

Prayer for Living  
Daily Reflections  
Liturgical Year B  
October



Master, let me see again

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# **PRAYER FOR LIVING YEAR B**

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## **Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> October, St. Therese of the Child Jesus.**

### **Isaiah 66:10-14, Mathew 18:1-5**

*The disciples came to Jesus and said, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' So he called a little child to him and set the child in front of them. Then he said, 'I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 'Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.'*

### Trusting like little children

As we read the Gospel and try to understand Jesus's words, we might think that entering the Kingdom of Heaven is not so difficult. We just have to be like children. However, as we engage in dialogue with Him, we may realise that it is not that simple. What does it mean in the gospel to be like a child? A little child cannot manage alone; he needs to depend on his parents. He trusts them, knowing that they will take care of him, and so he lives in peace without worrying about the future.

We often worry about our health, finances, and future. Do we believe that we are children of God? Do we trust in Him, knowing that we are in His hands and He is taking care of us? St. Therese of the Child Jesus, whose feast is celebrated today, did. She lived trusting in God the Father, knowing that, as His child, He was pleased with her little gestures of love.

### **Reflective question:**

Are we ready to trust more in God, letting go of our worries and control of our lives?

## **Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, The Holy Guardian Angels.**

### **Exodus 23:20-23, Mathew 18:1-5,10**

*The disciples came to Jesus and said, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' So he called a little child to him and set the child in front of them. Then he said, 'I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 'Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. 'See that you never despise any of*

*these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven.*

### Jesus, the Father's son

Jesus, in this gospel, is comparing Himself to a little child, and in fact, He lived totally as such in relation to God. During His public life, He depended totally on The Father. Throughout the passages of the gospels, we can observe how He frequently went to pray and listen to God in order to accomplish His will. Even at the end of His life, on the cross, He uttered his last prayer: "*Father, into your hands I commend my spirit*". This prayer was not improvised but rather the constant focus of His entire life. That was the way He lived: constantly in God's hands.

In celebrating the Eucharist, we receive Jesus, but do we receive Him with the same attitude that He had? He entrusts Himself to us; do we entrust ourselves to Him? Do we listen more and more to Him through His Word to do His will?

### **Reflective question:**

In my daily life, how can I live depending more and more on God?

### **Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 26<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Job 19:21-27, Luke 10:1-12**

*The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, "Peace to this house!" And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, "The kingdom of God is very near to you". But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say, "We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and*

*leave it with you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God is very near.” I tell you, on that day it will not go as hard with Sodom as with that town.*

### The urgency of the mission

As Jesus travelled from town to town, preaching the Good News, He noticed the people’s thirst for words of truth, hope, and direction in life. He could not help but urge His disciples to be part of His mission. But first, Jesus asked them to pray to the owner of the harvest. He reminded them to be aware that the people they would encounter belonged to God, and thus, He would be the one who would touch their lives.

Today, what do we observe across the streets of our city? What do we notice in our surroundings and among the people we relate to daily? Aren’t many of them in need of words of comfort and hope? Jesus sends us to them, just as He sent the seventy-two disciples. However, He also reminds us to acknowledge that God is the owner of the harvest, to pray to Him for the people, and to be aware of who is sending us. We go in Jesus’ name, bringing His peace and love to those we encounter along the way.

### **Reflective question:**

To whom can I bring words of peace and hope today?

### **Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> October, St. Francis of Assisi.**

#### **Job 38:1, 12-21, 40:3-5, Luke 10:13-16**

*Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Alas for you, Chorazin! Alas for you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. And still, it will not go as hard with Tyre and Sidon at the Judgement as with you. And as for you, Capernaum, did you want to be exalted high as heaven? You shall be thrown down to hell. ‘Anyone who listens to you listens to me; anyone who rejects you rejects me, and those who reject me reject the one who sent me.’*

### The unsuccessful mission

During His public life, Jesus experienced all kinds of emotions. In this gospel text, He expressed His frustration towards the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida. He preached and healed the people there, but they were not open to the Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven.

We may experience frustration when attempting to help someone in need with words of concern or a good deed, only to be rejected. As we identify with Jesus in His experience, He also identifies with us because He says, “*Anyone who rejects you, rejects me.*” At the same time, we need to be aware of the situations in which we may be rejecting the words or good intentional actions of those around us. When we catch ourselves doing so, let us remember that in rejecting the person, we are also rejecting Jesus. Lord, help us recognise you in people's goodness toward me and may we not get disheartened when our good actions are not appreciated.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I become more aware of welcoming Jesus through the actions of those who mean well to me?

