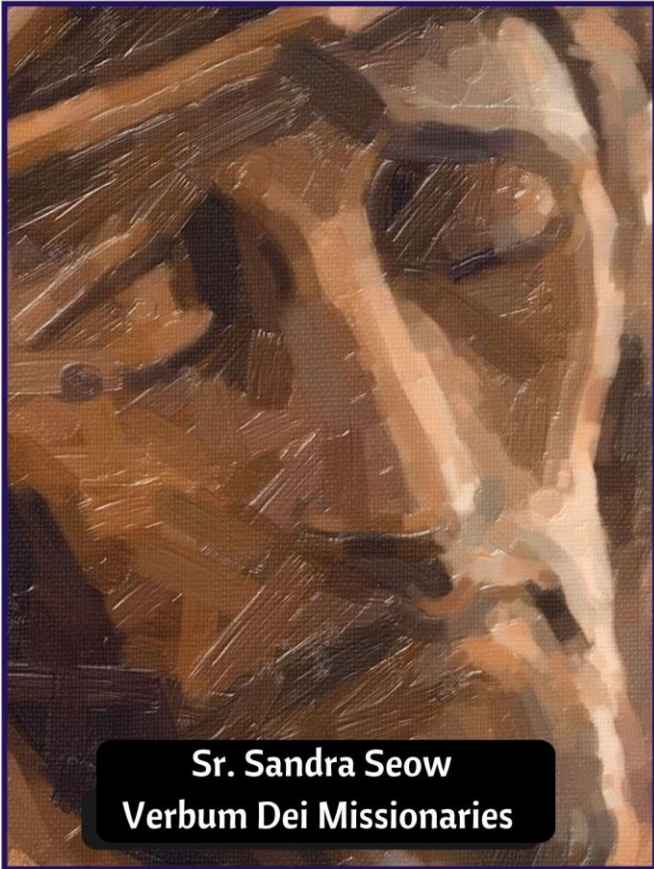


*Prayer for Living
Year C
November*

**Christ our King and
the Lord of Love**



**Sr. Sandra Seow
Verbum Dei Missionaries**

PRAYER FOR LIVING YEAR C

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Saturday, 1st November, All Saints.

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14, 1 John 3:1-3, Matthew 5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: 'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage. Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied. Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God. Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

Saints of Today

Today, we celebrate All Saints' Day. While we often think of saints as superheroes, they are actually ordinary people who allow themselves to be loved by God. In return, they love Him by loving and serving others, working for peace and justice, and responding to adversity with goodness rather than hatred. On this day, we remember both the saints who have been officially canonised and the many uncanonized saints in our everyday lives who strive to embody goodness and love. Let us not merely admire them, but aim to imitate their examples in our own lives.

In the Gospel, Jesus invites us to make the Beatitudes the foundation of our daily existence. The world often tells us that life is about achieving wealth, popularity, and status. However, the Beatitudes guide us toward a different path: to be poor in spirit, to mourn, to be gentle, to seek justice, to show mercy, to love peace, to keep our hearts pure, and to stand firm even when we face challenges for the sake of God's Kingdom. It is possible to become saints today when we prioritise others over our own personal interests and lives.

Reflective Question:

How can I strive to base my life on the Beatitudes?

Sunday, 2nd November, All Souls' Day.

Isaiah 25:6-9, Romans 5:5-11, Luke 7:11-17

Jesus went to a town called Nain, accompanied by his disciples and a great number of people. Now when he was near the gate of the town there was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a considerable number of the townspeople was with her. When the Lord saw her he felt sorry for her and said to her, 'Don't cry.' Then he went up and touched the bier and the bearers stood still, and he said, 'Young man, I tell you: get up.' And the dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Everyone was filled with awe and glorified God saying, 'A great prophet has risen up among us; God has visited his people.' And this view of him spread throughout Judaea and all over the countryside.

Death

As we mark All Souls' Day today, we take a moment to remember our beloved family and friends who have departed from this world. We express our heartfelt gratitude for the ways they enriched our lives, knowing that they now live on in the embrace of God. This day encourages us to reflect deeply on the fleeting nature of our lives. Indeed, the time we have on this earth is precious and limited, reminding us of a profound truth: one day, we too will leave this life behind. Every day offers us the opportunity to truly appreciate life and cherish the moments we have by embracing God's love and sharing it with others.

In today's gospel, Jesus encounters a widow at Nain who is preparing to bury her deceased son. Moved by her deep sorrow, Jesus says to her, "Don't cry." He then touches the coffin and tells the dead man, "Young man, I tell you: get up." He restores the young man to life and returns him to his mother. For those of us grieving the loss of a loved one, Jesus assures us that we are not alone in our pain. He seeks us in our sorrows. Let us find comfort in Jesus and hold onto the hope of one day being reunited with our loved ones in the presence of God's eternal love.

Reflective Question:

How does the reality of death challenge me to live my life for what truly matters?

Monday, 3rd November, St. Martin de Porres.

Romans 11:29-36, Luke 14:12-14

Jesus said to his host, one of the leading Pharisees, 'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not ask your friends, brothers, relations or rich neighbours, for fear they repay your courtesy by inviting you in return. No; when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; that they cannot pay you back means that you are fortunate, because repayment will be made to you when the virtuous rise again.'

