

PRAYER FOR LIVING

“God is love”

JUNE
YEAR A



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PRAYER FOR LIVING YEAR A

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Monday, 1st June, St. Justin.

2 Peter 1:2-7, Mark 12:1-12

Jesus began to speak to the chief priests, the scribes and the elders in parables, 'A man planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug out a trough for the winepress and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce from the vineyard. But they seized the man, thrashed him and sent him away empty-handed. Next he sent another servant to them; him they beat about the head and treated shamefully. And he sent another and him they killed; then a number of others, and they thrashed some and killed the rest. He had still someone left: his beloved son. He sent him to them last of all. "They will respect my son" he said. But those tenants said to each other, "This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours." So they seized him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. Now what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and make an end of the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this text of scripture: It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone. This was the Lord's doing and it is wonderful to see? And they would have liked to arrest him, because they realised that the parable was aimed at them, but they were afraid of the crowds. So they left him alone and went away.

Growing in virtues

In today's first reading, St. Peter encourages us to make the daily effort to "add goodness to the faith that you have, understanding to your goodness, self-control to your understanding, patience to your self-control, true devotion to your patience, kindness towards others to your devotion, and to this kindness, love." Faith is the foundation of all these virtues. It means trusting Jesus deeply, much like stepping out of a boat onto the stormy water when He says, "Come." Despite uncertainty and fear, we choose to focus on Him. When we are rooted in faith, we are moved to live for others and grow to become more like Christ.

In the Gospel, Jesus shares a parable about tenants who refuse to give the owner the fruit that rightfully belongs to him. Instead, they respond with rejection and violence. Like that owner, God has entrusted us with many gifts: our time, talents, relationships, and life experiences. He gives these not for us to keep for ourselves, but so that our lives may

bear good fruit. Today, we are invited to cultivate the virtues mentioned in the first reading, so that we become faithful stewards who use God's gifts well and can offer back to Him the true "harvest" of our lives.

Reflective question:

How is God inviting me to grow right now so that my life may bear good "fruit" for Him?

Tuesday, 2nd June, SS. Marcellinus & Peter.

2 Peter 3: 12-15, 17-18, Mark 12:13-17

The chief priests and the scribes and the elders sent to Jesus some Pharisees and some Herodians to catch him out in what he said. These came and said to him, 'Master, we know you are an honest man, that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you, and that you teach the way of God in all honesty. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay, yes or no?' Seeing through their hypocrisy he said to them, 'Why do you set this trap for me? Hand me a denarius and let me see it.' They handed him one and he said, 'Whose head is this? Whose name?' 'Caesar's' they told him. Jesus said to them, 'Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar - and to God what belongs to God'. This reply took them completely by surprise.

Bearing God's image of love

In today's first reading, St Peter reminds us of the importance of living "holy and saintly lives". We often think of holiness as something distant, unattainable or meant only for a select few. However, holiness is for all of us and is grounded in practical love. It involves letting God's way of loving, little by little, shape our own as we go about our daily activities.

In the Gospel, the religious leaders try to trap Jesus by asking Him a question about paying taxes to Caesar. He responds by saying, "Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar - and to God what belongs to God." We give to God what belongs to Him because we bear His image, and so, our whole being- heart, mind and strength-belongs to Him. Today, Jesus invites us to live with the constant awareness that we belong to God and to live intentionally, loving as He loves.

Reflective question:

In what concrete way can I “give to God what is God’s” today? (For example, through making a choice to be patient with someone, or by forming a healthy habit that shows my love for Him.)

Wednesday, 3rd June, SS. Charles Lwanga & Companions.**2 Timothy 1:1-3, 6-12, Mark 12:18-27**

Some Sadducees - who deny that there is a resurrection - came to Jesus and they put this question to him, ‘Master, we have it from Moses in writing, if a man’s brother dies leaving a wife but no child, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first married a wife and then died leaving no children. The second married the widow, and he too died leaving no children; with the third it was the same, and none of the seven left any children. Last of all the woman herself died. Now at the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be, since she had been married to all seven?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Is not the reason why you go wrong, that you understand neither the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, men and women do not marry; no, they are like the angels in heaven. Now about the dead rising again, have you never read in the Book of Moses, in the passage about the Bush, how God spoke to him and said: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? He is God, not of the dead, but of the living. You are very much mistaken.’

Fan into flame

In the first reading, St. Paul writes to Timothy, “*Fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power and love and self-control.*” Timothy has received a call and a mission, but St. Paul is worried that exhaustion, fear, rejection, and routine might weaken the fire of faith in him. He urges Timothy not to let his gift lie dormant, but to stir it up by remembering God’s call, facing fear with trust, and leaning on the Holy Spirit who is already at work in him. As we strive to fulfil our calling and mission as Christ’s disciples, we may face challenges, but let us embrace St. Paul’s message: the Spirit in us is not one of timidity, but He gives us the strength to love, serve, and remain faithful to the very end.