### **Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, St. Mary Faustina Kowalska.**

#### **Job 42: 1-3, 5-6, 12-16, Luke 10:17-24**

*The seventy-two came back rejoicing. ‘Lord,’ they said ‘even the devils submit to us when we use your name.’ He said to them, ‘I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Yes, I have given you power to tread underfoot serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven.’ It was then that, filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, he said, ‘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 who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.’*

*The privilege of the disciples Then turning to his disciples he spoke to them in private, ‘Happy the eyes that see what you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it’.*

#### The true joy

As we read the gospel, we can imagine the disciples' excitement and eagerness to tell Jesus about everything they had experienced in their mission. At the same time, we grasp how Jesus joyfully observed the signs they were doing and rejoiced with them. Instead of emphasising

their amazing work as the source of their joy, Jesus told them that their true happiness should come from the fact that their names were written in heaven. What brings us true joy? We may feel happy when we get promoted at work, when we are about to go on a vacation to a fantastic place, when our child passes an exam or when we have a day without any physical pain. Such moments indeed bring us happiness. But do those moments last?

*"...Filled with joy by the Holy Spirit"*. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Jesus experienced profound joy by recognising God's action in His disciples. Our true and lasting joy is also rooted in recognising God and His actions in our daily lives.

**Reflective question:**

Does the presence of God in my life give me joy?

**Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**Genesis 2:18-24, Hebrews 2:9-11, Mark 10:2-16**

*Some Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, 'Is it against the law for a man to divorce his wife?' They were testing him. He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' 'Moses allowed us,' they said, 'to draw up a writ of dismissal and so to divorce.' Then Jesus said to them, 'It was because you were so unteachable that he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.' Back in the house the disciples questioned him again about this, and he said to them, 'The man who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she is guilty of adultery too.' People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.*

## One in love

Some Pharisees approached Jesus to test Him with questions, hoping He would break the Law of Moses. Jesus told them that He did not come to abolish the Law of the Old Testament; instead, He came to fulfil it. As preached by Jesus in the New Testament, the Law of God is love. Love is the fundamental principle of marriage. Without love, there can be no sacrament of marriage. While there can be a contract between a man and a woman, it cannot be considered a sacrament without love, because marriage is a union of life and love.

Our human love may not be strong and constant. Thus, we must rely on God's never-ending love. In His love, we are firmly grounded. We should rely on God not only in marriage but in any relationship. Nourished by His love, we are empowered to forgive, ask for forgiveness, and be motivated to sacrifice for the good of others. God's love is the foundation of all relationships, whether in our family, marriage, or friendships.

### **Reflective question:**

Is God's love in me the source of my love towards others?

### **Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> October, Our Lady of the Rosary.**

#### **Acts 1:12-14, Luke 1:26-38**

*The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob forever, and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God' 'I am the*



*handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.'  
And the angel left her.*

### Changing plans

Today is the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, and the readings focus on Mother Mary. As we read the passage of the Annunciation slowly and prayerfully, we notice that she was deeply disturbed upon receiving the news from God through the angel Gabriel. Why? Mary of Nazareth was a village girl who had her own plans, like any other person, of getting married and living a normal life. God changed her plans by asking her to collaborate to bring Jesus to the world. The greatness of Mother Mary lies in her resounding 'Yes!' to being the mother of Jesus, which marked the beginning of her unwavering obedience to God.

What would we do when, in prayer or in the midst of our daily lives, we realise that God is asking us to do something that alters our plans? Would we respond like her with a 'yes' or hesitate and go our own way? Our Mother teaches us that God's plans are always for our best and the best of others.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I follow Mother Mary's example in listening to and obeying Jesus?

### **Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Galatians 1:13-24, Luke 10:38-42**

*Jesus came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. Now Martha who was distracted with all the serving, said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered: 'Martha, Martha,' he said, 'you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part; it is not to be taken from her.'*

### What friendship implies

In the first reading, St. Paul recounts how he went from being a persecutor of Christianity to becoming a faithful apostle of Christ, from

Jesus' enemy to His friend. His friendship with Jesus moved him to give his best by actively preaching the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.

The gospel introduces us to a family with whom Jesus used to spend time. The two sisters, Martha and Mary, welcomed Jesus, and each one offered Him their best. Martha cooked and served Him, and Mary attentively listened to Him as He spoke. What about us? How do we put our friendship with Jesus into action? Do we allow Him to share His ways and values with us? Do we serve Him by helping those in need? Let's learn from Saints Paul, Martha, and Mary to demonstrate our friendship with Jesus in our own practical way.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I make my friendship with Jesus grow?

**Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October, SS. Denis and Companions, St. John Leonardi.**

**Galatians 2:1-2, 7-14, Luke 11:1-4**

*Once, Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples'. He said to them, 'Say this when you pray: "Father, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come; give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us. And do not put us to the test."'*

### Teaching by example

The disciples observed that Jesus used to go to a quiet place to pray. They saw that His prayer life influenced His convictions and interactions with people, and they wanted to learn to pray in a similar manner. Thus, Jesus taught them how to pray by addressing God as 'Father'. Jesus experienced God as a loving and merciful Father and called Him in a familiar way, 'Abba'. He revealed the face of the Father through acts of kindness, healing and forgiveness as well as His welcoming approach and interactions with sinners and outcasts, etc.

