

# *Prayer for Living Year C October*

**“Pray continually and  
this  
never lose heart.”**



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## PRAYER FOR LIVING YEAR C

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

### **Isaiah 66:10-14, Matthew 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.'*

### The heart of God

In today's first reading, the prophet Isaiah states, "Like a son comforted by his mother, will I comfort you. At the sight, your heart will rejoice, and your bones flourish like the grass." Many of us have experienced times when we feel tired to the bone, completely worn out due to family challenges, financial uncertainties, health issues, and more. We often find ourselves struggling just to get through each day, leaving us longing for a moment of rest. In these moments, God assures us of His comforting presence that gives us strength and allows us to live each day with joy. nurturing us and helping us find joy.

In today's gospel, when the disciples asked Jesus who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, He shocked them by bringing a little child forward. While we often associate greatness with success, wealth, and power, Jesus teaches that true greatness comes from humility and child-like trust in God. This means trusting that God cares for us and will provide for our needs each day, allowing us to live in peace, rather than being consumed by unnecessary anxiety. Today, Jesus calls us to embrace a child-like trust in our loving Father, who is always there for us.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I become more like a child in my trust in God's love?

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

### **Exodus 23:20-23, Matthew 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.'*

### To become like little children

In today's gospel, Jesus tells His disciples, and He tells us as well, *"I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."* As we journey through life and accumulate years, we often find ourselves jaded, losing the sense of wonder, unwavering trust and openness that characterised the hearts of young children. When we think back on our early years, we remember the freedom we had to express our thoughts and emotions. Adulthood often leads us to hold back, causing us to lose the joy of living in the present and become consumed by anxiety. Over time, we also seem to lose the childlike faith and trust in God that we once had.

Do we dare to pray, *"Lord, give me the grace to be like a little child"*? It takes a lot of courage to let go of our tendencies toward self-reliance and egoistic pride and depend more on God. May we strive each day to grow into being more like little children.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I live with a child-like faith and confidence in God today?

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

#### **Baruch 1:15-22, 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 openness to Jesus' daily coming

In today's gospel, Jesus was frustrated with the people of the Galilean towns of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. Despite witnessing Jesus' works and hearing His preaching and teaching, they were unmoved and unresponsive.

We might wonder how the people of these towns were so unresponsive to Jesus. We might be similar to them, often overlooking Jesus' presence in our daily lives. He speaks to us in our quiet moments of prayer, in the loving words and actions of those around us and through the countless ways He guides our journey. Each day, Jesus invites us to open our hearts and recognise His presence as He comes to us in many ways. He longs for us to respond to Him by giving Him our love in return. Today, may we allow Jesus to open our eyes of faith so that we can perceive His presence in us, with us and among us.

### **Reflective question:**

How receptive am I to Christ's presence today?

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

#### **Baruch 4:5-12, 27-29, 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.' 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'*

### Your names are written in heaven

The disciples returned from their mission experience filled with joy. Jesus rejoiced alongside them but redirected their focus to the true source of their joy. Their happiness should not be based on their successes and accomplishments. Instead, their true joy should come from the understanding that their names were written in heaven, signifying that they belonged to God and had a permanent place in His heart.

Sometimes, we may feel overwhelmed by our roles and titles, as well as by the significant achievements we have made. We might also become impressed by the titles and power that others hold. Let Jesus' words guide us back to God, the true source of our joy. We are His children, and we belong to Him; this truth brings deeper joy than any external achievements or titles we may seek.

### **Reflective question:**

How does the reality of my name written in heaven provide a stable source of enduring joy in the midst of life's challenges?

### **Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4, 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14, Luke 17:5-10**

*The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith'. The Lord replied, 'Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea", and it would obey you. 'Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, "Come and have your meal immediately"? Would he not be more likely to say, "Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards"? Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, "We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty".'*

### Faith and service

In today's gospel passage, the disciples ask Jesus to "increase" their faith—they want to have more faith. Jesus responds by telling them that even faith as small as a mustard seed is enough to live as His disciples. They should not assume that requesting an increase in faith will grant them more power to dominate others or get admiration from others. In

fact, the more faith one possesses, the greater the call to humble oneself in service.

