

ARCHDIOCESE WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Liturgy for Women's Day Celebration

9th March 2025

Opening Introduction:

As we gather together, in the sacred presence of the Lord, to observe and celebrate International Women's Day, during this significant year of grace – the Jubilee Year, we are called to reflect on the theme: “For ALL women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.” As we partake in this Eucharist now, let us pray to Mary our Mother, who is the role-model of every woman, that like her, every woman may be blessed. Let us thank God for this wondrous blessing of ‘Women’ and for their presence in our lives. Let us gratefully acknowledge the graces and gifts He has so generously bestowed on them.

Readings:

First Reading:	Book of Deuteronomy 26: 4-10
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalms 91: 1-2, 10-15
Second Reading:	Romans 10: 8-13
Gospel:	Luke 4: 1-13

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL:

Celebrant:

As Sisters and brothers, united in Faith and trust in God's enduring love and mercy, let us bring our needs to Him, confident that our prayers will be heard.

Response: LOVING FATHER, HEAR OUR PRAYER

We pray for our Holy Father, Bishops, Priests, Religious, that they may continue to uphold the dignity and value of all, with a special focus on protecting the girl-child and empowering women. Our response

We pray for all the nations of the world, that, there may be an end to global suffering and violence, especially where little girls and women become the target victims. Our Response.

We pray for every woman, that the grace of this special Jubilee Year, may reawaken in her, the yearning to be a Pilgrim of Hope, to herself first, and then to her family, the Church and Society at large. Our Response

We pray for the safety of women facing the evils of society in various forms, that the grace of the Jubilee Year may transform humanity, to respect and treat women, in a new light, as being a gift from God. Our Response.

We pray for all woman, that they may experience the power of God, to overcome temptations in this materialistic world and live a life of dignity, fulfilling their rightful role in society. Our Response

We pray for our personal intentions (Pause)..... Our Response.

Celebrant: Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus. Grant our petitions which we present to you with deep faith and hope in our hearts. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Homily tips:

Jesus, who has been out in the wilderness for forty days, has been experiencing a time of reflection. At his hungriest, most exhausted and most vulnerable moment, he is confronted with the promises of comfort, power and privilege. When Jesus is able to decline the temptations before him, the devil departs until a more opportune time. It sounds ominous, doesn't it? But Jesus doesn't react as one who needs to be protected from what may be lurking in the shadows. He moves closer to the Way of God and begins his ministry of teaching in the community.

Throughout the years, the church has used the season of Lent as a time for Christian reflection and contemplation. Those same promises of comfort, power and privilege are offered to us every day. They can tempt us to stay put, instead of stepping out in faith to follow.

How was Jesus able to turn down bread when his stomach must have been churning with hunger? He relied on a more reliable promise from God. Jesus knew God would protect him and show him a better Way. It requires endurance, persistence and commitment to follow God.

Today as we celebrate International Women's Day, we have to ask ourselves if we are truly following God's ways. In Genesis 1:25 we read that God made man and woman in His image and likeness giving them equal rights. But today we see how unjust the world is towards woman.

Few days ago, Pope Francis has appointed Sister Raffaella Petrini as the new President of the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State and President of the Governorate of Vatican City State. With this appointment, she becomes the first woman to hold the highest leadership position within the Vatican's administrative structure. Pope Francis in his own way is taking women forward, can we in our own way do the same.

As individuals, we can all take steps in our daily lives to positively impact women's advancement.

We can call out stereotypes, challenge discrimination, question bias, celebrate women's success, and so much more. Additionally, sharing our knowledge and encouragement with others is key. International Women's Day remains an important opportunity for elevating and amplifying the focus on gender equality.

We can join with other groups to deliver an array of effective strategies in many areas including:

- forging women's economic empowerment
- supporting women and girls into leadership and decision-making
- helping women and girls make informed decisions about their health
- providing women and girls with access to quality education and training
- elevating women and girl's participation and achievement in sport
- promoting creative and artistic talent of women and girls
- addressing further areas supporting the advancement of women and girls.

Let this Lent be fruitful by following Jesus closely and in our relationship with women, do what Jesus did. He treated women with respect and dignity, and he considered them to be equal to men. Happy Women's Day!