Today, Jesus teaches us that God the Father does not need formalities when we pray to Him. We are His children, and He is a loving Father who accepts us unconditionally. Let us learn from Jesus how to pray and approach God confidently, who eagerly listens. As we establish a

relationship with Him, we can also inspire others by reflecting Jesus' values.

### **Reflective question:**

Does my prayer reflect Jesus' life?

### **Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time**

#### **Galatians 3:1-5, Luke 11:5-13**

*Jesus said to his disciples: 'Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, "My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him"; and the man answers from inside the house, "Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up to give it you". I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants. 'So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'*

#### **Dare to pray!**

*"Prayer is the breath of faith; it is its most proper expression... Let us not grow tired of knocking at God's door" (Pope Francis). Prayer can be a petition for oneself or others, an expression of thanksgiving, or simply a conversation through which one shares thoughts and experiences with God. In the gospel, Jesus uses an example to illustrate a characteristic of prayer, specifically the act of petition. He tells the example of a man who visits his friend's house late at night to ask for food for a traveller who arrives unexpectedly. After much insistence, the friend finally obliges.*

Jesus used this illustration to show the significance of praying for what we need and approaching God with unwavering confidence, trusting that He will always take care of us. He may not provide exactly what we ask

for, but He will give us what we truly need and what is best for us in that particular situation and moment of our lives. Let us not grow weary of calling on our Father God, for He knows our needs before we even ask.

### **Reflective question:**

Does our relationship with God bring us to be closer to Him?

### **Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> October, St. John XXIII, Pope.**

#### **Ezekiel 34:11-16, John 21:15-17 (Mass of St. John XXIII)**

*After the meal, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these others do?' He answered, 'Yes Lord, you know I love you'. Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs'. A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He replied, 'Yes, Lord, you know I love you'. Jesus said to him, 'Look after my sheep'. Then he said to him a third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was upset that he asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' and said, 'Lord, you know everything; you know I love you'. Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.*

#### Lord, you know everything

The Lord says, *"I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will find them a place to rest. I, the Sovereign Lord, have spoken."* (1<sup>st</sup> reading)  
Today, we celebrate the feast of St. John XXIII, known as The Good Pope. He initiated the Second Vatican Council and was notable for his humility, openness, and dedication to peace. Truly, he was a shepherd who cared for his sheep, following the heart of the Good Shepherd.

Through the gospel, Jesus asks us the same question He asked Peter: *"Do you love me?"* Jesus asked Peter three times, and Peter did not hesitate to respond, *"Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."* Jesus then told Peter, *"Feed my sheep"*. Today, Jesus wants us to show our love for Him by taking care of those around us. We are the good shepherds to whom Jesus has entrusted His sheep, His people. Will we show our love for Jesus by loving and taking care of the people in our lives? Let us pause and ponder on how we can do so. May we tell Jesus wholeheartedly, *"Lord, you know everything; you know that I want to love you by loving others; help my lack of love!"*

**Reflective question:**

How would I answer Jesus' question?

**Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time****Galatians 3:22-29, Luke 11:27-28**

*As Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said, 'Happy the womb that bore you and the breasts you sucked!' But he replied, 'Still happier those who hear the word of God and keep it!'*

**The true praise**

It is not common to find a word of praise in the gospel addressed to Jesus' mother. However, in these two verses, we see that while Jesus was preaching, the crowd listened and admired his wisdom. Suddenly, a woman raised her voice, blessing Jesus's mother for being His mother. Jesus went on to explain the true source of Mary's joy: her willingness to listen and follow God's words. During Jesus' childhood, He Himself learned from her how to pray, listen to God and obey Him.

Mary's greatness lies in her obedience to God, in her 'Yes,' not only at the Annunciation but throughout her entire life. Today, our Mother teaches us to listen to the Word, ponder it, and treasure it in our hearts, just as she did in her life in order to fulfil it. By doing so, we will also be blessed and happy, like her, with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

**Reflective question:**

Can Jesus call me happy because I sincerely listen to Him?

**Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.****Wisdom 7:7-11, Hebrews 4:12-13, Mark 10:17-30**

*Jesus was setting out on a journey when a man ran up, knelt before him and put this question to him, 'Good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You must not kill; You must not commit adultery; You must not steal; You must not bring false witness; You must not defraud; Honour your father and mother.' And he said to him, 'Master, I have kept all these from my earliest days'. Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and he said, 'There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.'*

*But his face fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked round and said to his disciples, 'How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!' The disciples were astounded by these words, but Jesus insisted, 'My children,' he said to them 'how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.' They were more astonished than ever. 'In that case' they said to one another 'who can be saved?' Jesus gazed at them. 'For men' he said 'it is impossible, but not for God: because everything is possible for God.' Peter took this up. 'What about us?' he asked him. 'We have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land – not without persecutions – now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.'*

### The gift of freedom

The gospel introduces us to an encounter and conversation between Jesus and a man who is presented as good and rich. The man ran towards Jesus, recognising that He had something that, no matter how rich he was, he still lacked. That is why he addressed Him as 'Master', someone who knew and lived more than himself. What was he looking for? He wanted to ensure his eternal life. Jesus mentioned the Law of Moses, i.e. the Ten Commandments in response to his question. As a devout Jew, this man had already obeyed them all. "*Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him...*" Upon hearing him, Jesus looked at him with love and told him that what his heart was searching for was to be fully free, detached from his possessions, so that he could follow Him closely.