Having more faith does not grant us status or praise from others. Instead, it propels us to put into practice Jesus' teachings about love and service in our everyday lives. Ultimately, how fulfilling it would be to approach Jesus, our Master, and humbly and joyfully say, "*We are merely servants; we have done no more than our duty.*" Even with faith as small as a mustard seed, we are called to follow Jesus by living a life of loving service, particularly towards the poor and vulnerable among us. The emphasis should not be on the size of our faith, but rather on how that faith—no matter how small—motivates us to serve others.

**Reflective question:**

How can my faith in Jesus encourage me to focus on serving and loving others around me?

**Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> October, St. Bruno.**

**Jonah 1:1-2:1, 11, Luke 11:25-37**

*There was a lawyer who, to disconcert Jesus, stood up and said to him, 'Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? What do you read there?' He replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself'. 'You have answered right,' said Jesus 'do this and life is yours.' But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of brigands; they took all he had, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him on to his own mount, carried him to the inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said "and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have." Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the*

*brigands` hands?’ ‘The one who took pity on him’ he replied. Jesus said to him, ‘Go, and do the same yourself’*

### To help and to be helped

In today’s gospel, Jesus shares the parable of the Good Samaritan, highlighting the importance of showing compassion to others, regardless of our personal feelings or preconceived notions. He invites us to rise above self-interest, indifference, and any biases we may hold, taking a moment in our busy lives to show care and concern for those around us.

Today, let us allow Jesus to open our hearts to apply the parable to our lives from another angle. He invites us to identify ourselves as the person beaten by robbers and left for dead, half dead on the side of the road, alone and helpless. Often, we tend to identify with the Good Samaritan or even the priest and Levite, who possess the ability to help. Yet, perhaps this parable reminds us that there are times when we, too, require the help and support from others as we go through the challenges that life throws our way. At the end of it all, whether we are the ones giving help or needing help, we are all God’s children, bound together by a shared humanity and a sense of compassion.

### **Reflective questions:**

Who do I identify with in the gospel? Why?

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

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

*In the sixth month, 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, you who enjoy God’s favour! 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. Look! You are to conceive in your womb 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 for ever and his reign will have no end.’ Mary said to the angel, ‘But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?’ The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, 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. And I tell you this too: your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' Mary said, 'You see before you the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said.' And the angel left her.*

### Collaborators of God

As we celebrate the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary, we are invited to reflect on the Gospel passage of the Annunciation. In this passage, Mary, a young woman from Nazareth, receives a message from God that changes her life and the world forever. The angel Gabriel informs her that she has been chosen by God to bear His Son. Mary's humble response is, *"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."* Her willingness to say "Yes" to God has served as a model of faith throughout history, even to this day. Although she did not fully understand what her "Yes" would entail or what would happen next, she placed her complete trust in God.

Today, we are called to follow Mary's example by trusting in God and surrendering to His will in our lives. By doing so, we allow His plans to unfold through us. Our "Yes" might not create a significant impact on the world, but in small, everyday ways, we can bring Christ to people around us through our words and actions.

### **Reflective question:**

What does it mean for me to say "Yes" to God's will today?

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

#### **Jonah 4:1-11, 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."'*

## Our Father

In today's Gospel, Jesus' disciples must have been impressed by how He prayed, which was different from the way other Jewish religious leaders did. He was not just reciting words mindlessly or praying out of habit. They likely observed that Jesus approached God the Father as if He were conversing with someone He deeply loved. There was something unique about Jesus' prayer that led one of the disciples to ask Him, "*Lord, teach us to pray...*"

Jesus taught the disciples—and us today—how to pray by addressing God with the intimate term "*Abba*," meaning "*Father*." For Jesus, God is not a distant, impersonal, or abstract being but someone who is close to us. This intimacy allows us to speak to Him with the same tenderness and trust that we share with those we love.

### **Reflective question:**

Am I automatically praying the Lord's Prayer, taking for granted who God is for me and how I can live in trusting dependence on Him?

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

**Malachi 3:13-20, 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!'*

### The best gift from God to us

We have all experienced unanswered prayers. We go to God with specific requests, yet nothing seems to happen. In today's gospel, Jesus invites us to shift our perspective on prayer by understanding that it is not a transaction, but a relationship. Prayer is being with God, our loving Father, who desires a loving relationship with us. When we recognise who we have with us in prayer, we can trust ourselves to open our hearts to Him and honestly share our thoughts and feelings, knowing that He listens to us and cares for us.

