



5 August 2022

HOLY HOUR
(*God's Gift of Freedom*)

HYMN: 221 Jesus my Lord, my God, my all, (*Joyful Celebration*) Or any other.

(*Pause for Moments of Silent and Personal Adoration...*)

INTRODUCTION: The month of August invites us to reflect on “God’s Gift of Freedom”. Pope Francis teaches us that true freedom is a gift from the Lord as it is the fruit of the death and resurrection of Jesus on the cross. He says, “Right there, where Jesus allowed Himself to be nailed, to become a slave, God has placed the source of human's liberation”. Blessed Virgin Mary is the first to receive the fullness of the redemption that her son has won for all of humanity. Mary's faith enabled her to recognize the work of God in her people's history and in her own life. May we be open and cooperative in God's plan of salvation.

Gandhiji, the father of our great nation believed that India’s political freedom was only an objective along the path. He held that complete liberty was the first and last goal, as “Real Swaraj” comes not by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the freedom of all, to resist authority when abused or to defy any form of corrupting evil in the contemporary society or in one’s personal life. He believed that only non-violence was a democratic means of struggle available to everyone – not just to those who owned weapons. A violent victory, even if a just one, would prove that violence had triumphed, not necessarily justice. During this Holy Hour, we pray earnestly for each citizen of our country and for our leaders that we may obtain true liberation of minds heart and soul, to fight against all that enslaves and curtails us from living a fuller life as children of God.

(*Pause for Moments of Silent and Personal Prayer*)

PRAYER:

Sovereign God,
your Holy Spirit created unity
in the midst of diversity,
orderliness amidst chaos.
We acknowledge that the diversity among human races
and other species is an expression of your creative love.
You made us the crown of your creation,
gifting us with intellect and will.
We thank you for filling our country and our world with
astonishing variety of races of people and their cultures.
Enrich our lives by ever-widening
the circles of friendship and fraternity.

Teach us peaceful and happy co-existence, not merely tolerance.
Help us recognise your presence in all,
especially in all those who differ from us;
until our hearts learn to welcome all,
in an embrace of your universal love. Amen.

(We now invoke the Holy Spirit, asking to prepare our hearts and minds to listen to God's Word. Hymn to the Holy Spirit may be sung) 343 Verse 2 of (Joyful Celebration) or any other.

SCRIPTURE READING: Galatians 5:1, 13-15

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another by one another, take care that you are not consumed.

REFLECTIONS:

St Paul makes it very clear that the freedom of grace is not a freedom to sin but a freedom to serve others in love. Grace does not simply free us from sin and condemnation but it frees us to a new life of holiness and love; we no longer live for ourselves but for Christ. The works of the flesh and the fruit of love are not two different optional ways to live in freedom. When we live in the flesh, we are in slavery but when we serve each other in love, we are in freedom. Love is motivated by the joy of sharing our fullness but the works of the flesh are motivated by the desire to fill our emptiness. When the flesh/ego feels deep emptiness, it uses the means within its own power to fill that emptiness. On the other hand, sharing love in service is the overflow of one's fullness. When God fills the emptiness of our hearts with forgiveness, love and hope, he frees us from the bondage to accumulate things and manipulate people.

LEADER: 1Corinthians 8:9 says, "*But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak*"

- True freedom, transcends cultures, nations and even history itself. Am I still bound by differences and biases of any sort?
- How do I value and protect my personal space, my rights, privileges, freedom and those of others? What is my attitude towards co-responsibility?
- Am I ready to forgo my comforts for the common good of all?

In 1Cor 6:12, St Paul says, "*Everything is permissible for me*" - *but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me" - but I will not be mastered by anything.*

(Pause..... for Moments of Silent Self- Examination)

HYMN: 438 We stand for God and for His glory *(Joyful Celebration)* Or any other.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS:

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the Holy Father's intention for the month, which is for small businesses, that small and medium sized business; in the midst of economic and social crisis, may find ways to continue operating, and serving their communities. **R/-**

Lord we pray for our country and its leaders that they may have the wisdom and grace to govern the people entrusted to their care with justice, integrity and peace. **R/-**

True slavery is the bondage of the will and heart, captivity of the soul. We pray that every citizen of our country, irrespective of caste, creed and religion will enjoy rights enshrined in our constitution and also faithfully exercise their duty. **R/-**

We pray for freedom of worship, freedom of the press, freedom to pursue opportunities and dreams, freedom of speech, and various other ways in which liberty is experienced in our country. **R/-**

We pray for peace and harmony among people of every nation, especially in the warring nations of Russia and Ukraine that they may soon find a peaceful and amicable solution and for Sri Lanka that the ongoing political and economic crisis may end. **R/-**

This month of July, we also pray for all our Priests, especially for those who had administered us the Sacraments or priests whom we hold dear (Priests who are part of our family or friends circle). May they be richly blessed; never lacking divine strength and grace in their priestly ministry and personal life. **R/-**

BENEDICTION

THE DIVINE PRAISES (*For Benediction*)

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in His angels and in His Saints.

CLOSING HYMN: 121 Father so loving, magnificent God. (*Joyful Celebration*) or any other.

- *Commission for Liturgy*
Archdiocese of Bombay