In the Gospel, Jesus, in responding to the Sadducees' question about marriage in the resurrection, says that God is "*not God of the dead, but of the living.*" We are people of the resurrection who belong to the God of the living. This identity helps us make daily choices that show our love for God. It allows us to live in freedom, being more loving and less anxious.

Reflective question:

What decision can I make today to show my love for the God of the living?

Thursday, 4th June, 9th Week in Ordinary Time.

2 Timothy 2: 8-15, Mark 12: 28-34

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken, said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God'. And after that no one dared to question him anymore.

Love God, love others

In today's Gospel, a scribe asks Jesus about the greatest commandment. Jesus responds with two inseparable commands: "*You are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. The second is this: You should love your neighbour as yourself.*" Love for God is not just an inner feeling; it is expressed in concrete love for people.

Today, we are called to put love into action. It is less about what we feel or say, and more about the choices we make. When we show up for someone who is lonely, listen without judgment, forgive rather than hold on to resentment, and share our time and resources with those in need, we show love. In these small, concrete actions, whether at home, at work, or on the streets, we make our love for God visible.

Reflective question:

What is one small way I can show love today to someone specific, as my response to God's love for me?

Friday, 5th June, St. Boniface.**2 Timothy 3:10-17, Mark 12:35-37**

At that time, while teaching in the Temple, Jesus said, 'How can the scribes maintain that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, moved by the Holy Spirit, said: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand and I will put your enemies under your feet. David himself calls him Lord, in what way then can he be his son?' And the great majority of the people heard this with delight.'

Jesus, my Lord

St. Paul writes to Timothy, "...you know my faith, my patience and my love; my constancy and the persecutions and hardships that came to me..." St. Paul highlights that following Christ involves enduring persecution and hardship. Despite his struggles, he affirms, "*the Lord has rescued me from every one of them.*" While suffering is inevitable, we can trust in God's faithful presence with us. St. Paul also urges Timothy to stay rooted in scripture because it is "*inspired by God*" and able to teach, correct, and guide us in living a life doing good. In times of confusion and hostility, the Word of God is our steady and firm foundation.

In the Gospel, Jesus uses Psalm 110, where David calls the Messiah "*my Lord*", to show that the Messiah is more than just David's descendant; he is also David's Lord. What does this mean for us today? Jesus is our Lord, and He is above every human tradition and leader. To accept Jesus as our Lord means allowing His Word to shape our hearts and minds, challenge our assumptions and judgments, and reorient our life priorities.

Reflective question:

How can I allow Jesus to be my Lord, who has the right to guide me and govern my heart and choices?

Saturday, 6th June, St. Norbert
2 Timothy 4:1-8, Mark 12:38-44

In his teaching, Jesus said, 'Beware of the scribes who like to walk about in long robes, to be greeted obsequiously in the market squares, to take the front seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at banquets; these are the men who swallow the property of widows, while making a show of lengthy prayers. The more severe will be the sentence they receive.' He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the treasury, and many of the rich put in a great deal. A poor widow came and put in two small coins, the equivalent of a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, this poor widow has put more in than all who have contributed to the treasury; for they have all put in money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in everything she possessed, all she had to live on'.

A life fully given

In the first reading, St. Paul looks back at his life and says, "My life is already poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought the good fight to the end..." He sees his whole life as a sacrifice lovingly poured out for God, rather than something to hold onto tightly. His confidence is not in worldly success, but in remaining faithful to God.

In the Gospel, Jesus notices a widow dropping her two small coins into the treasury and praises her. Others give from their surplus; she gives from the little that she has. Like St. Paul, she holds nothing back. Although her offering is small, it reflects her total trust in God. God sees and values the heart behind the gift, rather than its size. Today, these two readings challenge us to consider how much we offer ourselves to God. We can be like St. Paul, dedicating our lives to serving His mission, or we can perform small, hidden acts of simple generosity like the widow. In both cases, it is love that makes the gift complete.

Reflective question:

How is God asking me to give my time, attention, or resources to Him and others today?

Sunday, 7th June, Corpus Christi.

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16, 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, John 6:51-58

Jesus said to the Jews: 'I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world. Then the Jews started arguing with one another: 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' they said. Jesus replied: I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me. This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live forever.'

One bread, one body

In the second reading from 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, St. Paul reminds us that the Eucharist is not only personal, but it is also communal: *"The blessing cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ. The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf."* Each time we receive Communion, we unite ourselves with Christ and with those around us. We cannot receive the Eucharist while dividing ourselves from others. The *"one bread"* calls us to seek unity, to bridge differences, to avoid gossip and division.

In the Gospel, Jesus says, *"I am the living bread...the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world."* Jesus gives Himself totally to us so that we may receive the nourishment necessary to build communion and live as one body, reconciled with God and with one another.