The small acts of kindness

"...when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind; their inability to repay you means that you are fortunate..." These words from today's gospel are meant for us as well. Jesus invites us to give without counting the cost or seeking rewards in return. Often, we offer our time, money, and talents to others, but our giving can be tainted by self-interest and the hope of receiving favours in return. For instance, we might donate to a cause with the expectation that our contribution will be publicly recognised. We may invite someone to a party, anticipating that they will return the favour by inviting us to theirs. We work hard for our families, hoping for appreciation from our spouses and children.

Jesus wants us to act out of love and find joy in giving rather than in receiving. Both the small and large acts of kindness we perform will not go unnoticed, because Jesus sees and appreciates them. Today, let us focus on performing acts of love and speaking words of kindness simply to please Jesus.

Reflective question:

How can I truly be generous today?

Tuesday, 4th November, St. Charles Borromeo.

Romans 12:5-16, Luke 14:15-24

One of those gathered round the table said to Jesus, 'Happy the man who will be at the feast in the kingdom of God!' But he said to him, 'There was a man who gave a great banquet, and he invited a large number of people. When the time for the banquet came, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, "Come along: everything is ready now". But all alike started to make excuses. The first said, "I have bought a piece of land and must go and see it. Please accept my apologies."

Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen and am on my way to try them out. Please accept my apologies." Yet another said, "I have just got married and so am unable to come". The servant returned and reported this to his master. Then the householder, in a rage, said to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame". "Sir" said the servant "your orders have been carried out and there is still room." Then the master said to his servant, "Go to the open roads and the hedgerows and force people to come in to make sure my house is full; because, I tell you, not one of those who were invited shall have a taste of my banquet".

Let love be genuine

In the first reading from Romans, St. Paul reminds us, *"Do not let your love be a pretence, but sincerely prefer good to evil..."* In a world where love is often shallow and fleeting, St. Paul emphasises that Christian love should be genuine, shown through real and tangible actions. We can see how Jesus embodied this love by feeding the hungry, healing the sick, sharing meals with outcasts, and continually reaching out to those who were marginalised. His love was expressed through actions, not merely words. As His disciples, we are called to love as He did. However, to do this, we must first abide in Christ, allowing His love to fill us and flow through us.

In today's gospel, Jesus tells a parable of a man who invites many guests to his banquet. One by one, they reject the invitation with various excuses. Similarly, Jesus continues to invite us to partake in His banquet of love, where He wishes to fill us with His unconditional love. We can choose to make excuses, allowing busyness and material distractions keep us from Him, or we can respond to His call and cultivate a relationship with Him.

Reflective question:

How can I dedicate today to expressing genuine love through my words and actions?

Wednesday, 5th November, 31st Week in Ordinary Time.

Romans 13:8-10, Luke 14:25-33

Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them. 'If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife,

children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple. Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. 'And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, the onlookers would all start making fun of him and saying, "Here is a man who started to build and was unable to finish". Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who advanced against him with twenty thousand? If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace. So in the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions.'

The cost of discipleship

In today's reading from St. Paul's letter to the Romans, he emphasises the importance of love, stating, *"Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love... Love is one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour..."* These words continue to call out to us to remind us about the primacy of love in our relationships with our family, friends and even those we struggle to be with. Genuine and selfless love should direct our interactions with them and lead us to constantly seek their well-being.

In the Gospel, Jesus challenges us to consider the cost of discipleship. He outlines three conditions for following Him: *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, or children... Anyone who does not carry his cross... None of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions."* The term "hate" refers not to literal hatred, but rather signifies the absolute commitment needed of us in following Jesus. We also need to carry our crosses, which involve enduring struggles for justice and the betterment of others, and let go of attachments that can distract us from setting our hearts on Jesus. Let us commit to following Jesus and embrace the loving life that God intended for us.

Reflective question:

In what way do today's passages challenge me in my following of Jesus?

Thursday, 6th November, 31st Week in Ordinary Time.

Romans 14:7-12, Luke 15:1-10

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them: 'What man among you with a hundred sheep, losing one, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and then, when he got home, call together his friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," he would say "I have found my sheep that was lost." In the same way, I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance. Or again, what woman with ten drachmas would not, if she lost one, light a lamp and sweep out the house and search thoroughly till she found it? And then, when she had found it, call together her friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," she would say "I have found the drachma I lost." In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one repentant sinner.'

Lost and found

The shepherd left the 99 sheep in the wilderness to search for the one lost sheep, despite the risks of the others wandering off or being harmed. In a profit-driven world, few would choose to seek just one lost sheep. The woman lost one drachma, worth a day's wages for a labourer in Jesus' time. Although she had nine others, she valued the lost coin highly. She lit her lamp and searched diligently until she found it. In a throwaway culture, many would not bother looking for a single lost drachma.

In God's eyes, every lost sheep is worthy, and every lost drachma is valuable. This is the Good News! Our God is the God of the lost. Like the shepherd and the woman in the parables, God goes to extraordinary lengths to find and restore those who are lost. Therefore, when we find ourselves wandering away from Him or feeling undervalued and forgotten by others, we can be assured that we are relentlessly pursued and unconditionally loved by God. The path to His heart is always open.

Questions for Reflection:

In my life, have I experienced being lost and then found by God? How then can I step out of my comfort zone and seek the lost today?

Friday, 7th November, 31st Week in Ordinary Time.