In the gospel, Jesus says, *"...how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"* God provides us with what we truly need by offering us His greatest gift: the Holy Spirit, which is His very presence within us. He gives us Himself to be our daily companion on our journey through life. With the Holy Spirit within us, we have the strength, peace, joy, and hope needed to live a life that reflects and bears witness to God's love.

### **Reflective question:**

Do I trust that God is always prepared to provide what is best for me?

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

#### **Joel 1:13-15, 2:1-2, Luke 11:15-26**

*When Jesus had cast out a devil, some of the people said, 'It is through Beelzebul, the prince of devils, that he casts out devils'. Others asked him, as a test, for a sign from heaven; but, knowing what they were thinking, he said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is heading for ruin, and a household divided against itself collapses. So too with Satan: if he is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? - Since you assert that it is through Beelzebul that I cast out devils. Now if it is through Beelzebul that I cast out devils, through whom do your own experts cast them out? Let them be your judges then. But if it is through the finger of God that I cast out devils, then know that the kingdom of God has overtaken you. So long as a strong man fully armed guards his own palace, his goods are undisturbed; but when someone stronger than he is attacks and defeats him, the stronger man takes*

*away all the weapons he relied on and shares out his spoil. He who is not with me is against me; and he who does not gather with me scatters. When an unclean spirit goes out of a man it wanders through waterless country looking for a place to rest, and not finding one it says, "I will go back to the home I came from". But on arrival, finding it swept and tidied, it then goes off and brings seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and set up house there, so that the man ends up by being worse than he was before.'*

### The gaze of love

In today's gospel, Jesus performs a healing miracle, but some people attribute this act to evil. Their hardened hearts blind them to the presence of God in Jesus, leading them to reject the good works He does.

Jesus invites us to recognise the goodness in the lives of those around us and to be cautious about drawing conclusions based on our observations of others. He always sees the potential for goodness in people, even when they may not see it in themselves. For example, others viewed Matthew as a public sinner because of his job as a tax collector, but Jesus saw the potential for a meaningful life in him (Matthew 9:9-13). Similarly, when Jesus encountered the woman accused of adultery, He offered her a second chance, focusing on her potential for change rather than her mistakes (John 8:1-11). As Jesus' disciples today, let's strive to be open to the goodness in others.

### **Reflective question:**

What hinders me from seeing the good in others?

**Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> October, St. John XXIII.**

**Joel 4:12-21, 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!'*

### Listeners and doers of God's word

A woman in the crowd is struck by Jesus' words and acknowledges Mary, His mother, as blessed for bearing and nurturing Him. Jesus emphasises that true blessing comes from hearing and obeying God's word. In fact, Mary is richly blessed, and she serves as the perfect example of

someone who listens to God's word and puts it into practice in her life. She is truly blessed, not because of her being chosen to be Jesus' mother, but because of her unwavering commitment to hear and do God's word. We see her hearing and doing God's word during the Annunciation when she said "Yes" to be the Mother of God and continued with her ongoing acceptance of God's plan throughout her life, even in the face of challenges and uncertainties.

Listening to God's word, assimilating it, and putting it into action can be quite challenging. Often, we have good intentions but struggle to follow through and live out according to what God wants from us. Let us ask Mother Mary to guide us in following her example of listening to and living out His word.

**Reflective question:**

How can I translate God's word into action today and throughout the week?

**Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**2 Kings 5:14-17, 2 Timothy 2:8-13, Luke 17:11-19**

*On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered one of the villages, ten lepers came to meet him. They stood some way off and called to him, 'Jesus! Master! Take pity on us.' When he saw them he said, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests'. Now as they were going away they were cleansed. Finding himself cured, one of them turned back praising God at the top of his voice and threw himself at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. This made Jesus say, 'Were not all ten made clean? The other nine, where are they? It seems that no one has come back to give praise to God, except this foreigner.' And he said to the man, 'Stand up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you.'*

With grateful hearts

Today's first reading from 2 Kings recounts the story of Naaman, a high-ranking commander from Aram who suffered from leprosy. Despite his affliction, Naaman's humility in following the instructions of the prophet Elisha led him to experience God's healing presence in his life. In gratitude, Naaman vowed to worship only the God of Israel. In the Gospel, we encounter ten lepers who approached Jesus seeking healing.