Reflective question:

How can I strengthen unity rather than create division after receiving the Eucharist?

Monday, 8th June, 10th Week of Ordinary Time.

1 Kings 17:1-6, Matthew 5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went onto the mountain. And when he was seated his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: How blessed are the poor in spirit: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are the gentle: they shall have the earth as inheritance. Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognised as children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven; this is how they persecuted the prophets before you."

True happiness

In today's Gospel, Jesus shows us what true happiness is, which differs greatly from the happiness defined by the world: Blessed are those who know they need God, not the self-sufficient. Blessed are the gentle, those who mourn, and those who seek justice: they long for what is right. Blessed are the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers: those who let God's compassion, honesty, and peace flow through them. Blessed are the persecuted: those who stay faithful to Christ even when it is hard.

Jesus lived the Beatitudes in His own life. He invites us to follow Him and let our lives reflect the Beatitudes. Although walking this path may seem like a loss at times, Jesus calls it blessed because it opens the door to God's Kingdom, both in this life and in the life to come.

Reflective questions:

Which Beatitude speaks most to my life situation today? Why?

Tuesday, 9th June, St. Ephrem.

1 Kings 17:7-16, Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples, 'You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people's feet. You are light for the

world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.'

Salt and light

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, "*You are the salt of the earth*" and "*You are the light of the world.*" He does not say, "*Try to be,*" but "*You are.*" By doing so, He is affirming their inherent value and purpose. Today, He tells us the same- "*You are the salt and light of the world.*"

Salt helps preserve food and gives flavour. Without it, food can taste bland and spoil. As "*salt,*" we are called to bring God's loving presence to the world and keep His love from decaying. We can do so by living honestly, adding kindness to our words, and helping the vulnerable people around us. Light helps us to see and shows us the way. As "*light,*" we need to let Christ's life in us shine through, showing integrity, compassion, forgiveness, and courage. Our good works are not to draw attention to ourselves but to lead others to give praise to God. Today, God wants us to be salt and light wherever we are.

Reflective question:

How can I be salt and light so that people can taste and see God's presence of love through me?

Wednesday, 10th June, 10th Week in Ordinary Time.

1 Kings 18:20-39, Matthew 5:17-19

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them. In truth I tell you, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke, is to disappear from the Law until all its purpose is achieved. Therefore, anyone who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but the person who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of Heaven.'

Jesus, the fulfilment of the Law

In today's Gospel, Jesus says he has not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them by showing their deepest meaning. In Him, all that God has spoken becomes flesh: mercy, honesty, justice, compassion, fidelity, and love. These are no longer just rules but embody the essence of Jesus Himself.

We are invited to allow Jesus' way of living to be the Law that shapes our daily choices. How can we do this? We can put mercy into action by actively forgiving others. We can be honest by telling the truth, even when it goes against protecting our image or going against what others want to hear. We can be people of justice by speaking out when someone is treated unjustly. We let compassion flow through us when we offer to help those in need. We can show fidelity in our relationships, work and prayer even when it is difficult. We can choose to love by asking ourselves, "*What would Jesus do in this situation?*" May we live out our faith and become a true reflection of Christ.

Reflective question:

How is Jesus inviting me to live according to His way of life more concretely today?

Thursday, 11th June, St. Barnabas.

Acts 11:21-26, 13:1-3, Matthew 10:7-13

Jesus said to his apostles, 'As you go, proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. You received without charge, give without charge. Provide yourselves with no gold or silver, not even with a few coppers for your purses, with no haversack for the journey or spare tunic or footwear or a staff, for the workman deserves his keep. Whatever town or village you go into, ask for someone trustworthy and stay with him until you leave. As you enter his house, salute it, and if the house deserves it, let your peace descend upon it; if it does not, let your peace come back to you.'

The mission continues today

Today, we celebrate the memorial of St. Barnabas. In our first reading, we encounter Barnabas being sent to the new community in Antioch. There, he witnesses the work of God among the people and rejoices. He

encourages the Christians to remain faithful to God with heartfelt devotion. Wherever he goes, he brings peace and encouragement. Like Barnabas, we are called to do the same: to encourage others in their faith and allow our words and presence to bring peace into our relationships, homes, communities, and workplaces.

In the Gospel, Jesus sends the disciples, and us today, with a clear mission: “*Proclaim the kingdom of heaven is close at hand...*” This is the Good News we need to share with those around us: God is not far away; His reign, His presence, is already at work in every act of faithful service, in every quiet choice for justice, in every sincere prayer to Him, in every step towards someone lonely. Today, let us trust in the nearness of God, depend on Him and bring peace to every person we meet.

Reflective question:

Who is someone I can encourage, bring peace to, or pray for so they can remain faithful to God?