Romans 15:14-21, Luke 16:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, 'There was a rich man and he had a steward denounced to him for being wasteful with his property. He called for the man and said, "What is this I hear about you? Draw me up an account of your stewardship because you are not to be my steward any longer." Then the steward said to himself, "Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough. Go begging? I should be too ashamed. Ah, I know what I will do to make sure that when I am dismissed from office there will be some to welcome me into their homes." Then he called his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, "How much do you owe my master?" "One hundred measures of oil" was the reply. The steward said, "Here, take your bond; sit down straight away and write fifty". To another he said, "And you, sir, how much do you owe?" "One hundred measures of wheat" was the reply. The steward said, "Here, take your bond and write eighty". 'The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.'

To value people more than things

Today, Jesus shares a parable about a dishonest steward who mismanaged his master's business and was dismissed upon being discovered. Out of desperation for survival, he reduced the debts of his master's debtors. By doing this, he hoped to gain their favour so that when he lost his job, they might help him. Although the steward acted out of selfish interest, his actions revealed a change of heart: he learned that, ultimately, people are more important than material possessions.

Jesus calls us to prioritise our relationships with others above material wealth and possessions. We do this by actively using our resources to serve those around us and by treating others as more important than ourselves. When we make small efforts to love others, Jesus will work through us in surprising ways.

Reflection Question:

How can I live this day placing others and their needs as my top priority?

Saturday, 8th November, 31st Week in Ordinary Time.

Romans 16:3-9,16,22-27, Luke 16:9-15

Jesus said to his disciples: 'And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends, and thus make sure that when it fails you, they will welcome you into eternal dwellings. Anyone who is trustworthy in little things is trustworthy in great; anyone who is dishonest in little things is dishonest in great. If then you are not trustworthy with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches? And if you are not trustworthy with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own? No servant can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or be attached to the first and despise the second. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.' The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and jeered at him. He said to them, 'You are the very ones who pass yourselves off as upright in people's sight, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed in human eyes is loathsome in the sight of God.'

Serve God

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us, *"And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win friends for yourselves, so that when it fails, they will welcome you into eternal dwellings."* Money, along with our talents, intellect, and time, is a gift that God has given us. We are called to be responsible stewards of these gifts, using them for His purpose. Jesus emphasises the importance of using our resources to serve others, particularly to the poor and marginalised, in order to *"win friends"* and build meaningful connections.

Jesus concludes with the statement, *"No servant can serve two masters... You cannot serve both God and money."* Our "master" is the one who controls our thoughts and desires, shapes our values, and motivates our actions. Today, let us honestly examine ourselves to recognise who is controlling our lives. Let us pray for the grace to allow Him to be our Master by serving others.

Reflective question:

How can I use my resources to help others rather than hoarding them for selfish interests?

**Sunday, 9th November, The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica.
Ezekiel 47:1-2,8-9,12, 1 Corinthians 3:9-11,16-17, John 2:13-22**

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market'. Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up'. The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

God's Dwelling Place

Today, we celebrate the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, an important occasion that replaces a Sunday in Ordinary Time. The Lateran Basilica is the Pope's official cathedral, serving as the mother church of all churches and a symbol of unity for Christians around the world.

In the second reading, St. Paul reminds the Corinthians that we are God's temple, and that the Spirit of God dwells within us and among us. Just as we are, God has made His home within us. This invites us to recognise that our lives are sacred spaces where God resides. In the Gospel, Jesus drives the money changers and merchants out of the Temple in Jerusalem, declaring, *"Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace."* He recognised the intentions of these individuals, who were in God's house for financial gain. By driving them out, Jesus reminded people to centre their worship and lives around God. Today, let us allow Jesus to challenge us to remove the distractions that take God's rightful place in our lives. May we truly love God with all our heart, mind, and strength.

Reflective Questions:

Am I aware that I am the dwelling place of God today? What does this reality mean to me?

Monday, 10th November, St. Leo the Great.

Wisdom 1:1-7, Luke 17:1-6

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Obstacles are sure to come, but alas for the one who provides them! It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone put round his neck than that he should lead astray a single one of these little ones. Watch yourselves! If your brother does something wrong, reprove him and, if he is sorry, forgive him. And if he wrongs you seven times a day and seven times comes back to you and says, "I am sorry", you must forgive him.' 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.'

Increase our faith

Jesus begins today's gospel with the words, "*Obstacles are sure to come, but alas for the one who provides them!*" Indeed, we will face obstacles such as pride, selfishness, and indifference that can lead us away from the path of love, truth, and justice. Jesus warns us, "*Watch yourselves!*" This is important because many people depend on the way we live out our faith. Our unloving and selfish actions can scandalise others. Therefore, we must be careful not to become stumbling blocks through our negative examples to our family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers we encounter.

It is our choice to be good or bad examples, to be signs that point others toward Jesus or away from Him. In the Gospel, when the disciples realised the significant responsibilities placed upon them, they cried out to Jesus, "*Increase our faith.*" Today, let us also ask Jesus to strengthen our faith so that we can overcome the obstacles we face, continue trusting in God's forgiveness, and consistently seek His will.

Reflective question:

What is the obstacle in me that can prevent me from living out my faith today?

Tuesday, 11th November, St. Martin of Tours.

Wisdom 2:23-3:9, Luke 17:7-10

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘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”.

We are merely servants

Many of us commonly seek appreciation and recognition for our hard work, whether it is a word of praise or an affirmation. As Christians, can we instead adopt the mindset of saying, *“We are merely servants; we have done no more than our duty”*? Can we view our service to God and those around us as sacred acts of love?