Although all ten were healed, only one returned to Jesus to express his gratitude.

These two readings encourage us to reflect on our hearts: Are we truly grateful to God for His gifts and His loving presence? Often, we focus on our failures, disappointments, and sufferings, neglecting to appreciate and thank God for all He has done for us and given us. Our loving God is always by our side. His strength helps us through difficult times, His joy uplifts us when we are down, His light guides us in our lives, and His peace comforts us in our sorrows. Let us strive to be humble and recognise God's loving presence in every aspect of our lives, giving thanks to Him with grateful hearts. Gratitude leads us to a deeper relationship with God.

**Reflective question:**

How can I show gratitude to God today?

**Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 28<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**Romans 1:1-7, 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.'*

**Servant of Christ**

In today's first reading, St. Paul states, *"From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and especially chosen to preach the Good News..."*. He acknowledges that he was chosen by God to be *"a servant of Christ"* with the purpose of spreading the Gospel. Paul joyfully embraces his calling and mission out of love for Christ rather than from a sense of obligation. In 2 Corinthians 5:14, Paul proclaims, *"For the love of Christ compels us."* It is indeed his experience of Christ's personal love for him, alongside his own love for Jesus, that has defined

his life and empowered him to persevere in his calling. This love enables him to serve others faithfully, even amidst immense suffering for the sake of the Gospel. Today, let us recognise Jesus as our Master whom we love. Everything we do, we do with Him and for Him.

In the gospel, Jesus tells the people who are looking for signs, “*There is something greater than Solomon...than Jonah here*”. This refers to Himself, the incarnate God, who is greater than anyone. Therefore, we live with unwavering trust, knowing that He is the One to whom we dedicate our lives in love and service.

### **Reflective question:**

What are the practical steps I can take today to live out the calling as a servant of Christ?

**Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October, St. Callistus I.**

**Romans 1:16-25, 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.’*

### **A heart that loves**

In today’s gospel, a Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner and was shocked when Jesus did not wash His hands. This reaction came from ritual washing required by the Law, which the Pharisees prioritised. Knowing the man’s thoughts, Jesus pointed out that while the Pharisees focused on cleaning the outside of cups and plates, they ignored their own hearts, filled with extortion and wickedness. Consequently, they missed the true essence of their faith in God.

Jesus invites us to examine the state of our hearts instead of focusing excessively on outward religious practices. A heart filled with love for God naturally extends that love to others. This is the essence of our Christian faith: living a life of practical love by selflessly reaching out to

those in need. As we generously share our love, we find that our own hearts are not left feeling empty. In fact, the more we give of ourselves, the more we discover an overwhelming sense of joy and fulfilment, as God continually replenishes us with His infinite love.

**Reflective question:**

How can I practice giving love to those around me today?

**Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> October, St. Teresa of Jesus.**

**Romans 2:1-11, 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.'*

Not to lose sight of what matters

The Pharisees understood the core principles of their faith—loving God and loving their neighbours—but these ideas did not affect their daily lives. They focused on strict adherence to minor laws, often displaying pride and disdain for others while imposing heavy burdens on the people. Jesus used strong language to emphasise the importance of loving God and one's neighbour.

Perhaps Jesus' message to the Pharisees still holds a certain relevance for us. It is all too easy to become preoccupied with the rules and regulations of the Church, losing sight of what truly matters in our Christian faith, which is love. Jesus invites us not just to talk about love, forgiveness, and mercy, but to actively practice them so that our words and actions are coherent. In this time of prayer, let us return to a deep experience of God's unconditional love for us, allowing Him to redirect our focus toward prioritising love, which truly defines our Christian faith.



**Reflective question:**

Am I inconsistent between my words and actions, missing the essence of my faith?

**Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> October, St. Hedwig, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.  
Romans 3:21-30, 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.*

**Integrity, not hypocrisy**

In today's Gospel, Jesus accuses the religious leaders of hypocrisy and of misrepresenting God's true heart. Motivated by pride and vanity, they focus on meticulous adherence to the letter of the law and miss the spirit of God's will, which is to love God and neighbour, leading to empty words and actions. Thus, their hypocrisy was preventing people from encountering the real God of love and mercy and entering into a relationship with Him.