Friday, 12th June, The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Deuteronomy 7:6-11, 1 John 4:7-16, Matthew 11:25-30

Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

Come to the God of love

In today's second reading, St. John reveals the deepest truth about God: “*God is love*”. Love is not just an action from God, but it is His very essence, His very being. St. John continues, “*Anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him.*” To live in love means letting God's life flow through us, expressed in patience, forgiveness, care for the weak, honesty in relationships, and kindness in our words. When we put love into practice, we draw closest to God's heart.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us, “*Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.*” This God who is love has a face and a name: Jesus, who calls us to come to Him. He provides us with rest- a rest not about escaping life's realities, but about the profound peace that comes from being loved by Him. Resting in His love lightens our burdens, as we no longer carry them alone. Though we still face worries, we can lean on His strength rather than rely only on our own.

Reflective question:

What burden am I carrying today that I need to place into the hands of Jesus, trusting the God of love who invites me, “*Come to me*”?

Saturday, 13th June, The Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Isaiah 61:9-11, Luke 2:41-51

Every year, Jesus' parents used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him, they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere. Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied, 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand what he meant. He then went down with them, came to Nazareth, and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart.

Imitating Mary's heart

Today, we celebrate the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the Gospel, we see Mary and Joseph anxiously search for their lost son, Jesus, for three days before finding Him in the Temple. Mary expresses her concern to Jesus with the words of any parent, “*My child, why have you done this to us?*” Jesus responds, “*Did you not know that I must be*

busy with my Father's affairs?" His answer likely caused her pain and confusion, yet she remains trusting in God and stores all these things in her heart.

The heart of Mary is not spared from sadness, uncertainty or fear. It is a heart that meets them with trusting faith. Today, we are invited to respond to life as Mother Mary did. When we find that Jesus is "lost" in our lives, we keep on searching for Him. When we are confused and scared, we do not give up but keep ourselves rooted in prayer. When we worry about a loved one in our family, we place them in the Father's care. May we embrace each joy and challenge with a heart full of trust.

Reflective question:

Do I struggle to have a trusting, pondering heart like Mary's, due to my tendency to control and give in to fear?

Sunday, 14th June, 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Exodus 19:2-6, Romans 5:6-11, Matthew 9:36-10:8

When Jesus saw the crowds, he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers to his harvest.' He summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to drive them out and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of illness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon who is known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who was also his betrayer. These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them as follows: 'Do not make your way to gentile territory, and do not enter any Samaritan town; go instead to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And as you go, proclaim that the kingdom of Heaven is close at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those suffering from virulent skin diseases, drive out devils. You received without charge, give without charge.'

A mission of compassion

Today's Gospel passage begins with this statement: "*When Jesus saw the crowds, he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and*

dejected, like sheep without a shepherd...” Jesus looks at the crowds, and his response to them is not indifference or annoyance, but deep compassion. He sees them being harassed by circumstances beyond their control, such as sickness, oppression by the Romans and heavy religious burdens. Jesus feels their pain as if it were His own and is thus moved to help them. The heart of Jesus is always towards human weakness. It is a call for us to desire the same heart of Jesus that is moved by people’s suffering, rather than remaining indifferent.

Out of compassion, Jesus tells His disciples to pray for more labourers for the mission and immediately sends them out as the answer to His prayer. Today, Jesus sends us out to be living signs that God’s kingdom is near. We may not perform dramatic miracles, but we are called to show God’s care and love. Today, may we see people with compassion and go with His strength to be living signs of His presence in the world.

Reflective question:

Where is God inviting me to reflect His presence, through justice, mercy, generosity, reconciliation, or speaking the truth?

Monday, 15th June, 11th Week in Ordinary Time.

1 Kings 21:1-16, Matthew 5:38-42

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You have learnt how it was said: Eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you: offer the wicked man no resistance. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; if a man takes you to law and would have your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to anyone who asks, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away.'

To respond with love in the face of injustice

Today, Jesus presents a challenging teaching that is often misunderstood: “*Offer the wicked man no resistance.*” This does not mean that He is encouraging us to endure abuse, remain in harmful situations, or allow injustice to persist. Rather, Jesus calls us to respond to evil with love by establishing clear boundaries, firmly saying “no” to wrongdoing, and not holding on to bitterness and resentment. Look at Jesus, who walked away when people tried to harm Him (Luke 4:28–30), strongly confronted hypocrisy and oppression of the religious leaders

(Matthew 23:1-36), and when struck during His trial, He calmly challenged the injustice (John 18:23).

The important thing is to take care that pride and hatred do not take root in our hearts. We are called to resist injustice and wrongdoing in a way that reflects the heart of God: with truthfulness, courage, and without seeking revenge.

Reflective question:

Where is Jesus asking me to firmly say “no” to harm or unfairness without letting bitterness or hatred grow in my heart?

Tuesday, 16th June, 11th Week in Ordinary Time.

