let us pray to him in these words:

*Response:* Lord, draw all people to yourself

1. Father, grant that all people will come to know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. For this we pray...
2. Send workers into the harvest so that your name will be glorified among the nations. For this we pray...
3. You sent the disciples of Jesus to preach the gospel; help us to spread the victory of His cross. For this we pray...
4. Make us docile to the teachings of the apostles and our lives consistent with the truths we believe. For this we pray....
5. As you call us to serve in our brothers and sisters, make us the ministers of your truth. For this we pray....
6. Keep us as faithful ministers of your church, so that, having taught others, we ourselves may be found faithful in your service. For this we pray....
7. May the grace of the Holy Spirit guide our hearts and our lips, so that we may remain constant in loving and praising you. For this we pray....

**Celebrant:** we place these petitions at the feet of God our Father with full faith and confidence that He will grant them through Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Faith Formation Sunday is usually the day on which we have the commissioning of Catechists. The following Prayer of Blessing can be said over the catechists after the Post Communion prayer.***

**Celebrant:** We pray in a special way today for all our catechists, who are commissioned to teach the faith. I invite all catechists to bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

With your fatherly blessing, Lord, strengthen these servants of yours in their resolve to dedicate themselves as catechists. Grant that they will strive to share with others what they themselves derive from pondering your word and studying the Church's teaching. And let them gladly join those they teach in honouring and serving your name. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

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

**Homily Hints:**

The nCovid-19 pandemic has affected all of humanity either directly or indirectly. During these difficult times and looking ahead, many of us would have questioned and wondered where God's hand in all of this is. Similarly, a prevalent thought that could be playing at the back of our minds is how long is this situation going to last and when will God deliver us from these trying and testing times.

Amid these doubts and anxieties, we have today's readings. The First Reading from the prophet Zechariah is made up of only two verses. These two verses, however, have been called the centrepiece of the whole of Chapter 9 as they speak of the restoration of the people of Israel through the coming of a saviour who is pictured as being humble. The Second Reading from St. Paul's letter to the Romans tells us that the Christian life is a constant battle between the spiritual and the unspiritual. If we surrender ourselves to the Spirit of Christ, we will be able to overcome the fears and worries of this world. The gospel passage is part of a section that is dominated by the theme of belief and unbelief. It speaks of the acceptance of Jesus by those who are childlike. The Heavenly Father reveals Himself to us through the teachings and signs that Jesus works only if we are open to receive and put our faith in it like little children.

The readings of this Faith Formation Sunday, therefore, aptly call us and challenge us to place our faith in God; the same God who revealed himself as a liberator of the Jews, the same God who raised Jesus from the dead. We are called to be like little children and trust in His plans for us as we continue to live out the faith we profess – in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.....