Today's gospel challenges us to be people of integrity, enabling our lives to genuinely draw others closer to God. We are called to be solid bridges that connect others to God and God to others. In this time of prayer, let us humbly ask that the Holy Spirit come and transform our hearts so that we may be truly honest, trustworthy, and consistent in our words and deeds.

**Reflective question:**

How can I live out my faith authentically?

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

**Romans 4:1-8, Luke 12:1-7**

*The people had gathered in their thousands so that they were treading on one another. And he began to speak, first of all to his disciples. 'Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees -- their hypocrisy. Everything now covered up will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. For this reason, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in hidden places will be proclaimed from the housetops. To you my friends I say: Do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. I will tell you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has the power to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, he is the one to fear. Can you not buy five sparrows for two pennies? And yet not one is forgotten in God's sight. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. There is no need to be afraid: you are worth more than many sparrows.'*

Precious in God's sight

At the end of today's gospel, Jesus states, "*Can you not buy five sparrows for two pennies? And yet not one is forgotten in God's sight. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. There is no need to be afraid: you are worth more than many sparrows.*" Let us take a moment to reflect on the words of Jesus and find comfort in them. Jesus uses the example of a sparrow to remind us of our immense value in God's eyes. Although the sparrow is a small bird and often considered insignificant, Jesus assures us that not a single sparrow is forgotten by God. This illustrates that, no matter how small or seemingly unimportant we may feel, we are known and cared for by God.

We sometimes struggle with our sense of worth, especially when failures and disappointments make us feel down about ourselves. Today, let us anchor ourselves in God's unconditional love and hold on to the truth that we are always in His heart. Each one of us is precious to God. He is actively and personally involved in the details of our lives. Therefore, we can entrust our lives to Him, knowing that He will take care of us.

**Reflective question:**

How does knowing that I am precious in God's sight help me to live this day with confidence and hope?

**Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> October, St. Luke.**

**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"*

Never alone

*"Everyone of them deserted me... But the Lord stood by me and gave me power so that through me the whole message might be proclaimed for all the pagans to hear."* These words are taken from the 1<sup>st</sup> reading from St. Paul's letter to Timothy. Here, we can see Paul at the lowest point of his life when he was abandoned by his friends while in a Roman prison. Yet, He found solace in God's presence, who stood by Him and gave him strength. Paul's experience is similar to that of Jesus. As Jesus faced His impending death, He knew that His disciples would leave Him, but He said in John 16:32, *"Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me"*. This truth holds for us today as well: God is always by our side, walking with us through the joys and sorrows of life.

In the gospel, Jesus sent His disciples to proclaim the message that *"the Kingdom of God is very near you."* The Kingdom of God represents the presence of our loving God, who is with us. We are called to share this message with others so that they, too, can find comfort and strength during their difficult moments.

**Reflective question:**

How can I actively *"proclaim the Kingdom of God is very near you"* through my words and actions today?

## **Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> October, Mission Sunday.**

**Exodus 17:8-13, 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2, Luke 18:1-8**

*Jesus told his disciples a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. 'There was a judge in a certain town' he said 'who had neither fear of God nor respect for man. In the same town there was a widow who kept on coming to him and saying, "I want justice from you against my enemy!" For a long time he refused, but at last he said to himself, "Maybe I have neither fear of God nor respect for man, but since she keeps pestering me I must give this widow her just rights, or she will persist in coming and worry me to death".' And the Lord said 'You notice what the unjust judge has to say? Now will not God see justice done to his chosen who cry to him day and night even when he delays to help them? I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find any faith on earth?'*

### Just keep praying

In the animated movie "Finding Nemo", a forgetful fish named Dory uses the phrase "Just keep swimming" to encourage herself to persevere through the challenges she faces in the ocean. In today's gospel, Jesus conveys a similar message through the parable of the persistent widow, reminding us of the importance of being steadfast in our prayers. He encourages us to continue praying, even when it feels like God is silent. When our prayers seem unanswered, we must trust that God will provide what we truly need, in His own time and in His own ways.