God desires service that comes from love. He, being love itself, fills our hearts with an unlimited desire to give what is good for the sake of others. Our true joy arises when we recognise that we have done our best for others and that we are pleasing God through our actions. Today, let us focus our hearts on God. In doing so, we can let go of the need for recognition—finding happiness in the knowledge that our sole aim is to love God by seeking the well-being of those we love.

Reflective question:

How does today’s gospel challenge me to live this day by doing small acts of love?

Wednesday, 12th November, St. Josaphat.

Wisdom 6:1-11, Luke 17:11-19

Now 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.'

A grateful heart

In today's Gospel, Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one returned to Him to give thanks. This passage encourages us to reflect on how often we resemble the Samaritan who turned back to express his gratitude. Often, we approach God with long lists of requests and petitions— "*Lord, give me... save me... help me... listen to me.*" But do we also remember to say, "*Thank you, Lord*"?

Gratitude begins with humility. Humility involves recognising the hand of God in our lives. We must remember that every joy, every breath, every friendship, every moment lived, and every love received comes from Him. Today, let us take a moment to acknowledge God's presence in our lives, even during difficult times, and simply tell Him, "*Thank you.*"

Reflective question:

How can I express my gratitude to God today?

Thursday, 13th November, 32nd Week in Ordinary Time.

Wisdom 7:22-8:1, Luke 17:20-25

Asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was to come, Jesus gave them this answer, 'The coming of the kingdom of God does not admit of observation and there will be no one to say, "Look here! Look there!" For, you must know, the kingdom of God is among you.' He said to the disciples, 'A time will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man and will not see it. They will say to you, "Look there!" or, "Look here!" Make no move; do not set off in pursuit; for as the lightning flashing from one part of heaven lights up the other, so will be the Son of Man when his day comes. But first he must suffer grievously and be rejected by this generation.'

The Kingdom is here

The Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God would come. Their expectation was for the Kingdom of God to manifest as a visible, grand, victorious event. However, Jesus responded, "*The coming of the*

kingdom of God does not admit of observation, and there will be no one to say, 'Look here! Look there!' For you must know, the kingdom of God is among you." This means that the kingdom is already present, embodied in Jesus Himself, who represents the visible presence of God's reign. He is the human form of God, revealing the true heart of God, one that loves unconditionally and mercifully, through His words and actions. His life shows the reality of God's kingdom's presence.

Today, the Kingdom of God is already among us. Jesus invites us to recognise His presence in our daily lives. With Him within us, we are called to allow love, truth, and peace to reign in our lives and to flow through us to others.

Reflective question:

How does the presence of the Kingdom of God within me influence the way I live today?

Friday, 14th November, 32nd Week in Ordinary Time.

Wisdom 13:1-9, Luke 17:26-37

Jesus said to the disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it also be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating and drinking, marrying wives and husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It will be the same as it was in Lot's day: people were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but the day Lot left Sodom, God rained fire and brimstone from heaven and it destroyed them all. It will be the same when the day comes for the Son of Man to be revealed. 'When that day comes, anyone on the housetop, with his possessions in the house, must not come down to collect them, nor must anyone in the fields turn back either. Remember Lot's wife. Anyone who tries to preserve his life will lose it; and anyone who loses it will keep it safe. I tell you, on that night two will be in one bed: one will be taken, the other left; two women will be grinding corn together: one will be taken, the other left.' The disciples interrupted. 'Where, Lord?' they asked. He said, 'Where the body is, there too will the vultures gather'.

The fleeting nature of life

In today's gospel reading, Jesus offers a sobering reminder of the fragile nature of our existence. He reflects on the days of Noah and Lot, when

people were engrossed in their daily lives—eating, drinking, and enjoying their familiar routines—when suddenly, calamity struck without warning. He emphasises, *“On that night, two will be in one bed: one will be taken, the other left; two women will be grinding corn together: one will be taken, the other left.”*

This striking imagery serves as a powerful reminder that each of us will one day confront the inevitable end of our earthly journey. It prompts us to be vigilant and prepared, fostering a deep awareness of God’s ever-present influence in our lives. We are encouraged to nurture a relationship filled with loving trust in Him, which naturally moves us to extend love and compassion to those around us. Let us not fall into complacency, clinging to the illusion of endless time. Tomorrow is never promised. Therefore, it is vital to prioritise our relationship with God, placing it at the centre of our lives.

Reflective question:

How can I live fully and love fully today?

Saturday, 15th November, St. Albert the Great.

Wisdom 18:14-16, 19:6-9, 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?’

Praying with trust

In today’s parable, the widow represents someone who, despite being poor and powerless, demonstrates the power of persistence and determination. She continually approaches a corrupt judge until he finally listens and grants her request. This widow teaches us the importance of

prayer: to pray consistently and never lose heart. We should keep praying, no matter the obstacles we face. God answers our prayers in His own time and in His own ways. We can trust that He will provide for all our needs, as He loves and cares for us.

Jesus concluded the parable by asking, *“But when the Son of Man comes, will He find any faith on earth?”* This question invites us to maintain a persistent faith, even when we do not see immediate results from our prayers. Let us hold onto our faith in God and express it through our actions in every aspect of our lives, especially during our suffering, cultivating a deep and trusting relationship with Him.

Reflective questions:

Have I ever felt discouraged in my prayer? In those moments, what encourages me to continue trusting and not give up?