1 Kings 21:17-29, Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You have learnt how it was said: You must love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say this to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be sons of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike. For if you love those who love you, what right have you to claim any credit? Even the tax collectors do as much, do they not? And if you save your greetings for your brothers, are you doing anything exceptional? Even the pagans do as much, do they not? You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

By our love, they will know we are Jesus' disciples

The true sign that we follow Jesus is not that we know the Creed or all the teachings of the Church by heart, but that we truly love one another. It is by the quality of our love that we show we are Christians, disciples of Christ. It is natural to love our own family and friends. But Christian love goes further. It means showing care, concern, and kindness even to those we do not like, those who oppose us, or those who have hurt us. This may feel impossible, even “not human,” yet this is the love that makes us more truly human. It stretches our hearts, helps us grow, and leads us to a mature love, not just the love of feelings or family ties, but the love that makes us resemble our Father in heaven.

Jesus calls us to grow in this mature love by opening our hearts to every person we meet, including those we like and those we struggle to love. When we do this, people will recognise that we belong to Him.

Reflective question:

When people look at my life, do they recognise that I am a disciple of Jesus?

Wednesday, 17th June, 11th Week in Ordinary Time.

2 Kings 2:1, 6-14, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

Pleasing God alone

In today's Gospel, Jesus says, "*Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice...So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you...And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites...When you fast, do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do...*" It is easy to want to do good things just to be noticed by others. However, Jesus reminds us that if we only want to be seen and admired, the "praise" we get from others will be our only reward.

As we pray today, let us examine our hearts and consider the motivation behind what we do. When our motivation is to love God, not to seek approval from others, then our hidden service, unnoticed kindness and quiet sacrifices become beautiful and precious in His eyes. God, “*who sees all that is done in secret,*” is the One we want to please.

Reflective question:

What is one hidden act of love I can do and offer to God, without seeking others’ praise?

Thursday, 18th June, 11th Week in Ordinary Time.

Ecclesiasticus 48: 1-14, Matthew 6:7-15

Jesus said to his disciples, 'In your prayers do not babble as the pagans do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard. Do not be like them; your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So you should pray like this: 'Our Father in heaven, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us. And do not put us to the test, but save us from the evil one. Yes, if you forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours; but if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive your failings either.'

Our Father

In today’s Gospel, Jesus teaches us not to “*babble*” in prayer like the pagans, as God already knows our needs. Prayer is not about convincing Him but about opening our hearts to Him with trust and love.

Jesus then gives us the Our Father prayer. He begins by calling God “*Our Father,*” reminding us of our connection to a larger family and reminding us that we are never alone. “*May your name be held holy*” means that God be loved in our thoughts, words, relationships and choices. “*Your kingdom come, your will be done*” signifies surrendering our plans and allowing God to guide our daily lives. “*Give us today our daily bread*” shows that we trust God to give us what we need today and live without fear of tomorrow. “*Forgive us...as we have been forgiven*” is a powerful reminder that the mercy we receive from God must be passed on to others. “*Do not put us to the test*” expresses our desire for God to

guide us in walking toward Him rather than away from Him. May we truly mean what we say in the Our Father prayer.

Reflective question:

When I pray the Our Father, do I really mean the words, or do I just say them out of habit?

Friday, 19th June, SS Philip Minh & Companions.

2 Kings 11:1-4, 9-18, 20, Matthew 6:19-23

Jesus said to his disciples. "Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and woodworm destroy them and thieves can break in and steal. But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor woodworm destroys them and thieves cannot break in and steal. For wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be too. The lamp of the body is the eye. It follows that if your eye is clear, your whole body will be filled with light. But if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be in darkness. If then, the light inside you is darkened, what darkness that will be!"

Storing treasures in heaven

Jesus tells us, "*For wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be too,*" because He wants us to look at what we are truly living for. We often accumulate treasures on earth, including money, comfort, success, and reputation. While these things are not inherently bad, it is important to recognise that they are temporary and can be lost, stolen, or destroyed. The more we hold onto things as our sources of security, the more restless we become.

Jesus invites us to store up treasures in heaven by doing acts of love that nobody sees, by being generous to the poor, by forgiving someone from the heart, by staying faithful in our friendships, and by trusting God in hard times. These are treasures that will never fade. Every action, word, and prayer done with love for God here on earth shapes our hearts for eternity.

Reflective question:

Do the words I say, the daily choices I make, and the way I use my time and resources indicate where my true treasure lies?

Saturday, 20th June, 11th Week in Ordinary Time.

2 Chronicles 24:17-25, Matthew 6:24-34

Jesus said to his disciples, 'No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or be attached to the first and despise the second. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money. That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and what you are to wear. Surely life is more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? Can any of you, however much you worry, add one single cubit to your span of life? And why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his royal robes was clothed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the wild flowers growing in the field which are there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you who have so little faith? So do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What are we to wear?" It is the gentiles who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.'