In the first reading, the passage describes how Aaron and Hur assisted Moses by physically lifting his arms when he became too tired to hold them up in prayer to God. The image of Moses with his hands raised, supported by Aaron and Hur, shows the vital role of a supportive faith community. We need people to help us when we struggle to continue praying and feel overwhelmed by the challenges we face. God brings individuals into our lives to uplift us, and their love and support empower us to move forward with renewed determination and perseverance, even during our most challenging moments.

### **Reflective questions:**

Have I ever felt tempted to give up praying? What is Jesus' invitation for me during this time of prayer?

**Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

**Romans 4:20-25, Luke 12:12-21**

*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 do not have 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.'*

### To share, not hoard

In today's gospel, a man from the crowd asked Jesus to settle a family dispute over inheritance. Instead, He used this situation as an opportunity to teach the crowd about the dangers of hoarding wealth. He told a parable about a rich man who, instead of being grateful to God for his good fortune and sharing with those who were less privileged, focused his time and energy on building bigger barns to store his excess crops. He believed that by accumulating more wealth, he would be able to enjoy life. However, God addressed him, saying, *"Fool! This very night, the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?"* The man's sudden death rendered his wealth worthless to him, illustrating the uselessness of his plans.

Jesus calls us to strive to be rich in God's sight by generously sharing everything we have with those in need. We are merely stewards of all that we possess, including our time and talents. Today, let us open our eyes to the needs of others around us and share what we have with them.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I be rich in God's sight?

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

**Romans 5:12, 15,17-21, 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.'*

### Jesus, our Master and Servant

In today's gospel, Jesus calls us to be ready for His coming, like servants waiting patiently for their master to return. We often associate Jesus' coming with the end of our lives, but Jesus also comes to us every single day, knocking at the door of our hearts. He waits for us to open up and allow Him to take a place in our lives. Jesus also comes to us through the needs of our brothers and sisters, especially those who are suffering. Each time we show love to someone, use our talents to help others, care for the needy, or offer encouraging words to a friend, we are faithful servants, ready for action.

In the book of Revelation, Jesus says, "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me*" (Revelation 3:20). Jesus patiently knocks at the door of our lives every day. If we choose to open the door, He will enter and stay with us, by being our faithful servant, pouring out His boundless love and care.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I intentionally cultivate a heart of readiness for Jesus' coming today and every day of my life?

**Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October, St. John Paul II.**

**Romans 6:12-18, 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.’*

### Responsible stewards

In today’s gospel, Jesus concludes with the statement, “... *when a man has had a great deal given him on trust, even more will be expected of him.*” He calls us to be responsible stewards of what God has given to us. Each day, He gives us opportunities to use our talents and skills to benefit those around us, to give our material resources to help those in need, to exercise our authority to serve and positively impact the lives of others, and the list goes on. Every time we serve those around us, we are expressing our love for God, our Master.

When we see God face-to-face at the end of our lives, what will truly matter will not be the money in our bank accounts, the number of vacations we have taken, or our titles and positions. Rather, it will be the acts of love and words of kindness we have shared with others.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I live my life so that I can be a true steward of God?

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

**Romans 6:19-23, 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.'*

### Blazing with the fire of Christ

In the gospel, Jesus states, *"Do you suppose that I am here to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division."* This raises a question about what Jesus meant by this statement. Isn't He the Prince of Peace who offers us His peace? Yes, He does come to bring peace, but not the kind that merely signifies agreement or silences dissent. The peace Jesus offers is distinct from worldly peace.

Following Jesus on His path of love and truth often leads to divisions because not everyone will welcome what we say or do. Consider Jesus on the cross: His mission was not peaceful in the sense that His radical lifestyle and His efforts to establish God's kingdom of justice and love resulted in rejection and ultimately crucifixion. Today, let us ask Jesus to burn our hearts with love for God, so we can spread His love throughout the world, even when faced with opposition from others.

### **Reflective question:**

In what way can I show faithfulness to Him, even if it leads to opposition with others?

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

**Romans 7:18-25, Luke 12:54-59**

*Jesus said again 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'*



### To see God

In today's gospel passage, Jesus expressed frustration with the people who believed that they could interpret the signs of nature. Despite witnessing the greatest sign unfolding right before them, they remained oblivious. They saw Jesus opening the eyes of the blind, enabling the mute to speak, allowing the lame to walk, and even raising the dead. They heard Him teaching with authority that impressed all those who heard Him speak. Yet, despite all these, many did not recognise the presence of God working in and through Jesus.