Sunday, 16th November, 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Malachi 3:19-20, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12, Luke 21:5-19

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, ‘All these things you are staring at now-the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed’. And they put to him this question: ‘Master,’ they said ‘when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?’ ‘Take care not to be deceived,’ he said ‘because many will come using my name and saying, “I am he” and, “The time is near at hand”. Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon.’ Then he said to them, ‘Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. ‘But before all this happens, men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name - and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, because I myself shall give you eloquence and wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. You will be hated by all men on account of

my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your endurance will win you your lives.'

God, our constant

In today's gospel, the disciples were awestruck by the stunning beauty of the Temple, captivated by its grand, massive stones. However, Jesus responded, revealing that this magnificent Temple, which inspired such admiration, would eventually face destruction. This serves as a reminder of the impermanence of even the most impressive human-made structures. Through this message, Jesus urges us to recognise that all worldly pursuits and achievements—such as material possessions, status, and fame—are fleeting and temporary. As stated in the book of Ecclesiasticus 1:2-3, *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?"* We are invited to place our security in God alone, for He is the only constant.

When we choose to realign our lives with God and prioritise our relationship with Him over worldly achievements, we often encounter opposition and criticism from those around us. This shift in focus can challenge societal norms and expectations, leading others to question our choices or dismiss our values. In such moments of difficulty, Jesus reassures us not to be afraid, as He will provide us with the strength and wisdom we need. Our faith will empower us to endure any challenge.

Reflective question:

How does today's gospel help me in facing the trials and uncertainties of life?

Monday, 17th November, St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

1 Maccabees 1:10-15,41-43,54-57,62-63, Luke 18:35-43

As Jesus drew near to Jericho there was a blind man sitting at the side of the road begging. When he heard the crowd going past he asked what it was all about, and they told him that Jesus the Nazarene was passing by. So he called out, 'Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me'. The people in front scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he shouted all the louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me'. Jesus stopped and ordered them to bring the man to him, and when he came up, asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' 'Sir,' he replied 'let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight. Your faith has saved you.' And instantly his

sight returned and he followed him praising God, and all the people who saw it gave praise to God for what had happened.'

Let Me See Again!

In today's gospel passage, the blind man heard that Jesus was passing by, and he refused to let the opportunity slip away. He began to shout with all his might, "*Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!*" Though he was blind, he had the eyes of faith to recognise that Jesus could give him what he truly needed. He would not remain silent. Jesus stopped and asked the blind man, "*What do you want me to do for you?*" At first glance, this may seem like a strange or even unnecessary question. Wasn't it obvious what the man needed? Yet Jesus asked it deliberately. He wanted the blind man to express his desire with clarity and determination, to name what his heart truly longed for.

Today, Jesus asks each of us the same question: "*What do you want me to do to do for you?*" We are often surrounded by many wants—like a relaxing vacation, the newest smartphone, or the latest designer clothes. But Jesus is not asking about our surface-level desires. He is inviting us to dig deeper, to reflect on our deepest need. The blind man did not ask for money or comfort. He did not request a new cloak to keep warm. He simply said, "*Lord, let me see again.*" And Jesus responded to that sincere, faith-filled request. Today, Jesus asks us once more, "*What do you want me to do for you?*" How will we answer?

Reflective Question:

What is my deepest need? (e.g., a need for peace, patience, healing, direction, or the strength to do God's will)

Tuesday, 18th November, Dedication of the Basilicas of St. Peter and St Paul.

2 Maccabees 6:18-31, Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the town when a man whose name was Zacchaeus made his appearance; he was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man. He was anxious to see what kind of man Jesus was, but he was too short and could not see him for the crowd; So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus who was to pass that way. When Jesus reached the

spot he looked up and spoke to him: 'Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I must stay at your house today.' And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully. They all complained when they saw what was happening. 'He has gone to stay at a sinner's house' they said. But Zacchaeus stood his ground and said to the Lord, 'Look, sir, I am going to give half my property to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody I will pay him back four times the amount' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek out and save what was lost'

"I must stay at your house today"

In today's Gospel, we encounter the story of Zacchaeus, a wealthy chief tax collector, who climbed a sycamore tree in his deep desire to catch a glimpse of Jesus as He entered the city of Jericho, surrounded by a great crowd. In that moment, something remarkable happened: Jesus looked up, saw him, and said, "*Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.*" Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed Jesus joyfully into his home. That encounter changed his life forever. Touched by the presence of Christ, he resolved to abandon his dishonest ways and embrace a life of integrity and generosity. From that day forward, Zacchaeus was no longer the same.

Today, Jesus extends the same invitation to each one of us: "*I must stay at your house today.*" He desires not just to visit us, but to dwell with us, deeply and personally, in the ordinary and sacred spaces of our daily lives. The question is: Will we open the door? Will we welcome Him with joy, allowing His presence to transform the way we live, speak, and act? Will we let Him not merely be a guest, but the Master of our hearts and the centre of our homes?

Reflective question:

How does Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus inspire me in my journey of faith?

Wednesday, 19th November, 33rd Week in Ordinary Time.

