

Prayer for Living  
Daily Reflections  
Liturgical Year B



Why are you so frightened?  
Have you still no faith?

SR. SANDRA SEOW  
VERBUM DEI MISSIONARIES

# **PRAYER FOR LIVING YEAR B**

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**Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> June, St. Justin Martyr**  
**Jude 1:17, 20-25, Mark 11:27-33**

*Jesus and his disciples came to Jerusalem, and as Jesus was walking in the Temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, and they said to him, 'What authority have you for acting like this? Or who gave you authority to act like this?' Jesus said to them, 'And I will ask you a question, just one; answer me and I will tell you my authority for acting like this. John's baptism, what was its origin, heavenly or human? Answer me that.' And they argued this way among themselves, 'If we say heavenly, he will say, "Then why did you refuse to believe him?" But dare we say human?' -- they had the people to fear, for everyone held that John had been a real prophet. So their reply to Jesus was, 'We do not know.' And Jesus said to them, 'Nor will I tell you my authority for acting like this.'*

Jesus, our authority

*"You must use your most holy faith as your foundation and build on that, praying in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves within the love of God...."* (1<sup>st</sup> reading). Let these words of St. Jude remind us that we must be faithful in our faith journey. Faith is a relationship with Jesus in which we entrust ourselves to Him. His life-giving presence in us shapes our values and leads us in how we live and love others. Thus, having faith as the bedrock of our lives involves a daily determination to seek Jesus moment by moment and be aware of His loving presence close to us.

In the gospel, the religious leaders were threatened by Jesus and wanted to know where his authority came from. We know that Jesus' authority was rooted in the reality that He was God's beloved son and God was at work in and through him. Jesus is our authority. He is the Lord of our lives. Today, let Jesus shape our lives and direct us in what we say and do. Following Him, we will experience the freedom of being God's beloved children.

**Reflective question:**

Is Jesus the supreme authority, the Lord of my life?

**Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, Corpus Christi.**

**Exodus 24:3-8, Hebrews 9:11-15, Mark 14:12-16, 22-26**

*On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to Jesus, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, "The Master says: Where is the room for me to eat the Passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.' The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover. And as they were eating he took bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. 'Take it,' he said, 'this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he handed it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them, 'This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for many. In truth I tell you, I shall never drink wine any more until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.' After the psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives.*

From the table of the Lord to His mission field

In the gospel, the disciples were unsure where they were supposed to go to prepare the Passover meal. Little did they know that the Passover meal would open up events that would eventually lead them to go out to the world and bring the good news of Christ. Each time we partake in the Eucharistic meal, we are empowered by His presence in us to go out and bring Him and His peace and love to our family members, friends, neighbours, etc.

Let the words of Pope Francis speak to us: *"In the Eucharist, we contemplate and worship the God of love. The Lord who breaks no one, yet allows himself to be broken. The Lord who does not demand sacrifices but sacrifices himself. The Lord who asks nothing but gives everything. In celebrating and experiencing the Eucharist, we too are called to share in this love. For we cannot break bread on Sunday if our hearts are closed to our brothers and sisters...In the end, and the end of our solemn Eucharistic liturgies as well, only love will remain."*

## **Reflective question:**

What does it mean for me to celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi?

## **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June, SS. Charles Lwanga & Companions.**

### **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 of 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, thinking, "They will respect my son." 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: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this is the Lord's doing, and we marvel at it?' 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 to become fully human

*"...adding goodness to the faith that you have, understanding to your goodness, self-control to your patience, kindness towards your fellow men to your devotion, and to this kindness, love" (1<sup>st</sup> reading).* Let these words of St. Peter resound in our hearts. To grow mature as Christians and conform to Christ, we need to keep adding Christ-like qualities to our faith: goodness, understanding, self-control, patience, fraternal kindness and, most important of all, love. None of us will fully develop all these traits in our lives. However, it does not mean that we should not try our best to put them into practice daily.

In the gospel, Jesus is the stone rejected by the builders and now He is the cornerstone, the keystone that God has firmly placed as the foundation of our lives. Rooted in Him, we will not be shaken in times of

harsh storms we encounter. Grounded in Him, he will lead us to live a life of love we have been created for.

**Reflective question:**

What is the message from Jesus today?

**Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June, 9<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**2 Peter 3:11-15, 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 that you are an honest man, that you are not afraid of anyone, because human 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 or not?' Recognising their hypocrisy he said to them, 'Why are you putting me to the test? Hand me a denarius and let me see it.' They handed him one and he said to them, 'Whose portrait is this? Whose title?' They said to him, 'Caesar's.' Jesus said to them, 'Pay Caesar what belongs to Caesar -- and God what belongs to God.' And they were amazed at him.*

Take a step toward love

*"You should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come..."* (1<sup>st</sup> reading). We will one day meet God face-to-face when we cross over the threshold of death. However, while we are still here on earth, we must always live a life of love, which is the path of holiness. Living holy and saintly lives is not simply piously kneeling at saintly statues or collecting prayer cards of saints. Instead, it is living with love by doing our daily tasks with honesty and joy, offering our time to serve our brothers and sisters and treating those closest to us with respect and affection.

In the gospel, it is interesting to see that even the enemies of Jesus could recognise and affirm that Jesus was an honest man, that achieving power was not on his agenda and that He taught the ways of God with sincerity. Today, let us follow Jesus and become people of integrity and strive to live a life of love that even people who do not like us may recognise God working in and through us.

## **Reflective question:**

How can I be faithful to do little acts of love and kindness to those around me today?

**Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> June, St. Boniface.**

**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, Moses prescribed for us that 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, 'Surely the reason why you are wrong is 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.'*

## God's gift to us

*"That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hand on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control..."* (1<sup>st</sup> reading). St. Paul wrote these words to Timothy to remind him to keep fanning into a flame God's gift to him, the gift of the Holy Spirit. We too have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, whose presence of love empowers us to a life of love and service. We have the daily task to keep fanning into a flame His presence by putting love into practice.

In the gospel, Jesus speaks of God as God of the living, not the dead. We are called to believe and share this good news with others. God of the living desires that we have life and have it to the full. May we never take this gift for granted and never stop stirring the Holy Spirit in our lives and letting Him guide us to live and love fully.

**Reflective question:**

How can I fan into a flame the gift of the Holy Spirit in me?

**Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, St Norbet.**

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

*One of the scribes who had listened to them debating appreciated that Jesus had given a good answer and put a further 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, only 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 burnt offering 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 any more.*

**To love fully to the end**

In the first reading, St. Paul states: *"We may be unfaithful, but he is always faithful..."*. Let us stay and allow these words to touch our hearts and give us the peace and comfort we need. God loves us with His unfailing faithfulness. When we feel that our burdens are weighing us down, when we find ourselves living in loneliness, when sickness strikes us, etc, God commits Himself to walk with us and care for us today, tomorrow and forever. Today, He asks us to stay faithful to Him. Often, it is so easy to say "yes" to love God, but we fail to remain steadfast in saying "yes" to Him each and every day. In this time of prayer, let us be aware of God's presence. He waits for us. Let Him love us even when we find ourselves at our worst.

In the gospel, Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment we need to obey is to love God, love others as we love ourselves. Let us not lose sight of what matters in life: the primacy of love. Let us ask Jesus to give us the faithfulness to love fully.

**Reflective question:**

How can I love God, others and myself today?



**Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> June, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.**

**Hosea 11:1,3-4, 8-9, Ephesians 3:8-12, 14-19, John 19:31-37**

*It was the Day of Preparation, and to avoid the bodies' remaining on the cross during the Sabbath -- since that Sabbath was a day of special solemnity -- the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they saw he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of one who saw it -- true evidence, and he knows that what he says is true -- and he gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture: Not one bone of his will be broken; and again, in another place scripture says: They will look to the one whom they have pierced.*

God is love

*"When Israel was a child I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt. I myself taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in my arms; yet they have not understood that I was the one looking after them. I led them with reins of kindness, with leading strings of love..."* (1<sup>st</sup> reading). As we prayerfully read these words, let us embrace the image of God that He presents to us. Like a mother, God led us through life with reins of kindness and leading strings of love. His love for us, despite our past mistakes and our many flaws, is full of affection and tenderness. Let us simply allow God to look at us with love and to find security in Him.

The gospel leads us to contemplate the extraordinary love of God revealed in the death of Jesus on the cross. Experiencing being loved by God, let us pass that love to each person we encounter today, even those whom we do not like. May our hearts be full of God's love so that we can love those around us with compassion, affection and tenderness.

**Reflective question:**

Who is the concrete person whom God calls me to love today?