Worry less, trust more

Jesus starts today's Gospel passage by stating, "No one can be the slave of two masters." Jesus knows that we tend to worry about our health, money, the future, our work, and our family. He calls us to trust by reminding us that we cannot be slaves to both God and money. We need to choose which one of them we allow to shape our hearts. If we serve money and material possessions, we will constantly feel anxious about wanting more and fearful of losing what we have. However, if we serve God, we find peace and learn to trust in His care.

Worry brings tension to our lives, constantly pulling us toward the uncertain future we cannot control. Trust brings us to the present and enables us to perceive that God is with us today, walking alongside us. Jesus tells us, "Set your hearts on His kingdom first," which means we need to put God first and central in our lives and trust that He knows

what we need. When we look to Him first, our hearts gradually begin to let go of fear.

Reflective questions:

What do I worry about most? What do these worries show about who or what I really trust?

Sunday, 21st June, Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Jeremiah 20:10-13, Romans 5:12-15, Matthew 10:26-33

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Do not be afraid of them, therefore. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows. So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

Do not be afraid

Today's first and Gospel readings speak of moments when we feel afraid and misunderstood while trying to stay faithful to God. In the first reading, we hear the Prophet Jeremiah express his fears as he looks around and sees only enemies, mockery, and betrayal. Yet, in the midst of his struggles, he says, "*the Lord is at my side, a mighty hero...Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord.*" He turns to God and depends on Him for strength. Today, when we feel misunderstood and lonely, we can follow Jeremiah's example by trusting in God. While our circumstances may not change, we find the inner strength to keep going.

In the Gospel, Jesus reassures His disciples and all of us by saying, "*Do not be afraid.*" We are precious in the eyes of God, who knows us deeply. He understands our inner worries and fears, and He cares for us with unwavering love. God will never abandon us. Let us seek our safety in Him.

Reflective question:

In what way is Jesus inviting me today to trust Him more and to share my faith with courage?

Monday, 22nd June, St. Pauline of Nola, Ss. John Fisher and Thomas More**2 Kings 17:5-8, 13-15, 18, Matthew 7:1-5**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; because the judgements you give are the judgements you will get, and the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How dare you say to your brother, "Let me take the splinter out of your eye", when all the time there is a plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.'

Judge not

Today's Gospel passage challenges us to look honestly at ourselves before we look at others. Jesus tells us, *"Do not judge, and you will not be judged...Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own?"* Very often, we judge others by noticing the *"splinter"* of small mistakes and weaknesses of others, while ignoring our own *"plank"* of attitudes and habits.

Jesus invites us to examine our own hearts first, before correcting others for their faults. We need to let God reveal our *"plank"* and allow Him to transform us so we can grow in humility and mercy. May we be slow to criticise or speak badly about someone, and instead choose to let Him change what needs to be changed in us.

Reflective question:

What is one concrete *"plank"* in my life that I need to allow God to transform?

Tuesday, 23rd June, 12th Week in Ordinary Time.**2 Kings 19:9-11, 14-21, 31-35, 36, Matthew 7:6,12-14**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls in front of pigs, or they may trample them and then turn on you and tear you to pieces. So always treat others as you would like

them to treat you; that is the meaning of the Law and the Prophets. Enter by the narrow gate, since the road that leads to perdition is wide and spacious, and many take it; but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.'

The challenging teachings of Jesus

In the Gospel, Jesus states three important points for us to ponder. He says, *“Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls in front of pigs...”* These *“holy”* things and *“pearls”* are the precious things that God has given us: our relationship with Him, our faith, His Word and the insights we receive in prayer and through life. While we are called to share our faith, Jesus cautions us against pushing or arguing in ways that could lead these gifts to be mocked or reduced to an argument. Our role is to witness with patience, allowing God to change hearts in His time and way.

Jesus also gives us the Golden Rule: *“always treat others as you would like them to treat you,”* encouraging us to step out of ourselves and see things from the other person’s view. It makes us ask ourselves, *“If I were in their place, how would I want to be treated?”* and, by doing so, we move from making love a theory to a practice. Lastly, Jesus speaks of the narrow gate, which represents living the Gospel values of forgiveness, honesty, generosity, and faithfulness. While challenging, His words guide us toward a purposeful life.

Reflective question:

How can I intentionally choose to walk the narrow path of Jesus?