2 Maccabees 7:1,20-31, Luke 19:11-28

While the people were listening, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and they imagined that the kingdom of God was

going to show itself then and there. Accordingly he said, 'A man of noble birth went to a distant country to be appointed king and afterwards return. He summoned ten of his servants and gave them ten pounds. "Do business with these" he told them "until I get back." But his compatriots detested him and sent a delegation to follow him with this message, "We do not want this man to be our king". Now on his return, having received his appointment as king, he sent for those servants to whom he had given the money, to find out what profit each had made. The first came in and said, "Sir, your one pound has brought in ten". "Well done, my good servant!" he replied "Since you have proved yourself faithful in a very small thing, you shall have the government of ten cities." Then came the second and said, "Sir, your one pound has made five". To this one also he said, "And you shall be in charge of five cities". Next came the other and said, "Sir, here is your pound. I put it away safely in a piece of linen because I was afraid of you; for you are an exacting man: you pick up what you have not put down and reap what you have not sown." "You wicked servant!" he said "Out of your own mouth I condemn you. So you knew I was an exacting man, picking up what I have not put down and reaping what I have not sown? Then why did you not put my money in the bank? On my return I could have drawn it out with interest." And he said to those standing by, "Take the pound from him and give it to the man who has ten pounds". And they said to him, "But, sir, he has ten pounds..." "I tell you, to everyone who has will be given more; but from the man who has not, even what he has will be taken away. "But as for my enemies who did not want me for their king, bring them here and execute them in my presence." When he had said this he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

Faithfulness in small things

In today's parable, Jesus reminds us that greatness in His Kingdom is not measured by recognition or grand accomplishments, but by quiet faithfulness, especially in the little things. He speaks through the voice of the king in the parable, who says, *"Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in very small matters..."* What about us? Have we been faithful in the small tasks entrusted to us? Do we give our best even when no one sees—when there is no applause, no praise, no reward?

Jesus notices the unnoticed and humble moments of our daily lives—when we do a simple act of kindness, make the quiet choice to love again,

discipline ourselves to finish a task with love, take time to listen to someone with patience, and make an effort to serve without complaint. St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, *“Be faithful in small things, because it is in them that your strength lies.”* May we never underestimate the power of these little acts offered in love.

Reflective question:

How faithful am I to the small things that have been entrusted to me?

Thursday, 20th November, 33rd Week in Ordinary Time.

1 Maccabees 2:15-29, Luke 19:41-44

As Jesus drew near and came in sight of the city he shed tears over it and said, 'If you too had only recognised on this day the way to peace! But in fact it is hidden from your eyes! Yes, a time is coming when your enemies will raise fortifications all round you, when they will encircle you and hem you in on every side; they will dash you and the children inside your walls to the ground; they will leave not one stone standing on another within you, because you did not recognise the moment of your visitation.'

The nearness of Jesus

In today's Gospel, St. Luke writes, *“As Jesus drew near and came in sight of the city, He wept over it...”* Jesus shed tears for Jerusalem, for its people whose hearts had grown hard, and for their inability to recognise the peace He came to bring. It broke His heart to see them turn away from the loving presence of God.

Even today, we are not so different. Like the people of Jerusalem, we sometimes close our hearts to God. We overlook His presence in our daily lives and miss countless opportunities to recognise His grace at work around us. Yet, Jesus continues to draw near, always out of love. He approaches us not with condemnation, but with compassion, inviting us to open our hearts and place our trust in Him. He longs to be the source of our peace, the quiet centre of our restless lives. May we recognise the gentle nearness of Christ today and respond with faith, with love, and with open hearts.

Reflective questions:

What are the areas in my life where I fail to perceive Christ's presence, and how might I open my heart more fully to the peace He longs to give me?

Friday, 21st November, The Presentation of Mary.**Zechariah 2:14-17, Matthew 12:46-50**

Jesus was speaking to the crowds when suddenly his mother and his brothers were standing outside and were anxious to have a word with him. Someone said to him: Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to speak to you. But to the man who told him this, Jesus replied, 'Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?' And stretching out his hand towards his disciples, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.'

Mary, the one who did God's will

In today's gospel, Jesus is told that His mother and brothers are outside, wanting to speak with Him. He responds, "*Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?*" And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He says, "*Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.*" At first glance, this might seem like a dismissal of Mary, but it is quite the opposite. Jesus is not denying His relationship with her; rather, He is elevating it. Mary is not just His mother by blood—she is His mother most profoundly because she did the will of the Father. From the moment of the Annunciation, when Mary said, "*Let it be done to me according to your word,*" her entire life was marked by surrender to God's will. In joy, in suffering, in silence, and in trust, Mary followed where God led. She teaches us that true kinship with Christ is found not in status or title, but in obedience to God's will.

Today, let us follow Mary's example of listening, trusting, and saying "yes" to God in the everyday moments of our lives. In doing so, we too become part of Christ's family.

Reflective question:

Am I truly open to doing the will of God in my daily life, as Mary was?

Saturday, 22nd November, St. Cecilia.

1 Maccabees 6:1-13, Luke 20:27-40

Some Sadducees—those who say that there is no resurrection—approached Jesus and they put this question to him, ‘Master, we have it from Moses in writing, that if a man’s married brother dies childless, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. Well then, there were seven brothers. The first, having married a wife, died childless. The second and then the third married the widow. And the same with all seven, they died leaving no children. Finally the woman herself died. Now, at the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife since she had been married to all seven?’ Jesus replied, ‘The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world, and if the resurrection from the dead do not marry because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection, they are sons of God. And Moses himself implies that the dead rise again, in the passage about the bush where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is God, not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all men are in fact alive.’ Some scribes then spoke up. ‘Well put, Master’ they said - because they would not dare to ask him any more questions.