## **Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> June, The Immaculate Heart of Mary.**

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

*Every year his 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 the days of the feast were over and they set off home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was somewhere in the party, 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. It happened that, three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the teachers, 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.' He replied, 'Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he meant. He went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart.*

### A life consumed by love

Today, as we celebrate the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we are invited to contemplate the heart of Mary and see that it is full of love and trust in God. In the gospel, when she and Joseph found Him sitting with the religious teachers at the Temple, she asked Him, “*My child, why have you done this to us?*”—the question “why” at the Temple was not the one that she uttered. Surely, many events in her life happened beyond her understanding that led her also to ask, “why”. For example, when God called her and entrusted her to be the mother of His Son, when the Prophet Simeon told her that her heart would be pierced with sorrows, when she followed Jesus around in His mission and felt the tensions between Him and the religious leaders and when she stood at the cross of Her Son and watched Him die, etc. Yet, Mary did not waver in her love and trust in God.

Let Mother Mary inspire us to have a heart that keeps on trusting and loving God as we journey through the ups and downs of life.

## **Reflective question:**

Is my heart like Mary's?

**Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**Genesis 3:9-15, 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1, Mark 3: 20-35**

*Jesus went home with his disciples, and once more such a crowd collected that they could not even have a meal. When his relations heard of this, they set out to take charge of him; they said, 'He is out of his mind.' The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem were saying, 'Beelzebul is in him,' and, 'It is through the prince of devils that he drives devils out.' So he called them to him and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot last. And if a household is divided against itself, that household can never last. Now if Satan has rebelled against himself and is divided, he cannot last either -- it is the end of him. But no one can make his way into a strong man's house and plunder his property unless he has first tied up the strong man. Only then can he plunder his house. 'In truth I tell you, all human sins will be forgiven, and all the blasphemies ever uttered; but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, but is guilty of an eternal sin.' This was because they were saying, 'There is an unclean spirit in him.' Now his mother and his brothers arrived and, standing outside, sent in a message asking for him. A crowd was sitting round him at the time the message was passed to him, 'Look, your mother and brothers and sisters are outside asking for you.' He replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' And looking at those sitting in a circle round him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. Anyone who does the will of God, that person is my brother and sister and mother.'*

### To give primacy to God

*"When his relations heard of this, they set out to take charge of him; they said, 'He is out of his mind.'" Jesus' relatives judged Him as out of His mind and wanted to take Him by force back to Nazareth, back to the safety of home where He would remain as a carpenter and stop upsetting the religious establishment of the day. However, Jesus took the opportunity to teach His disciples about the primacy of God. He said to them, "Anyone who does the will of God, that person is my brother and sister and mother". Jesus is saying these exact words to us today. Being a Christian means putting God first by seeking to do His will, which*

is to reject the evil of lies, violence, and discrimination and live a life of loving service to others.

When we live according to God's will, we belong to the family of God, we are Jesus' brothers and sisters in a bond deeper than normal family ties. Today, let us strive to live a gospel-inspired life that is expressed in concrete acts of love.

**Reflective question:**

Do I seek to do God's will?

**Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**1 Kings 17:1-6, Mark 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.'*

**Beggars before God**

*"Elijah did as the Lord has said; he went and stayed in the wadi Cherith which lies east of Jordan. The ravens brought him bread in the morning and meat in the evening, and he quenched his thirst at the stream" (1<sup>st</sup> reading). In a severe drought, God told the prophet Elijah to go to the Brook Cherith. There, Elijah depended on God to provide. God did not fail the prophet but nourished him by providing water from the stream and food from the ravens. Today, let us remember the many ways that God has provided for us in the past and trust that He will never stop meeting our needs.*

*“How blessed are the poor in spirit: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs...”*. This is the first of the Beatitudes that Jesus calls His disciples to live by. The prophet Ezekiel exemplifies what *“poor in spirit”* means. It is to be aware of our deep need for God and recognise that we cannot rely on ourselves as our hearts can never be contented apart from His presence in our lives.

**Reflective question:**

Have I experienced being poor in spirit and needy of God’s presence?

**Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> June, St. Barnabas.**

**Acts 11: 21-26, 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 those suffering from virulent skin-diseases, drive out devils. You received without charge, give without charge. Provide yourselves with no gold or silver, not even with coppers for your purses, with no haversack for the journey or spare tunic or footwear or a staff, for the labourer deserves his keep. ‘Whatever town or village you go into, seek out someone worthy and stay with him until you leave. As you enter his house, salute it, and if the house deserves it, may your peace come upon it; if it does not, may your peace come back to you.’*

Barnabas

*“... he (Barnabas) urged them all to remain faithful to the Lord with heartfelt devotion; for he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith...”* (1<sup>st</sup> reading). Barnabas means “son of encouragement”. Everywhere he went, Barnabas mentored and supported the early Christians. When Paul, after his conversion, tried to meet Jesus’ disciples, they rejected him. Barnabas was the one who went to bring Paul back to meet them (Acts 9:26-27). Later, in Paul’s missionary journey, he did not allow Mark to join them on the trip. Barnabas refused to give up on Mark (Acts 15: 36-41). Indeed, Barnabas was always ready to see the good in others and to encourage them to grow.

In the gospel, Jesus calls us to go and proclaim the good news of God’s love. Each of us is sent to bring hope, healing and love to others around us by using the gifts God has given us. Barnabas’ gift was to encourage

others, and through this gift, he brought life to many. Today, let us give freely of the gifts we receive for the sake of the mission.

**Reflective question:**

Do I have a Barnabas in my life of faith?

**Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

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

*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.'*

The law of love

*"Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them".* Jesus did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to complete them by making the words of the Scriptures come to life through His works and words. For Him, the meaning of Scriptures is to love God and others: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."* (Matthew 22:37-38).

Christianity is more than just following rules and regulations; it is about practising the real meaning of love. By doing so, we will fulfil God's law. Today, may we make the words of the scriptures come alive in our lives by applying love in all we do and say.

**Reflective question:**

What is Jesus' message to me in this time of prayer?

**Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> June, St. Anthony of Padua.  
1 Kings 18:41-46, Matthew 5:20-26**

*Jesus said to his disciples, 'For I tell you, if your uprightness does not surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of Heaven. 'You have heard how it was said to our ancestors, You shall not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you, anyone who is angry with a brother will answer for it before the court; anyone who calls a brother "Fool" will answer for it before the Sanhedrin; and anyone who calls him "Traitor" will answer for it in hell fire. So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. Come to terms with your opponent in good time while you are still on the way to the court with him, or he may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. In truth I tell you, you will not get out till you have paid the last penny.'*

Love, not anger

Today's gospel shows the breaking of the Law and also its continuity. Jesus breaks away from the wrongful interpretations and draws out the important objective of the Law: the practice of a greater love. Regarding anger, the Law states that "You shall not kill". However, Jesus goes beyond it and insists that it is not just to avoid killing but the need to uproot the seeds of anger, resentment and the desire for revenge from within our hearts. Jesus does not want us to have a bitter but loving heart.

Jesus also speaks of reconciliation. Often, we face conflicts and disagreements with others, but we must reconcile by asking for forgiveness and forgiving others. When our hearts are full of God's love, we will choose to walk the path of reconciliation. In this prayer time, let us ask Jesus to help us set aside anger and pursue reconciliation instead.

**Reflective question:**

How do Jesus want me to behave before those who have caused hurt to me?

**Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**1 Kings 19:9, 11-16, Matthew 5:27-32**

*Jesus said to his disciples, 'You have heard how it was said, You shall not commit adultery. But I say this to you, if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye should be your downfall, tear it out and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of yourself than to have your whole body thrown into hell. And if your right hand should be your downfall, cut it off and throw it away; for it will do you less harm to lose one part of yourself than to have your whole body go to hell. It has also been said, Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a writ of dismissal. But I say this to you, everyone who divorces his wife, except for the case of an illicit marriage, makes her an adulteress; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.'*

### The voice of love

In today's first reading, the prophet Elijah ran away from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel and felt alone in doing God's mission. Yet, he was not alone. Elijah found God in the "sound of the gentle breeze" and experienced His comforting presence. Let us listen to God as He speaks to us in the still small voice, in the gentle whisper in our hearts. There, He never stops calming us when we feel anxious, encouraging us when we feel disheartened and strengthening us when we lose courage.

In the gospel, Jesus calls us to be faithful and loving in our relationships with others. He uses drastic imagery of tearing our eyes and cutting out our limbs because He wants us to grasp the consequences of our actions and words to others when we choose to be unloving. Let us keep listening to the gentle whisper in our hearts as God nourishes us with His words and enlarges our hearts to love like Him.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I live out the message that I have understood in today's prayer?

**Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**1 Kings 19:19-21, Matthew 5:33-37**

*Jesus said to his disciples, 'You have heard how it was said to our ancestors, You must not break your oath, but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I say this to you, do not swear at all, either by heaven, since*



*that is God's throne; or by earth, since that is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, since that is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your own head either, since you cannot turn a single hair white or black. All you need say is "Yes" if you mean yes, "No" if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the Evil One.'*

"Yes" is "Yes" and "No" is "No"

In today's gospel, the message that Jesus wants us to understand and put into practice is: To make truth the ground in which we root ourselves so that we can be trustworthy people. Our "yes" must be a "yes" and our "no" must be a "no". Let us look at our lives and how we interact with God and others: Am I rooted in truthfulness? Do I communicate with others honestly or deceitfully?

It is not easy to be honest sometimes, especially when we need to admit our mistakes to others. In such situations, lying might seem to be appealing. Yet, when we fail to keep our word, we actually take away the trust the person has for us. Today, let us never forget that the Master we follow is honest and trustworthy, and let us also ask Him to help us to become people of our word.

**Reflective question:**

Are my words and actions based on honesty and integrity?

**Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**Ezekiel 17:22-24, 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, Mark 4: 26-34**

*Jesus said to the crowds, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know.*

*Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, at once he starts to reap because the harvest has come.'* He also said, 'What can we say that the kingdom is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which, at the time of its sowing, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth. Yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.' Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it. He would not speak to

*them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples when they were by themselves.*

### Walk by faith, not sight

*“We are always full of confidence when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight...”* (2<sup>nd</sup> reading). We often hear this phrase of St. Paul, *“walk by faith, and not by sight”*. What does he mean? St. Paul reminds us that we should not root ourselves in visible certainties and securities. Rather, we go by faith in God, whom we cannot see or touch. He is the sure ground on which we stand. We trust and believe that He is with us and active in our lives. Thus, even in times of uncertainty and change, we have confidence in God and our hope is based on His love and promises, not our external situations.

In the gospel, Jesus assures us that we do not need enormous faith in our walk with God. Like the tiny mustard seed, our faith can be small, fragile and unassuming, but God continues working in and through us. May we always count on His faithfulness to us.

### **Reflective question:**

Do I have at least faith in the size of a tiny mustard seed?

### **Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 11<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

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

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

#### Love, not hate

As we prayerfully read Jesus’ words in the gospel today, let us ask Him for wisdom to understand and put them into practice. Jesus calls us once more to walk the path of love, not vengeance and holding grudges. It is a challenge for us, especially when we have been wronged and wounded by others. In such situations, we often struggle with the desire to strike back and cause harm to those who have hurt us. Jesus shows

us another way: the way of love. Looking at the life of Jesus, He never retaliated against those who put Him on the cross. Instead, He overcame evil with the power of love. On the cross, He forgave them.

In the letter of St. Paul to the Romans, he says, *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”* (Romans 12:21). This is the invitation for each one of us: To overcome insults, hurts, lies, etc. with the power of love, patience, forgiveness, mercy. Let us ask Jesus to help us become people who think, speak and act lovingly.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I better be an instrument of forgiving love in my life?

### **Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 11<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **1 Kings 21:17-2, Matthew 5: 4-48**

*Jesus said to his disciples: 'You have heard how it was said, You will love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say this to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on the bad as well as the good, and sends down rain to fall on the upright and the wicked alike. For if you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Do not even the tax collectors do as much? And if you save your greetings for your brothers, are you doing anything exceptional? Do not even the gentiles do as much? You must therefore be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.'*

#### Loving your enemies

*“But I say this to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”*. These are simple words, but they are the hardest to put into practice! Jesus is telling us to love our enemies, i.e. the very people we do not like, the people who look down on us, the people who hurt us with their gossip, the inconsiderate people who make our lives miserable, etc. These people are precisely the ones we are called to love, bless, do good to them and pray for them.

Jesus is not placing an impossible task on us. He directs us to walk this path of love because He knows that loving our enemies will bring us peace, and keeping hatred in our hearts will make us miserable and sad. Thus, it is for our own good that Jesus tells us to love and make peace

with others. Hopefully, by our efforts to love them, our enemies might transform their ways towards us. May the love of God fill our hearts so that we can start taking small steps to love.

**Reflective question:**

What are the practical ways of loving the people I struggle to like?

**Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> June, SS. Philip Minh & Companons.**

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

*Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be careful not to parade your uprightness in public to attract attention; otherwise 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 human admiration. In truth I tell you, 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. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room, shut yourself in, and so 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 are fasting, do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they go about looking unsightly to let people know they are fasting. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put scent 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.'*

To please God alone

In today's gospel, Jesus reminds us not to do things just for the sake of human recognition and admiration. Why do we give alms, pray, fast, organise a parish event, give a faith formation, conduct a meeting, etc.? Often, we tend to seek glory for ourselves, and thus, we become obsessed with what people think of us. It is a challenge not to be overly focused on ourselves but to do these with a heart full of humble love for God and others.

As we listen to Jesus through this gospel passage, let us allow His words to shine a light on our actions, words and decisions. May we turn towards God and place Him as the top priority in our lives.

**Reflective question:**

What motivates me to do what I do, especially in the parish and my faith community?

**Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 11<sup>th</sup> 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 gentiles 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 calls us not to babble and use many high and almighty words to address God. Prayer is not going on and on, piling up phrases and thinking that if we say enough, God will listen to and answer us. Instead, He tells us to simply start our prayer by addressing God, "Father" and to talk to Him as children speaking with love and confidence with their loving parents.

One of the greatest obstacles to relating with God is the false images of Him we might harbour; for example, God punishes us for our sins, God is indifferent to our suffering, God is weak, etc. These distorted images of God can impact how much we trust Him, how strong our love for Him is and how happy we are to live with Him and for Him. Today, Jesus invites us to recognise God as our loving Father and Mother, the source of all love. It is time for us to let go of all that prevents us from relating with God with confident trust. May we draw close to God and call Him "Father".

**Reflective question:**

Who is God for me at this point in my life?

**Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, St. Aloysius Gonzaga.**

**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 darkness. If then, the light inside you is darkened, what darkness that will be!'*

To see God

*"The lamp of the body is the eye. It follows that if your eye is clear, your whole body will be filled with light."* The eye is the window of the heart and mind. How we see affects the state of our hearts. A healthy spiritual eye makes us perceive God's presence in life's ordinary and extraordinary events and opens our hearts to receive Him as the centre of our lives. With Him in us, He frees us from all that is unloving and false and fills our hearts with His light and truth. Thus, we have the clarity to follow the path of Jesus with determination. Let us ask God for a healthy vision, not one marred by pride, jealousy and anger.

Today, let God be the greatest treasure in our hearts, our treasure box. When we give our hearts to Jesus, He comes to us, makes a home in us and leads us to expand our hearts to live for love.

**Reflective question:**

What can distort my vision from seeing truth and beauty?

**Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June, St Pauline, SS. John Fisher & Thomas More.**

**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.'*

### Father, I trust in you

Let us read the words of Jesus slowly and be aware that it is He Himself who is saying them to us. The message that Jesus wants us to grasp and take to heart is: Do not be anxious but trust in God. Many of us tend to be overly anxious and fill our days worrying about "what if" scenarios: "What if something bad happens to my family?", "What if I fall seriously sick?", etc. Today, Jesus invites us to set aside worries and trust that God is with us to care for our needs.

Jesus says, "So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." Interestingly, Jesus does not say that we should not worry about tomorrow because it will be full of goodness as today, but He tells us not to worry as today is already full of challenges and problems. Jesus is a realist. He knows that each day has tough situations which we have to face. However, He encourages us never to stop trusting God, who is with us.

### **Reflective question:**

What is stopping me from trusting in God today?

**Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**  
**Job 38:1, 8-11, 2 Corinthians 5:14-17, Mark 4:35-41**

*With the coming of evening, Jesus said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a great gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are lost!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and there followed a great calm. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? Have you still no faith?' They were overcome with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'*

Why are you frightened?

*"They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are lost!'"* The disciples of Jesus feared that their boat might sink due to the heavy storm. When trials of life surround us, haven't we cried out to Jesus, *"Lord, don't you care? Why are you not helping me?"* We feel as though there is no way out from the overwhelming waves of problems. While the disciples were struggling with their fears, Jesus peacefully slept in the boat. His action of sleeping in the middle of a storm conveys to us that His inner peace as He slept on in the storm came from His faith that God the Father was with Him.

*"Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? Have you still no faith?'"* The disciples were afraid because they looked at the waves and forgot that Jesus was with them in the boat. Today, let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and not be engrossed in our problems to the point that we feel overwhelmed with stress and hopelessness. With Him in our boats, He will give us the inner peace we need.

**Reflective question:**

What strikes me the most as I pray with today's gospel?

**Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> June, The Nativity of 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*



*lavished on her his faithful love, they shared her joy. Now it happened that 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 grew strong. And he lived in the desert until the day he appeared openly to Israel.*

### A voice that bears witness to the Living Word of God

Zechariah temporarily lost his voice when he doubted the angel's message that his aged wife Elizabeth, would bear a son. In this gospel passage, he found his voice after he wrote on the writing tablet, "*His name is John*". In Luke 1:67-79, Zachariah used his voice to praise God with a beautiful hymn that proclaimed the task that God entrusted his son: "...*And you, little child, you shall be called Prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare a way for him, to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,... to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow dark as death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*"

Indeed, John the Baptist lived his life being the voice preparing hearts to welcome the coming of Jesus. Today, let us find our voices to speak of peace, truth, and justice and commit ourselves to spreading the Good News of God's love.

### **Reflective question:**

Do I use my voice to bear witness for Jesus?

**Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 12<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**2 Kings 19:9-11, 14-21, 31-36, 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 Law and the Prophets. Enter by the narrow gate, since the road that leads to destruction 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 golden rule

Today's gospel is made up of various sayings of Jesus. One key saying that is important for us in our "Me-centred" culture is: "*So always treat others as you would like them to treat you; that is the Law and the Prophets*". What do these words of Jesus mean? We need to treat those around us the same way we would like them to treat us.

If we want to be loved, then we must first give it. If we want others to respect us and speak to us with kindness, then we must first do the same to others. If we want others to forgive us, we must first take the initiative to offer it to those who need our forgiveness. However, we love others not because we want to reap the benefits for ourselves. Instead, our actions of loving and serving others must always be grounded in and motivated by selfless and unconditional love. By doing so, we walk on the narrow path that leads to life.

### **Reflective question:**

How does Jesus want me to live and love today?

### **Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 12<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **2 Kings 22: 8-13; 23:1-3, Matthew 7:15-20**

*Jesus said to his disciples: 'Beware of false prophets who come to you disguised as sheep but underneath are ravenous wolves. You will be able to tell them by their fruits. Can people pick grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, a sound tree produces good fruit but a rotten tree bad fruit. A sound tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor a rotten tree bear good fruit. Any tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown on the fire. I repeat, you will be able to tell them by their fruits.'*

### Look at the fruit

"*You will be able to tell them by their fruits.*" In today's gospel, Jesus invites us to become discerning people by opening our eyes of faith to

look at the fruit. Often, we are easily impressed by impressive sermons and talks given by religious figures in the church or by grand titles people have. Look at the fruit that a person bears by observing their actions, words, attitudes towards others, etc., and not be caught up with their words and titles. We must note that we are not judging others but being wise and discerning!

Today, let us also ask God to help us look at our lives and see what fruit we are bearing. Do we bear the fruit of love, kindness, compassion and peace? Are we dependable, honest and respectful? Let us allow God to continue working in and through us so that we can live and love like Jesus.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I be more discerning of others?

### **Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> June, St. Cyril of Alexandria. 2 Kings 24:8-17, Matthew 7:21-29**

*Jesus said to his disciples: "It is not anyone who says 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, drive 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, all evil doers! 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, unlike their own scribes.*

### A coherent life

*"...everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock."* What is Jesus' message for us in this time of prayer? Our discipleship is expressed not just in our words but in the manner in which we choose to align our daily

actions and behaviours with the will of God, which is to live a life of love. The way we live must show our inner life of faith.

Jesus invites us not to be like the stupid person but to be like the sensible person who builds his house on a strong and solid foundation. Today, let us listen attentively to Jesus' words and put them into practice. There is no point if we speak eloquent words and carry impressive titles, but our lives do not reflect Jesus Himself.

**Reflective question:**

How can I build my life on Jesus, the solid foundation?

**Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> June, St. Irenaeus.**

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

*After Jesus had come down from the mountain large crowds followed him. Suddenly a man with a virulent skin-disease came up and bowed low in front of him, saying, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can cleanse me.' Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him saying, 'I am willing. Be cleansed.' And his skin-disease was cleansed at once. Then Jesus said to him, 'Mind you tell no one, but go and show yourself to the priest and make the offering prescribed by Moses, as evidence to them.'*

Come as you are

Lepers were regarded as the untouchables in Jesus' time. They could not be touched because the disease could spread to the rest of the community. Thus, to protect themselves, the Jewish people made sure that the lepers were separated from them. In today's gospel, a leper approached Jesus and asked him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can cleanse me". Jesus did not reject the leper but drew close to and touched him.