In this time of prayer, Jesus invites us to free ourselves from worries, material concerns, and worldly desires. He offers us His loving gaze and encourages us to fully embrace His life here and now. Let us not leave in sadness like the rich man in the gospel who could not let go of his possessions.

**Reflective question:**

What is Jesus inviting me through this passage?

**Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> October St. Callistus I.****Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1, Luke 11:29-32**

*The crowds got even bigger and Jesus addressed them, 'This is a wicked generation; it is asking for a sign The only sign it will be given is the sign of Jonah. For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. On Judgement day the Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and there is something greater than Solomon here. On Judgement day the men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation. and condemn it, because when Jonah preached they repented; and there is something greater than Jonah here.*

The only sign

Jesus preached extensively to the crowd, but they struggled to understand His message and instead asked for a miracle to believe in Him. Jesus felt frustrated because He knew that they did not receive His words with an open mind, and the only thing they wanted was His extraordinary signs. They could not understand that the greatest sign they could have was the presence of Jesus Himself among them and the Good News that He was preaching to them.

What is the sign of Jonah? Jesus compared His three days in the tomb before resurrection to Jonah's three days in the darkness inside the whale. Therefore, His death and resurrection are the greatest signs on which our faith is rooted. Like the people of the gospel, do we ask God for signs before trusting in Him? Or do we believe His word and keep it in our hearts, knowing that He knows what is best for us?

**Reflective questions:**

Do I need signs to believe in God? Why?

**Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> October, St. Teresa of Jesus****Galatians 5:1-6, Luke 11:37-41**

*Jesus had just finished speaking when a Pharisee invited him to dine at his house. He went in and sat down at the table. The Pharisee saw this*

*and was surprised that he had not first washed before the meal. But the Lord said to him, 'Oh, you Pharisees! You clean the outside of cup and plate, while inside yourselves you are filled with extortion and wickedness. Fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside too? Instead, give alms from what you have and then indeed everything will be clean for you.'*

### Cleanliness of heart

The Pharisee was surprised that Jesus did not perform the rituals of cleanliness before eating when he invited Jesus to his house for a meal. He was so focused on adhering to external rituals that he failed to recognise the true importance: the goodness of Jesus. Jesus, on the contrary, pointed out that the only necessary thing was the cleanliness of the heart. *"Blessed are the pure in heart; they will see God"* (Mt 5:8)

To be pure in heart does not mean being perfect in fulfilling all the laws, but having pure intentions, being honest, and generous towards others. In other words, to fulfil the law of love towards God and neighbour, we will see the goodness in those around us. The Pharisee failed to see the face of God in Jesus; he was too concerned with the externals instead of embodying the essence of God's commandments. Jesus, in the conversation with the Pharisee, teaches us the importance of having a pure heart that feels for others and reaches out to their needs.

### **Reflective question:**

What do I learn from the teaching of Jesus in this passage?

### **Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> October, St. Hedwig, St Margaret Mary Alacoque Galatians 5:18-25, Luke 11:42-46**

*The Lord said to the Pharisees: 'Alas for you Pharisees! You who pay your tithe of mint and rue and all sorts of garden herbs and overlook justice and the love of God! These you should have practised, without leaving the others undone. Alas for you Pharisees who like taking the seats of honour in the synagogues and being greeted obsequiously in the market squares! Alas for you, because you are like the unmarked tombs that men walk on without knowing it!' A lawyer then spoke up. 'Master,' he said 'when you speak like this you insult us too.' 'Alas for you lawyers also,' he replied 'because you load on men burdens that are unendurable, burdens that you yourselves do not move a finger to lift.'*



## How terrible!

*'...Master, he said, when you speak like this, you insult us too.'* These verses from the gospel of Luke can be difficult to digest. When we come across them, whether at mass or during prayer, we feel like they do not apply to us and that we are not like the Pharisees and the Teachers of the Law. Jesus was not only talking of His time; His words also apply to us today. We all have a 'little Pharisee' inside of us. We like to be respected and believe that we are right in what we do and think. We tend to judge others when they do not think like we do, and we often lack forgiveness and understanding.

Jesus uses very strong words in this passage toward the 'little Pharisee' in all of us because He loves us and wants us to understand how harmful it is to think in that way and how damaging it is to feel superior to others in any way. Therefore, He invites us to practice humility and look at others with His eyes of love.

### **Reflective question:**

Do I look at others with respect and love?