As we pray with this passage today, we might ask ourselves: What would Jesus say about us? Can we truly recognise Him amidst the complexities of our lives? Do we see His presence in the comforting words of a friend, in the needs of those around us, or in the silent depths of our hearts, where we yearn for peaceful moments of prayer? Are we open to welcoming Him in the faces of the people we meet, the events we experience, and the challenges we face? Let us seek to see the extraordinary in the ordinary and acknowledge His presence in every moment.

### **Reflective question:**

How can I apply my faith to recognise and celebrate God's presence in my life today?

### **Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Romans 8:1-11, 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 loves, not punishes

In today's gospel passage, two incidents involving violent deaths were brought to Jesus' attention. Many believed that these unfortunate events occurred because God was punishing the victims for their sins. However, Jesus cautioned the people against linking calamities and tragedies in life to punishment from God. Instead, both good and bad experiences are part of the human journey. Jesus did not provide specific reasons for why suffering and death occur; rather, He emphasised the importance of repentance in our life journey.

Repentance is not merely about feeling regret; it involves turning towards God's merciful love and allowing Him to change our mindset, giving us a renewed perspective and a new way of loving. Today, Jesus invites us to seize the opportunity to live life to the fullest. Every moment provides an opportunity to experience God's mercy and deepen our relationship with Him.

### **Reflective question:**

If today were my last day on earth, how would I want to live it?

### **Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

**Ecclesiasticus 35:12-14, 16-19, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18, Luke 18:9-14**  
*Jesus spoke the following parable to some people who prided themselves on being virtuous and despised everyone else, 'Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood there and said this prayer to himself, "I thank you, God, that I am not grasping, unjust, adulterous like the rest of mankind, and particularly that I am not like this tax collector here. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes on all I get." The tax collector stood some distance away, not daring even to raise his eyes to heaven; but he beat his breast and said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner". This man, I tell you, went home again at rights with God; the other did not. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the man who humbles himself will be exalted.'*

## Humility

In today's gospel, Jesus highlights the importance of humility through the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, who both went to the Temple to pray. The Pharisee stood before God, thanking Him for being better than others. He listed all the good deeds He had done and felt proud of how good he was. In contrast, the tax collector stood at a distance, recognised his need for God's mercy, and prayed, "*God, be merciful to me, a sinner.*" Jesus explains that it was the tax collector who went home justified.

Jesus calls us to be humble and to recognise our need for God and His mercy in our lives when we pray. If we are overly focused on ourselves, we leave no room for God to work in us and through us. By embracing humility, we also understand that there is no need to compare ourselves to others; instead, we are called to love and accept each person as they are.

### **Reflective question:**

How does today's gospel challenge me in my relationship with God?

### **Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> October, 29<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Romans 8:12-17, Luke 13:10-17**

*One Sabbath day, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and there before him was a woman who for eighteen years had been possessed by a spirit that crippled her; she was bent double and quite unable to stand upright. When Jesus saw her he called her over and said, 'Woman, you are freed from your disability,' and he laid his hands on her. And at once she straightened up, and she glorified God. But the president of the synagogue was indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, and he addressed all those present saying, 'There are six days when work is to be done. Come and be healed on one of those days and not on the Sabbath.' But the Lord answered him and said, 'Hypocrites! Is there one of you who does not untie his ox or his donkey from the manger on the Sabbath and take it out for watering? And this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has held bound these eighteen years -- was it not right to untie this bond on the Sabbath day?' When he said this, all his adversaries were covered with confusion, and all the people were overjoyed at all the wonders he worked.*

### To do good all the time

In today's gospel, Jesus notices a woman in the synagogue who has been crippled for eighteen years. He feels compassion for her suffering and calls out to her, saying, "*Woman, you are freed from your disability.*" Instantly, she is healed and stands up straight, praising God. Like this woman, many of us carry burdens from past failures, anxiety about the future, heartaches, and pain. Jesus wants to free us from these heavy loads. Today, He reaches out to us through the comforting presence and prayers of people around us and nourishes us with His Word and the Eucharist.

