

**30 AUGUST 2020**

**TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**OPENING HYMN**

**If you wish to be my disciple,  
Take up your cross and follow me.**

Whoever loves his life will only lose it.  
It's only sacrifice that brings one gain.

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*

**OPENING PRAYER**

God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of Your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, You may nurture in us what is good and, by Your watchful care, keep safe what You have nurtured. 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:** Jer 20:7-9

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Ps 62:2-6, 8-9

**Our Response is:** *For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord my God.*

O God, you are my God, for you I long;  
for you my soul is thirsting.  
My body pines for you  
like a dry, weary land without water. **R/**

So I gaze on you in the sanctuary  
to see your strength and your glory.  
For your love is better than life,  
my lips will speak of your praise. **R/**

So I will bless you all my life,  
in your name I will lift up my hands.  
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,  
my mouth shall praise you with joy. **R/**

For you have been my help;  
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.  
My soul clings to you;  
your right hand holds me fast. **R/**

**SECOND READING:** Rom 12:1-2

**GOSPEL:** Mt 16:21-27

### **REFLECTION:**

One of humanity's strongest desires is to live and preserve life. Jesus is inviting each one of us to share in His divine life. This is only possible when we are willing to let go of our life. Only then, Jesus can give us more.

In the first reading, Jeremiah vows to quit speaking about God "*I will not speak about His name anymore*". But God's word burns, *seduces and overpowers* him, drawing him to speak in God's name. Similarly, in today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that "*if anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me*". In other words, each disciple of Jesus has to follow the demands of the Cross. In embracing the Cross for His sake, one will receive his life.

In the Psalm today, we realize that God's "*love is better than life*". It is He alone who can satisfy our hunger and thirst. Can we, like Jesus himself, Jeremiah and Peter, stay focused on God's will for us in our life? He will surely grant us the courage and strength to lose our life. What exactly am I thirsting for? **Pause.**

In today's Gospel text, Jesus shows us what faithful discipleship is i.e. denying to self. Jesus teaches his disciples and each one of us to let go of our self, so that, we can rise and live a new life that identifies completely with Jesus. Am I ready to help others, ready to give up my own ideas and accept others ideas and suggestions? Am I open to allow the Holy Spirit to work in my life? It may take us our whole lifetime to let Jesus transform our life into the fullness of life and joy he offers us. What is my response? **Pause.**

### **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

**Leader:** Let us pray to the Father, that we may be faithful to Jesus who says "*...anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it*". Let us confidently bring our prayers to the Lord.

**Our response is: Gracious Father, hear our prayer**

We pray for all the members of the Church, that we may be ready to die to ourselves in order that we may experience the new life that Christ offers us; (*pause*); let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all the people in the world, that guided by the Spirit, we may choose values of compassion, love, mercy and goodness; *(pause)*; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those who are sick and suffering, that they may receive assistance from their families and the community; *(pause)*; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those baptised, that as Christ's disciples, we may take up our cross daily and follow Jesus; *(pause)*; let us pray to the Lord...

**Leader:** Heavenly Father, You transform each one of us to model our behaviour and the renewal of our minds on Your Son Jesus. Give us the grace to discern Your will and do what is good and perfect. 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**

O Lord, renewed by Your Word, we beseech You to stir our hearts to charity and to serve You in our neighbour. 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**

**I have decided to follow Jesus – 3  
No turning back, no turning back.**

The world behind me, the cross before me...

*(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)*