### **Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> October, St. Ignatius of Antioch.**

#### **Ephesians 1:1-10, Luke 11:47-54**

*Jesus said: 'Alas for you who build the tombs of the prophets, the men your ancestors killed! In this way you both witness what your ancestors did and approve it; they did the killing, you do the building. 'And that is why the Wisdom of God said, "I will send them prophets and apostles; some they will slaughter and persecute, so that this generation will have to answer for every prophet's blood that has been shed since the foundation of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was murdered between the altar and the sanctuary". Yes, I tell you, this generation will have to answer for it all. 'Alas for you lawyers who have taken away the key of knowledge! You have not gone in yourselves and have prevented others going in who wanted to.'* When he left the house, the scribes and the Pharisees began a furious attack on him and tried to force answers from him on innumerable questions, setting traps to catch him out in something he might say.

## Closing the door

*“... You have not gone in yourselves and have prevented others going in who wanted to.”* Jesus’ speech was very harsh towards the Teachers of the Law. Why? Their minds were closed to Jesus’ teachings about the Kingdom because they were entrenched in a rigid and distorted tradition.

Pope Francis said in a homily, *“The Pharisees and doctors of the Law were rigid people, not disposed to change.”* And he continued warning us: *“Be careful around those who are rigid. Be careful around Christians – be they laity, priests, bishops – who present themselves as so “perfect,” rigid. Be careful. There’s no Spirit of God there. They lack the spirit of liberty. And let us be careful with ourselves because this should lead us to consider our own life. Do I seek to look only at appearance and not change my heart? Do I not open my heart to prayer, to the liberty of prayer, the liberty of almsgiving, the liberty of works of mercy?”* If we are not open to the freedom of the Spirit, we may close the door to ourselves and others due to our rigid attitude. Lord, help us to be open to you!

### **Reflective question:**

How can I be open in prayer to the novelty of God’s teachings?

### **Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> October, St. Luke, Evangelist.**

#### **2 Timothy 4:10-17, Luke 10:1-9**

*The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, ‘The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, “Peace to this house!” And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, “The kingdom of God is very near to you”.*

## Collaborators of Jesus

Today, we celebrate the feast of St. Luke Evangelist, a committed Christian who accompanied St. Paul on his missionary journeys. Today's gospel tells us that Jesus needed more disciples to collaborate with Him and prepare the way for His coming. The instructions were strict and clear: "*Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road.*" What does Jesus mean with those orders? He wanted the disciples to understand the urgency of the mission and avoid getting distracted along the way. At the same time, the mission did not need many logistics; instead, it needed the disciples to travel light and depend on the 'Lord of the Harvest', not on themselves.

Here and now, Jesus' words are addressed to us; our names are among the seventy-two. He reminds us that living the gospel values in our world will not be easy. But we need to understand that we are only helping to prepare the way; it will be Jesus Himself who will touch the lives of those we reach out to.

### **Reflective question:**

As a Christian, am I aware of my mission?

**Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> October, SS. John de Brebeuf and Issac Jogues, St. Paul of the Cross.**

**Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 12:8-12**

*Jesus said to his disciples: 'I tell you, if anyone openly declares himself for me in the presence of men, the Son of Man will declare himself for him in the presence of God's angels. But the man who disowns me in the presence of men will be disowned in the presence of God's angels. 'Everyone who says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. 'When they take you before synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how to defend yourselves or what to say, because when the time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say.'*

### Being open to the Holy Spirit

We may be puzzled by the words of Jesus in this gospel, wondering how a sin could be unforgivable. In baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit, who is the love between the Father and the Son, and He dwells within us. St. Paul tells us, in the first reading, that he prays for us to see the light of

the Holy Spirit, to acknowledge His presence, and to allow Him to work in us. *'I ask the Father to give you the Spirit...I ask that your minds may be opened to see his light, so that you will know what is the hope to which he has called you...and how very great is his power at work in us who believe.'* (1<sup>st</sup> reading).

To sin against the Holy Spirit would be to deny and reject His presence in us. This denial prevents us from allowing the Holy Spirit to live and work in us, depriving us of living the gospel. In this way, we are the ones who reject forgiveness. In fact, we would not ask for it since we would not recognize God within us. Let us be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit and allow Him to work in us and through us.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I be more aware of the Holy Spirit in me?