In the gospel, another character is the president of the synagogue. Instead of praising God, he expresses anger over Jesus' healing someone on the Sabbath. In his eyes, Jesus is not following the Sabbath law. However, for Jesus, every day is an opportunity to do good. Today, let us also strive to do good and allow compassion to guide our actions.

### **Reflective question:**

As I read the gospel passage, what is Jesus' message to me?

### **Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October, SS. Simon and Jude.**

#### **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.*

### Ordinary People, Extraordinary Mission

Jesus chose twelve ordinary individuals, each with their own strengths and limitations, to be His apostles. When we look at the list of these apostles, none would be considered great or important by the world's standards. In fact, they were very ordinary men, yet Jesus sent them on an extraordinary mission. Because they trusted in Him, they chose to follow.

This is wonderful news for us! Jesus calls each one of us—imperfect as we may be—to be His friends. Like the apostles, we have the choice to

respond generously to His call. We can make excuses such as, “*I have no time,*” “*I am not qualified,*” “*I am too old,*” or “*I am too young.*” Alternatively, we can be bold and pray with open hands, “*Take me, Lord, and use me for Your glory.*” Today, as we celebrate the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, let us allow Jesus to use our ordinary lives for His extraordinary mission.

### **Reflective Question:**

Am I open to collaborating with God in the mission to share His love with those around me?

### **Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.**

#### **Romans 8:26-30, 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.”*

#### Following Jesus and entering the Narrow Door

In today’s gospel, Jesus said, “*Try your best to enter by the narrow door.*” What is this narrow door? It refers to the narrow door of love—love that is patient, trusting, kind, forgiving, courageous, peaceful, faithful, and self-giving. By entering this narrow door of love, we become faithful disciples of Jesus, walking the same path He did.

Entering this narrow door is not easy because the world encourages us to prioritise ourselves. However, we should not be afraid to follow Jesus

as He guides us daily toward this narrow door of selfless love, which offers the greatest fulfilment that the world cannot provide.

### **Reflective Question:**

What prevents me from entering the narrow door of love?

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

**Romans 8:31-39, 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!'

### Nothing can separate us from God's love

In today's gospel, Jesus uses the metaphor of a hen gathering her chicks under her wings to illustrate God's loving kindness. This image conveys a sense of tenderness and gentle affection. Just as a mother hen watches her fragile chicks, nurturing and shielding them from harm, God remains ever watchful over us. He draws us close into His embrace of love. Even in the midst of our struggles and brokenness, God's love is a constant presence in our lives.

In the first reading from St. Paul's letter to the Romans, he expresses confidence in God's steadfast love: *"Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked...For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Like St. Paul, let us live this day with security and hope, knowing we are infinitely loved by God.

**Reflective question:**

How does the foundational truth of God's love change the way I face the challenges I live today and the uncertainties of the future?

**Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time.****Romans 9:1-5, Luke 14:1-6**

*Now it happened that on a Sabbath day, Jesus had gone to share a meal in the house of one of the leading Pharisees, and they watched him closely. Now there in front of him was a man with dropsy, and Jesus addressed the lawyers and Pharisees with the words, 'Is it against the law to cure someone on the Sabbath, or not?' But they remained silent, so he took the man, cured him and sent him away. Then he said to them, 'Which of you here, if his son falls into a well, or his ox, will not pull him out on a Sabbath day without any hesitation?' And to this they could find no answer.*

**The law of love**

In today's gospel, Jesus is invited to the house of a prominent Pharisee, where He shares a meal with other religious leaders on the Sabbath. During the meal, they closely observe Jesus because a man suffering from dropsy is present, and they want to see if He will heal him, potentially breaking the Sabbath law. For these religious leaders, adhering to the Sabbath law takes precedence over the welfare of individuals. In contrast, Jesus always prioritises the well-being of people. Therefore, He is ready to demonstrate His love through healing the man, even though He knows this might lead to rejection by the religious leaders.

Authentic love for God requires us to extend our hearts to others, especially the marginalised around us. Let us be moved by a deep, compassionate love that drives us to reach out and help those in need. Even when our efforts may be met with harsh judgments or criticism from others, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to serve those around us, placing their well-being and dignity above all else.

**Reflective question:**

How can I focus on the needs of those around me as Jesus did?