As we pray with today's gospel, let us take comfort in the fact that Jesus is always willing to come close to us and touch our lives with His life-giving presence. He wants to love us as we are, even the darkest parts of us that we are not proud of, even the most unattractive areas that we cannot accept of ourselves. All He wants from us is not to be afraid but to come to Him as we are.

**Reflective question:**

What is Jesus' message to me in this time of prayer?

**Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> 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 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 and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a blessed man! Because it was no human agency 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 community. And the gates of the underworld can never overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'*

**God stood by me**

*"My life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought a good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith..."* (2<sup>nd</sup> reading). Paul, who had travelled to many places to preach the Good News, befriended many people during his travels and helped build Christian communities in different cities, now seems to die virtually alone. Yet, he knew that he had kept the faith and ran the race without regrets. He wrote, *"The Lord stood by me..."* and this was the constant presence that held, guided, and motivated him. When we face moments of fear and loneliness, may we experience God standing close to us, supporting and loving us.

In today's gospel, Jesus asks us, *"Who do you say I am?"*. Let us echo with the lives of St. Paul and St. Peter, *"Lord, you are God who is with me. You are my Friend and companion. You are my treasure here, now and forever."*

**Reflective question:**

What is my answer to Jesus' personal question, *"Who do you say I am?"*?

**Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24, 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15, Mark 5:21-43**

*When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered round him and he stayed by the lake. Then the president of the synagogue came up, named Jairus, and seeing him, fell at his feet and begged him earnestly, saying, 'My little daughter is desperately sick. Do come and lay your hands on her that she may be saved and may live.' Jesus went with him and a large crowd followed him; they were pressing all round him. Now there was a woman who had suffered from a haemorrhage for twelve years; after long and painful treatment under various doctors, she had spent all she had without being any the better for it; in fact, she was getting worse. She had heard about Jesus, and she came up through the crowd and touched his cloak from behind, thinking, 'If I can just touch his clothes, I shall be saved.' And at once the source of the bleeding dried up, and she felt in herself that she was cured of her complaint. And at once aware of the power that had gone out from him, Jesus turned round in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' His disciples said to him, 'You see how the crowd is pressing round you; how can you ask, "Who touched me?"' But he continued to look all round to see who had done it. Then the woman came forward, frightened and trembling because she knew what had happened to her, and she fell at his feet and told him the whole truth. 'My daughter,' he said, 'your faith has restored you to health; go in peace and be free of your complaint.' While he was still speaking some people arrived from the house of the president of the synagogue to say, 'Your daughter is dead; why put the Master to any further trouble?' But Jesus overheard what they said and he said to the president of the synagogue, 'Do not be afraid; only have faith.' And he allowed no one to go with him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. So they came to the house of the president of the synagogue, and Jesus noticed all the commotion, with people weeping and wailing unrestrainedly. He went in and said to them, 'Why all this commotion and crying? The child is not dead, but asleep.' But they ridiculed him. So he turned them all out and, taking with him the child's father and mother and his own companions, he went into the place where the child lay. And taking the child by the hand he said to her, 'Talitha kum!' which means, 'Little girl, I tell you to get up.' The little girl got up at once and began to walk about, for she was twelve years old. At once they were overcome with astonishment,*

*and he gave them strict orders not to let anyone know about it, and told them to give her something to eat.*

### Have faith in Jesus who loves us

In today's gospel, we see two people approaching Jesus. One is Jairus, a prominent official; the other is a woman who is not named but has lost her material resources to search for a cure for her sickness. Jairus goes up to Jesus in public and requests that He come to his house to heal his sick daughter. The woman, however, approaches Jesus secretly and touches His cloak. Both Jairus and the woman seek Jesus in their greatest moment of suffering and need. To both, Jesus helps them.

This gospel gives us a lot of consoling hope. Jesus wants us all to live fully and not live a life of sadness and despair. Let us never be afraid to go to Jesus and share with Him all that we have in our hearts - our fears, loneliness, pain, etc. He will never reject us but tell us with the same words He says to Jairus, "*Do not be afraid; only have faith... Do not be afraid. I am with you now, here and forever.*" Thus, we walk on in life with Jesus by our side.

### **Reflective question:**

Do I truly trust Jesus and His love and care for me?