God of the living

In today’s gospel, Jesus says, “*He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him all are alive.*” What does Jesus mean by these words? Jesus reveals that God is the God of life. Death is not the end of our existence—it is the beginning of a new and fuller life with Him. In death, we do not lose our identity; rather, we discover our truest identity as beloved children of God.

In the gospel, Jesus uses the example of the woman who had seven husbands to make a deeper point. The question posed to Him by the Sadducees—about whose wife she will be in the afterlife—misses the heart of the matter. In the life to come, earthly relationships as we know them will no longer define us. There will be no exclusive claims between spouses, families, or friends. Instead, all will belong to God, and all will be bound together in perfect love. In Him, we will find eternal peace, rest, and fulfilment.

Reflective question:

Knowing that I belong to God for all eternity, how do I want to live each moment of today?

Sunday, 23rd November, Solemnity of Christ the King.**2 Samuel 5:1-3, Colossians 1:12-20, Luke 23:35-43**

The people stayed there before the cross watching Jesus. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. 'He saved others,' they said 'let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.' The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer vinegar they said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself'. Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews'. One of the criminals hanging there abused him. 'Are you not the Christ?' he said. 'Save yourself and us as well.' But the other spoke up and rebuked him. 'Have you no fear of God at all?' he said. 'You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,' he said 'remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you,' he replied 'today you will be with me in paradise.'

Self-giving love

In today's Gospel, we see the King of Kings crowned, not with gold and glory, but with a crown of thorns, hanging on the cross. Despite His suffering and humiliation, Jesus shows the greatest act of love by giving Himself completely, offering mercy even to the repentant thief beside Him. Christ's kingship is not about power or prestige; it is about self-giving love that reaches out to the lost, the broken, and the humble. His kingdom is one of compassion and forgiveness.

As the disciples of Christ the King, we are called to live this same love in our daily lives. It means offering kindness when it is difficult, forgiving when it is painful, and serving without expecting anything in return. Self-giving love transforms ordinary moments into acts of grace that reflect the heart of our King. Today, whether in family, work, or faith community, let us live like Jesus, our King, marked by boundless self-giving love.

Reflective question:

In what specific ways can I show Christ-like, self-giving love to someone in my life today?

**Monday, 24th November, SS. Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions.
Daniel 1:1-6, 8-20, Luke 21:1-4**

As Jesus looked up he saw rich people putting their, offerings into the treasury; then he happened to notice a poverty-stricken widow putting in two small coins, and he said, 'I tell you truly, this poor widow has put in more than any of them; for these have all contributed money they had over, but she from the little she had has put in all she had to live on.

Two Small Coins

Jesus observed rich people entering the Temple and placing their offerings into the treasury. Yet, they did not impress Him. Amid the crowd, one poor widow caught His attention. Her two small coins were her humble expression of love for God, and Jesus was deeply moved by her total surrender. She could have held back those two small coins, but instead, she gave them freely out of love.

Often, we look at what we have to offer and think it is too little to matter. However, for Jesus, it is not the amount we give that counts; it is the motivation behind our giving. True giving flows from a heart that loves God and others. Real generosity gives without expecting anything in return. When we give from the heart, even the smallest offering becomes precious in Jesus' eyes. Every day, we have opportunities to offer our "two small coins" — acts of love, concern, patience, and kindness. Even when no one sees or appreciates these small gifts, Jesus sees and rejoices. Today, let us take the courageous step to give generously, without holding back our two small coins.

Reflective question:

How do I offer my time, talents, and resources to God, not for show or recognition, but out of genuine love and trust?

**Tuesday, 25th November, 34th Week in Ordinary Time.
Daniel 2:31-45, Luke 21:5-11**

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, 'All these things you are staring at now-the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed'. And they put to him this question: 'Master,' they said 'when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?' 'Take care not to be

deceived,' he said 'because many will come using my name and saying, "I am he" and, "The time is near at hand". Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon.' Then he said to them, 'Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.'

Judged by Love

Jesus overheard people admiring the beautiful Temple, proud of its grandeur and stonework. For the Jews, the Temple was the sacred dwelling of God and a symbol of security and permanence. However, Jesus said to them, *"The time will come when not one stone will be left on another; everything will be destroyed."* In A.D. 70, the seemingly indestructible Temple was indeed destroyed.

What does this mean for us today? Too often, like those people, we admire earthly things—gadgets, buildings, and achievements—forgetting that they are temporary. Everything worldly will pass away, but what is eternal will remain. We are called to invest in what lasts, which is not wealth, work, or possessions, but love. The love we give continues to bear fruit even beyond our mortal life. St. Teresa of Calcutta once said, *"At the end of life, we will not be judged by diplomas, wealth, or achievements, but by how much love we showed: 'I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was naked, and you clothed me; I was homeless, and you took me in.'"* May we live each day with the awareness that the legacy of our lives will be the love we give.

Reflective Question:

How can I bear the eternal fruit of love in my life?

Wednesday, 26th November, 34th Week in Ordinary Time.

Daniel 5:1-6,13-14,16-17,23-38, Luke 21:12-19

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name - and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or

contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. You will be hated by all men on account of my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your endurance will win you your lives.'

Courage in witnessing

In today's gospel, Jesus warns His disciples about the trials and persecutions they will face for His name's sake. He encourages them not to be afraid, assuring them that the Holy Spirit will give them the words and strength they need.