Wednesday, 24th June, The Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

Isaiah 49:1-6, Acts 13:22-26, Luke 1:57-66, 80

The time came for Elizabeth to have her child, and she gave birth to a son; and when her neighbours and relations heard that the Lord had shown her so great a kindness, they shared her joy. Now on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother spoke up. 'No,' she said 'he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'But no one in your family has that name', and made signs to his father to find out what he wanted him called. The father asked for a writing tablet and wrote, 'His name is John'. And they were all astonished. At that instant, his power of speech returned,

and he spoke and praised God. All their neighbours were filled with awe and the whole affair was talked about throughout the hill country of Judaea. All those who heard of it treasured it in their hearts. 'What will this child turn out to be?' they wondered. And indeed the hand of the Lord was with him. Meanwhile, the child grew up and his spirit matured. And he lived out in the wilderness until the day he appeared openly to Israel.

Called and chosen

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Birth of St John the Baptist. In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah says, "*The Lord called me before I was born, from my mother's womb he pronounced my name...*" This reminds us that God's call is not an afterthought. Long before anyone knew us, God did. He called us, chose us, and gave our lives a purpose. In the Gospel, we see this clearly in John's life. Even before he is born, he is promised and named by God. When the relatives want to name him Zechariah, after his father, both parents insist that his name is "*John*," just as the angel had said. His identity is not shaped by family expectations or custom, but by God, who sets him apart to prepare the way for the Lord and to point others to Jesus.

Like John the Baptist, God also calls us by name. He chooses us and gives our lives meaning. We are not meant just to exist or drift through life. In our own families, workplaces, and communities, our deepest purpose is the same: to help others come closer to Christ through the way we live, speak, and love each day.

Reflective question:

How is God using my life to help others see Jesus?

Thursday, 25th June, 12th Week in Ordinary Time.

2 Kings 24:8-17, Matthew 7:21-29

Jesus said to his disciples: 'It is not those who say to me, "Lord, Lord", who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. When the day comes many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, cast out demons in your name, work many miracles in your name?" Then I shall tell them to their faces: I have never known you; away from me, you evil men!' 'Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be

like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!' Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say, and his teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, and not like their own scribes.'

Jesus, the strong foundation

In today's Gospel, Jesus says, *"It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord, who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven."* Doing religious activities alone is not enough; what Jesus wants from us is a life guided by obedience to His teachings. He goes on to give the image of two builders. Both hear his words, but the difference is in what they do next. The wise person hears and acts, and by doing so, he builds his house on rock. When storms of trials and crises come, the house still stands. The foolish person hears but does not act, and thus, builds on sand. When the same storms hit, the house collapses.

Today, the message for us is to understand that discipleship is practical. The choices we make, such as choosing to forgive someone, being truthful, or making time for God, reveal whether we are building our foundations on rock or sand. Let us take small steps today to start building our foundation on Jesus, our solid rock.

Reflective question:

What small step can I take today to start building on Jesus, my solid rock?

Friday, 26th June, 12th Week in Ordinary Time.

2 Kings 25: 1-12, Matthew 8:1-4

After Jesus had come down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. A leper now came up and bowed low in front of him. 'Sir,' he said 'if you want to, you can cure me.' Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him and said, 'Of course I want to! Be cured!' And his leprosy was cured at once. Then Jesus said to him, 'Mind you do not tell anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest and make the offering prescribed by Moses, as evidence for them'.

The tender love of Jesus

In the Gospel passage, a man with leprosy approaches Jesus, kneeling before Him and saying, “*Sir, if you want to, you can cure me.*” Jesus does not turn away from him, but he stretches His hand, touches the man, saying, “*Of course I want to! Be cured!*” Through His touch, Jesus conveys the message, “*Be cured, because you matter and are precious to God.*” This shows the tenderness of Jesus.

Today, we can bring our “leprosy”, the ugly and difficult parts of our lives, to Jesus. This includes the fear that paralyses us, the wound we cannot forgive, and the weakness we face. He wants to touch these hidden areas of our lives through the power of His Word, the sacraments and the quiet moments of prayer, and make us whole again. In the same way we experience the tender love of Jesus, we are also called to show the same tenderness to others, allowing ourselves to be moved by their struggles and becoming the hands and heart of Jesus for them each day.

Reflective question:

How can I let Jesus' tenderness flow through me to others?

Saturday, 27th June, St. Cyril of Alexandria

Lamentations 2:2, 10-14, 18-19, Matthew 8:5-17

When Jesus went into Capernaum a centurion came up and pleaded with him. ‘Sir,’ he said ‘my servant is lying at home paralysed, and in great pain.’ ‘I will come myself and cure him’ said Jesus. The centurion replied, ‘Sir, I am not worthy to have you under my roof; just give the word and my servant will be cured. For I am under authority myself, and have soldiers under me; and I say to one man: Go, and he goes; to another: Come here, and he comes; to my servant: Do this, and he does it. ‘When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, ‘I tell you solemnly, nowhere in Israel have I found faith like this. And I tell you that many will come from east and west to take their places with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven; but the subjects of the kingdom will be turned out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.’ And to the centurion Jesus said, ‘Go back, then; you have believed, so let this be done for you’. And the servant was cured at that moment. And going into Peter’s house Jesus found Peter’s mother-in-law in bed with fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

That evening they brought him many who were possessed by devils. He cast out the spirits with a word and cured all who were sick. This was to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah: He took our sicknesses away and carried our diseases for us.