### **Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, Mission Sunday. Isaiah 53:10-11, Hebrews 4:14-16, Mark 10:35-45**

*James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached Jesus. 'Master,' they said to him 'we want you to do us a favour.' He said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' They said to him, 'Allow us to sit one at your right hand and the other at your left in your glory'. 'You do not know what you are asking' Jesus said to them. 'Can you drink the cup that I must drink, or be baptised with the baptism with which I must be baptised?' They replied, 'We can'. Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I must drink you shall drink, and with the baptism with which I must be baptised you shall be baptised, but as for seats at my right hand or my left, these are not mine to grant; they belong to those to whom they have been allotted'. When the other ten heard this they began to feel indignant with James and John, so Jesus called them to him and said to them, 'You know that among the pagans their so-called rulers lord it over them, and their great men make their authority felt. This is not to happen among you. No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be slave to all. For the Son of Man himself did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'*

## Becoming great

Everyone has the innate desire to excel in various aspects of life, whether it's in education, career advancement, or competition. It's natural to strive for greatness. In the gospel, Jesus tells the disciples, as well as us today, that if we want to be great, we should be great in service. Being a disciple of Jesus means going against the world's oppressive standards of authority. Jesus teaches us through His testimony that He was constantly at the service of humanity. We can see how He spent long hours healing and preaching, attending to those in need, and reaching out to the vulnerable and those rejected by society. He became the servant of all.

Jesus shows us through His life what love is and how to cultivate it by not demanding too much attention for ourselves, but by focusing on others. Instead of seeking special treatment, we should help others with their needs. In this way, we will find Him close to us.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I imitate Jesus' attitude today?

### **Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Ephesians 2: 1-10, Luke 12:13-21**

*A man in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance'. 'My friend,' he replied-'who appointed me your judge, or the arbitrator of your claims?' Then he said to them, 'Watch, and be on your guard against avarice of any kind, for a man's life is not made secure by what he owns, even when he has more than he needs'. Then he told them a parable: 'There was once a rich man who, having had a good harvest from his land, thought to himself, "What am I to do? I have not enough room to store my crops." Then he said, "This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and store all my grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my soul: My soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come; take things easy, eat, drink, have a good time". But God said to him, "Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?". So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God.'*

### Planning with God

*“Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance.”* We can see that during Jesus' time, as well as now, inheritance has been and continues to be a problem for siblings. In the gospel, Jesus did not give a solution to the man. Instead, He used a parable to teach His listeners a lesson on greed. The parable is about a man who became wealthy due to a successful harvest. Jesus called him a “fool!” because he planned to secure his life with wealth, relying on riches but not on God. *“Greed is a form of idolatry”* (Cf. Col 3:5). Therefore, a fool is a person who replaces God for his own possessions.

We all face the danger of accumulating more than we need and feeling insecure about having enough for our old age. However, Jesus invites us to a different path, one of trust and security in God's hands. No matter how much wealth we amass, we cannot buy a single day. God the Father knows what we need and cares for us, providing a comforting contrast to the insecurity of wealth.

### **Reflective question:**

Is God the treasure of my life where I feel secure or my own wealth?

### **Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October, St John Paul II, Pope.**

#### **Ephesians 2:12-22, Luke 12:35-38**

*Jesus said to his disciples: ‘See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Happy those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready.*

### Waiting with readiness

*“Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks”.* Jesus speaks about the act of waiting in this gospel passage. We live in a society where everything is fast: fast food, fast transport, fast communication... and we are no longer used to waiting.

Jesus tells us to cultivate the attitude of waiting, not simply passive waiting but actively waiting. To be ready and wait for Jesus, our Master, means to live doing what we are supposed to do in every moment and to do it with love. Jesus comes to us not only at the end of our lives but constantly through encounters with people, situations, nature, or when He speaks to our conscience. Do we recognize Him? Is our heart ready to receive Him as He comes? Let us be ready to open the door of our hearts and our minds to His presence and words.

**Reflective question:**

Am I ready to receive Jesus through the different ways He comes to me?

**Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, St John of Capestrano.**

**Ephesians 3:2-12, Luke 12:39-48**

*Jesus said to his disciples: You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what hour the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.’ Peter said, ‘Lord, do you mean this parable for us, or for everyone?’ The Lord replied, ‘What sort of steward, then, is faithful and wise enough for the master to place him over his household to give them their allowance of food at the proper time? Happy that servant if his master’s arrival finds him at this employment. I tell you truly, he will place him over everything he owns. But as for the servant who says to himself, “My master is taking his time coming,” and sets about beating the menservants and the maids and eating and drinking and getting drunk, his master will come on a day he does not expect, and at an hour he does not know. The master will cut him off and send him to the same fate as the unfaithful. The servant who knows what his master wants but has not even started to carry out those wishes will receive very many strokes of the lash. The one who did not know but deserves to be beaten for what he has done will receive fewer strokes. When a man has had a great deal given him, a great deal will be demanded of him; when a man has had a great deal given him on trust, even more will be expected of him.*

With privilege comes great responsibility

*‘...When a man had a great deal given him on trust, even more will be expected of him.’* What is Jesus referring to in this gospel? In baptism,

we become children of God, receiving the Holy Spirit who lives in us and works in us. *“The Spirit Himself joins with our spirit to bear witness that we are children of God. And if we are children then we are heirs, heirs of God and join-heirs with Christ” (Rm 8:16-17).* We are no longer servants but co-heirs with Christ, in the gospel of John, Jesus calls us ‘friends’ because He shares with us everything that the Father communicates to Him (Cf. Jn 15:15). It is such a privilege to be called a child of God and a friend of Jesus!

