

13 SEPTEMBER 2020

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OPENING HYMN

Enter the house of the Lord, our God,
Enter the house of the Lord.
Sing of our God who reigns above,
Sing of His everlasting love,
Sing of His goodness all our days,
Come, be of one accord,
Lift up our voices, sing His praise,
As we enter the house of the Lord.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

Look upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and, that we may feel the working of Your mercy, grant that we may serve You with all our heart. 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.

FIRST READING: Sir 27:30-28:7

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 102:1-4,9-12

Our Response is: The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his Holy Name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.. **R/**

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals everyone of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. **R/**

His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry forever.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. **R/**

For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.
As far as the East is from the West
so far does he remove our sins. **R/**

SECOND READING: Rom 14:7-9

GOSPEL: Mt 18:21-35

REFLECTION:

Jesus asks us to forgive and be merciful. Forgiveness is a gift of grace, a reflection of God's love for us. Forgiveness means giving up the right to get even with someone who has wronged us; it does not seek revenge but rather, sets someone free from the guilt of wrong done to us. Forgiveness transforms us, heals relationships and changes our attitude towards others.

In the first reading, Sirach tells us that we must be merciful and compassionate towards others if we want to receive mercy and compassion from God. When we keep God's commandments and follow the values of Jesus, it becomes easier to overlook the offences of others. Am I able to ignore the faults of others and forgive them the way Jesus wants me to? **Pause**

Today's Psalm is one of the great psalms of praise and thanksgiving where the psalmist praises God for all the blessings he has received, both physical and spiritual. Our God "forgives", "heals", "redeems" and "crowns"; He is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and compassion and strong in His love for us. Like the psalmist, do we also feel an overwhelming sense of God calling us to be forgiving and compassionate in our relationships with others? **Pause**

In the Gospel passage, when Jesus responds to Peter's question, he emphasizes that forgiveness should have no limit and should not be calculated. It is important for us to forgive others just as God forgives us. Each of us should strive to be kind and merciful, slow to anger and rich in compassion. However, it is often difficult to forgive when we are angry with those who have hurt us. Do we behave like the merciless servant in the parable when we are heartless and unforgiving towards those who have wronged us and forget the many, many times that God, in His infinite mercy, has forgiven us for all our offences? **Pause** We are called to follow the example of Jesus and forgive completely and unconditionally from our heart. Is there someone who has hurt me and who I can forgive today? **Pause**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader: Gracious Lord, slow to anger and abounding in mercy, united in prayer, we confidently bring our petitions to You.

Our response is: Merciful Father, hear our prayer

We pray for all the members of the Church, that we may live by the Commandments of God and be merciful and compassionate towards others; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for our world leaders and leaders of the Church, that they may be faithful and committed to their responsibilities and use the powers vested in them for the benefit of the people under their care; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord.

We pray that during these difficult times of the Covid pandemic, we may use our resources

cautiously and wisely and be sensitive to the needs of the poor and marginalized; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for those facing hardships and insecurities, those who have lost their jobs and source of livelihood, those who have been rendered homeless and those directly affected by the Covid pandemic, that they may experience God's compassion and mercy; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord.

Leader: God our Father, in Your infinite mercy and compassion, graciously hear the prayers of Your people and make us instruments of mercy and compassion. 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, may this heavenly gift, Your Word, take possession of our minds and bodies, so that its effects, and not our own desires, may always prevail in us. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who shows 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

Thank you, Lord, for all you've done,
Things both great and small,
And for Jesus Christ your Son,
Thank you most of all.

You forgive us when we falter,
You bring healing when we sin,
You redeem our life from bondage,
And renew us deep within.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)