Jesus, the healer

In today's Gospel, Jesus encounters three groups of people: the centurion, Peter's mother-in-law and the sick individuals who are brought to Him. Firstly, the centurion cares for his servant and believes that Jesus can heal him with just a word. He tells Jesus, "*...just give the word and my servant will be cured.*" Jesus is amazed by his faith, which trusts in who He is and what He can do. We too can bring others to Jesus in prayer, trusting His Word is enough. Next, Peter's mother-in-law is sick with a fever. Jesus sees her and is compassionate towards her situation. He touches her hand and heals her. Immediately, she gets up and serves. Likewise, experiencing Jesus' love moves us to serve others. Finally, many people bring their sick friends and family to Jesus, and He heals them. As Isaiah states, "*He took our sickness away and carried our diseases for us.*" Jesus does not distance Himself from us. With trust, we bring our burdens to Him and know He will carry them for us, offering us comfort and support.

Today, let us allow Jesus to encounter us where we are. His presence provides us with strength, helping us to journey through our challenges with peace and hope.

Reflective question:

Is there someone I can entrust to Jesus today?

Sunday, 28th June, 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16, Romans 6:3-4, 8-11, Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me. Anyone who welcomes a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man will have a holy man's reward. If

anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'

Discipleship

Today, Jesus speaks clearly and directly to us about priorities and discipleship. He tells us, *"Anyone who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me..."* Jesus is not asking us to love our families any less. Instead, He is asking us to place Him at the centre of our lives and to love Him first. When Jesus is at the centre, His love flows through us to others, allowing us to love them more authentically, free from fear, control, and neediness.

Jesus continues by saying, *"Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me."* The "cross" here refers to the daily challenge of choosing to live according to His values and His way of love as His disciples. This often involves making difficult choices, especially when it conflicts with our desire for comfort, our tendency to speak harshly or our habit of holding grudges. The cross we are called to carry is not necessarily big and dramatic suffering, but rather the small, concrete actions we take to let go of our pride, selfishness, and convenience. By doing so, we allow Christ's love to take root and grow within us.

Reflective question:

In what concrete situation is Jesus inviting me today to *"take up my cross"* by choosing His way of love?

Monday, 29th June, SS. Peter & Paul.

Acts 12:1-11, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18, Matthew 16:13-19

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets'. 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said 'the Son of the living God'. Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out

against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.'

God's love goes beyond our mistakes

Today we celebrate the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. In the Gospel, when Jesus asks, "*Who do you say I am?*", Peter answers at once, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" Jesus knows Peter's impulsiveness and his fear, yet He still entrusts him with the mission of building up the Church. Even after Peter's denial, Jesus forgives him and makes him a shepherd of His flock.

In the second reading, Paul looks back on his life and can say, "*I have fought the good fight, I have run the race to the finish, I have kept the faith.*" He knows that it is God's mercy that has forgiven his past as a persecutor of Christians. His failures do not stop God from calling and sending him to preach the Gospel. This feast reminds us that God's love is greater than our fears and our past. He can work through our weaknesses and mistakes. What matters is that we keep turning back to Jesus and seek to remain faithful to Him to the end.

Reflective question:

Where is Jesus inviting me to trust that He can use my weaknesses, as He did with Saints Peter and Paul, to help others and spread the Gospel?

Tuesday, 30th June, First Martyrs of the Church of Rome

Amos 3:1-8, 4:11-12, Matthew 8:23-27

Jesus got into the boat followed by his disciples. Without warning a storm broke over the lake, so violent that the waves were breaking right over the boat. But he was asleep. So they went to him and woke him saying, 'Save us, Lord, we are going down!' And he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened, you men of little faith?' And with that he stood up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and all was calm again. The men were astounded and said, 'Whatever kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him.'

Do not be afraid

In today's Gospel, Jesus and His disciples get into a boat and set off across the lake. During their journey, they are suddenly faced with a

violent storm. The disciples are filled with fear, worried that their boat will capsize. This scene offers us comfort. It shows that having Jesus in our "boat" does not guarantee a life free from storms. Even with Him by our side, we still encounter pain, brokenness, and disappointment. What truly matters is not the absence of storms, but His presence in the midst of them.

Jesus sleeping in the boat is not a sign that He does not care, but it is a sign of His deep trust in the Father. He knows that His life and mission are in God's hands. Because He trusts completely, He is not controlled by fear. His sleep shows a heart that is at peace, even in the midst of the storm. Today, Jesus calls us to trust in Him by honestly bringing our worries to Him and believing that, even when He seems silent, He is with us and will never let us down.

Reflective question:

What is preventing me from trusting Jesus more?