Jesus trusts us. Therefore, we bear the significant responsibility to respond not as unfaithful servants but as beloved children and faithful friends, caring for those entrusted to us. Such a task is a duty of love, not of obligation.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I live with the responsibility of my identity as a child of God?

### **Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> October, St Anthony Mary Claret.**

#### **Ephesians 3:14-21, Luke 12:49-53**

*Jesus said to his disciples: ‘I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already! There is a baptism I must still receive, and how great is my distress till it is over! ‘Do you suppose that I am here to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on a household of five will be divided: three against two and two against three; the father divided against the son, son against father, mother against daughter, daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.’*

#### The fire of love

*“I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already!”* Jesus is referring to the Holy Spirit, who has poured out His love in our hearts. By baptism, we have the fire of the Holy Spirit in us. The day of Pentecost is often depicted as the apostles receiving a flame of fire in the Cenacle, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. The love of God, given to us through the Holy Spirit, sets our hearts on fire so that we may live our baptismal promises of renouncing evil and adhering to the ways of the gospel.



Living in accordance with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who always encourages us to choose love, is not easy. This is because we live in a competitive society that promotes self-interest. As a result, choosing to align with God's values may challenge those who do not, leading to division. Jesus invites us to stand firm in our convictions in spite of the internal or external persecutions that we may suffer.

**Reflective question:**

What is Jesus inviting me today in my prayer?

**Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time**

**Ephesians 4:1-6, Luke 12:54-59**

*Jesus said to the crowds: 'When you see a cloud looming up in the west you say at once that rain is coming, and so it does. And when the wind is from the south you say it will be hot, and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the face of the earth and the sky. How is it you do not know how to interpret these times? 'Why not judge for yourselves what is right? For example: when you go to court with your opponent, try to settle with him on the way, or he may drag you before the judge and the judge hand you over to the bailiff and the bailiff have you thrown into prison. I tell you, you will not get out till you have paid the very last penny.'*

Our vocation is love

*"I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you, therefore, to lead a life worthy of the vocation to which you were called. With all humility and gentleness, and with patience, support each other in love"* (1<sup>st</sup> reading). Our life span, no matter how long it may be, is short. St. Paul encourages us to live out our calling, to live in accordance with the summons we received from Christ at our baptism. As Christians, we do not live our faith alone. Christianity is not just about attaining perfection or being good enough for God. Our Christian faith does not exist in isolation; it is lived out in community with others. The first community is our family, where we need to exercise love with patience and selflessness.

In the gospel, Jesus urges us to recognise the signs of our time so that we can commit ourselves to living our vocation of love in the environment where we are.

**Reflective question:**

How can I live today being aware of my vocation?

**Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**Ephesians 4:7-16, Luke 13:1-9**

*Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.' He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down." '*

### God's patience

Jesus spent His public life travelling throughout the country, preaching the Kingdom of God to all people, but only a few were willing to embrace His message and live by it. In today's gospel, Jesus said, "*A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard*". The fig tree is a symbol of the Jewish nation. Throughout history, God has taken care of them by sending leaders and prophets who were the voice of the Lord. "*But in our time, the final days, He has spoken to us in the person of His Son*" (Hebrews 1:2). Jesus experienced frustration due to the lack of response from the people to God's abundant love. However, God's love is patient and never gives up; He will continue taking care of each one of His children until the end.

If we recall our own journey of faith, we would realize how many times God has shown His love to us through the different situations we have lived. In moments of feeling lost, when we prayed to Him and He answered, He was there nurturing us with His love.

**Reflective question:**

Does my life produce fruits of love?

**Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.****Jeremiah 31:7-9, Hebrews 5:1-6, Mark 10:46-52**

*As Jesus left Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (that is, the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting at the side of the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout and to say, 'Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me'. And many of them scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me'. Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him here'. So they called the blind man. 'Courage,' they said 'get up; he is calling you.' So throwing off his so cloak, he jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, 'What do you want me to do for you?' 'Rabbuni,' the blind man said to him 'Master, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has saved you'. And immediately his sight returned and he followed him along the road.*

New vision

As we read the gospel, we try to immerse ourselves in the scene. There was a lot of commotion on the road as Jesus left Jericho, with a crowd following Him. Blind Bartimaeus was begging by the roadside. When he heard the noise and knew that Jesus was passing by, he started to shout to get his attention. He could not see Jesus with his eyes, but he knew in his heart who Jesus was and he was filled with hope. His determination to encounter Him was not diminished by the reactions of those along the way. He persevered, crying out until Jesus called him. Bartimaeus could not see physically, but he could see Jesus with his heart filled with hope for a new life. In the end, he not only recovered his sight but also became a follower of Jesus, gaining a new perspective on life.

What about us? Do we persist in calling on Jesus? Do we place our hope in Him, knowing that He is the only one who can heal us from any distress, anxiety and lack of peace?

**Reflective question:**

What will my answer be to Jesus' question: "What do you want me to do for you?"

**Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> October, SS Simon and Jude, Apostles  
Ephesians 2:19-22, Luke 6:12-19**

*Jesus went out into the hills to pray; and he spent the whole night in prayer to God. When day came he summoned his disciples and picked out twelve of them; he called them 'apostles': Simon, whom he called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot who became a traitor. He then came down with them and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. People tormented by unclean spirits were also cured, and everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him because power came out of him that cured them all.*

Following The Master

In today's gospel, Jesus went to spend time with the Father in prayer. This was a normal activity in Jesus' schedule. This time when He prayed, it was special because it was before He chose His apostles. Certainly, He needed to have a dialogue with God about them. In choosing the Twelve, He was selecting His community, those with whom He would share life and mission. He came down, together with the apostles, and started their mission with the people.

Jesus, in this gospel, tells us the three characteristics that every Christian needs to live: prayer, community life, and mission. We cannot be Christians without spending time in a relationship with Jesus, as He did with the Father. At the same time, we need to live our faith within a Christian community, growing and sharing life with one another. Lastly, 'apostle' means 'being sent', and as The Twelve, we all have the mission to bring, with our lives and words, the Good News of Christ to those we encounter.

**Reflective question:**

Do I fulfil the three characteristics of the Christian life?

**Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.****Ephesians 5:21-33, Luke 13:18-21**

*Jesus said: 'What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with? It is like a mustard seed which a man took and threw into his garden: it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air sheltered in its branches.' Another thing he said, 'What shall I compare the kingdom of God with? It is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.'*

Small but great

The Kingdom of God is not an empire or an organization. It is a journey that begins here on earth and is fulfilled in eternity. God is the one who works in the world, transforming it into His Kingdom, but He needs seeds of love; He needs our lives to be inserted in the midst of the world to make it possible. It is like the mustard seed of the parable, small but with significant effects when sown and grown into a large tree.

These parables are very much for each one of us. We are like the yeast that the flour needs to become a good loaf of bread. God needs our lives to spread His love where we live, sowing seeds of care and concern in places of indifference, and overcoming pride and hatred with our love. We are workers for the Kingdom, collaborating with God to bring His Kingdom to earth as we pray in the Our Father: "*May your Kingdom come!*"

**Reflective question:**

Do I live the day sowing seeds of love?

**Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.****Ephesians 6:1-9, Luke 13:22-30**

*Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, 'Sir, will there be only a few saved?' He said to them, 'Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed. 'Once the master of*

*the house has got up and locked the door, you may find yourself knocking on the door, saying, "Lord, open to us" but he will answer, "I do not know where you come from". Then you will find yourself saying, "We once ate and drank in your company; you taught in our streets" but he will reply, "I do not know where you come from. Away from me, all you wicked men !" Then there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves turned outside. And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. 'Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.'*

### The narrow door

Among those who followed Jesus, a man asked him, "*Sir, will only a few be saved?*". Jesus did not answer the question; instead, He invited everyone to enter through the narrow gate. Everybody can enter the fullness of life, but they must walk the narrow path. The way of Jesus leads us to happiness, not only at the end of our lives, but also in the present moment when we live out the Beatitudes, which represent Jesus' life plan. However, we recognize that following His path requires effort and sacrifice.

Living the Christian way is not just about following rules to earn God's favour. It requires loving Him with all our mind, heart, and strength, as well as loving our neighbour in the same way (Cf. Luke 10:27). Love is about giving of oneself; it means putting others' interests before our own and helping them to grow. Jesus invites us to follow Him in the way He loves so that, by loving others, we will already be experiencing His salvation.

### **Reflective question:**

Do I choose to follow Jesus' ways in my daily life?

**Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**Ephesians 6:10-20, Luke 13:31-35**

*Some Pharisees came up to Jesus. 'Go away' they said. 'Leave this place, because Herod means to kill you.' He replied, 'You may go and give that fox this message: Learn that today and tomorrow I cast out devils and on the third day attain my end. But for today and tomorrow*

*and the next day I must go on, since it would not be right for a prophet to die outside Jerusalem. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused! So be it! Your house will be left to you. Yes, I promise you, you shall not see me till the time comes when you say: Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!*

### Jesus' love for His people

*“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused!”*. In this gospel passage, Jesus shows us His heart, which is full of emotions. Jerusalem is where the Temple to worship God is, but the people have rejected the One sent by the Father, and in that way, they had rejected God too. Jesus felt frustrated because the people He deeply loved did not accept His love, despite the signs He showed among them. He experienced Himself as the shepherd who risks his life, searching for the lost sheep, as well as the hen protecting her young with her life. Jesus, looking at Jerusalem, cried for the people: *‘If you only knew today what is needed for peace!’*

Today, we are Jerusalem, God’s people. What does Jesus see when He looks at us? He continues to search for us in order to respond to His love.

### **Reflective question:**

How do I respond to Jesus’ love?



By: Mike Moyers