Witnessing to our faith is not always easy. It can come with challenges—misunderstanding, rejection, or even opposition. Yet, Jesus reminds us that enduring these difficulties with faithfulness is a powerful testimony in itself. Every day, we have opportunities to witness Christ, not only through words but through our actions, patience, and love in the face of difficulty. Even small acts of faithfulness can inspire others to come to encounter Christ. Today, let us pray for courage and trust in the Holy Spirit to witness boldly, knowing that Jesus walks with us through every challenge.

Reflective question:

In what ways can I witness to my faith today, especially when it feels difficult or challenging?

Thursday, 27th November, 34th Week in Ordinary Time.

Daniel 6:12-28, Luke 21:20-28

Jesus said to his disciples, 'When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you must realise that she will soon be laid desolate. Then those in Judaea must escape to the mountains, those inside the city must leave it, and those in country districts must not take refuge in it. For this is the time of vengeance when all that scripture says must be fulfilled. Alas for those with child, or with babies at the breast, when those days come! For great misery will descend on the land and wrath on this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive to every pagan country; and Jerusalem will be trampled down by the pagans until the age of the pagans is completely over. There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces

the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'

Courage in the face of trials

In today's gospel, Jesus speaks openly about times of great distress—wars, destruction, and fear—that will shake the foundations of the world. Yet, despite these difficulties, He calls us to have courage. He urges us not to be terrified or lose heart when chaos surrounds us, but to stand firm with faith and trust in God's unfailing presence.

True courage arises not from the absence of fear, but from the deep conviction that God's love remains steadfast, no matter the storms we face. It is the courage to face uncertainty with a heart anchored in hope, knowing that beyond every trial, God is at work, bringing hope and peace. Courage is the quiet strength to persevere, to keep walking even when the path is unclear, and to trust that God is with us. May we embrace courage daily, not as a fleeting feeling, but as a choice rooted in faith that sustains us through life's greatest challenges.

Reflective question:

In what areas of my life am I being called to stand firm with courage and trust that God is with me, even when fear and uncertainty arise?

Friday, 28th November, 34th Week in Ordinary Time.

Daniel 7:2-14, Luke 21:29-33

Jesus told them a parable, 'Think of the fig tree and indeed every tree. As soon as you see them bud, you know that summer is now near. So with you when you see these things happening: know that the kingdom of God is near. I tell you solemnly, before this generation has passed away all will have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.'

Trust in God's unfailing love

In today's gospel, Jesus says, "*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*" Let us allow these comforting words of Jesus to sink into our hearts and bring us peace.

Many of us struggle to trust God fully because we doubt His power or care. Today, Jesus invites us to open our hearts and rediscover God's unfailing love. Heaven and earth may pass away, but God is always with us, guiding, protecting, and speaking words that remain true forever. His love never fails. Because of this, we can live with hope, peace, and joy. We are also called to share God's faithful presence and comforting words with those who suffer around us. Let us not fear to trust in God, who desires only to give us a love that upholds us, no matter what life brings.

Reflective question:

How can I live with trust in God today?

Saturday, 29th November, 34th Week in Ordinary Time.

Daniel 7:15-27, Luke 21:34-36

Jesus said to his disciples, "Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened by debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will come upon you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come down on all those living on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to hold your ground before the Son of man." All day long he would be in the Temple teaching, but would spend the night in the open on the hill called the Mount of Olives. And from early morning the people thronged to him in the Temple to listen to him.

Watchful and Ready: Living with Purpose

In today's gospel, Jesus warns us not to be weighed down by the cares of this world, like excess, worry, and distractions, because these can dull our spiritual awareness and readiness. He invites us instead to be watchful, to live with open hearts and minds, ready for the moments when God's love breaks into our lives.

This call to vigilance is not about fear but about hope. It is about choosing daily to stay connected to God, to nurture our faith, and to act with love and compassion. When we live intentionally, mindful of God's presence, we find strength to face challenges and peace amid uncertainty. Let this gospel passage inspire each of us to embrace each day with courage and purpose, staying awake to God's work within us and around us, so we can stand firm and ready in every season of life.

Reflective question:

What distractions or worries might be weighing down my heart, and how can I stay spiritually awake and ready for God's presence today?

Sunday, 30th November, First Sunday of Advent.**Isaiah 2:1-5, Romans 13:11-14, Matthew 24:37-44**

Jesus said, "As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept them all away. This is what it will be like when the Son of man comes. Then of two men in the fields, one is taken, one left; of two women grinding at the mill, one is taken, one left. So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Stay awake

While much of the commercial world is already starting to celebrate Christmas, the gospel today tells us to stay awake because we do not know the day when our master is coming. Thus, as we light the first candle on the Advent wreath, we are met not with the gentle images of a manger or shepherds, but with a call to vigilance.

Jesus invites us to live awake by living with intention, with awareness, with hearts open to His presence here and now. It means not letting the noise, distractions, or demands of the world lull us into forgetting who we are and what truly matters. It is a spiritual attentiveness, a readiness rooted in hope. Let us be Advent people who are preparing and waiting, not just for Christmas day, but for the coming of Christ into our lives each moment, and ultimately, at the end of time. As we enter this season, Jesus invites us to live this Advent not in a daze of busyness or distraction, but watching, waiting, and preparing our hearts for our Master, who is coming.

Reflective question:

Are there any distractions or routines that you feel are dulling your awareness of Jesus' presence this Advent season?

