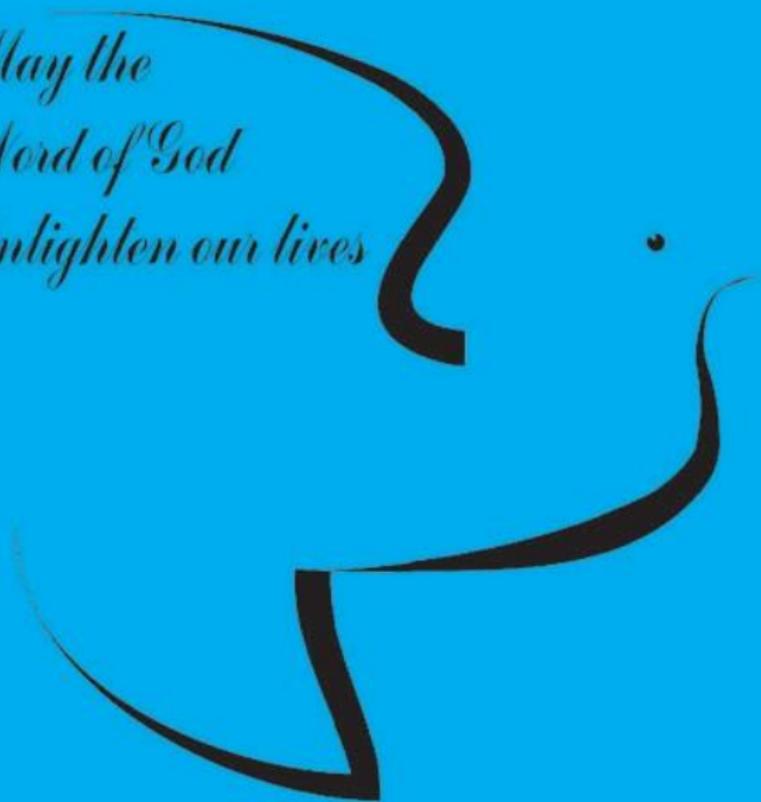


*May the  
Word of God  
Enlighten our lives*



**A V E**

**JUNE 2021**



**“The prayer of the monk is not perfect until he no longer recognizes himself or the fact that he is praying.” - St. Anthony of Padua**

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**POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION**

**Intention for evangelization - *The beauty of marriage***

Let us pray for young people who are preparing for marriage with the support of a Christian community: may they grow in love, with generosity, faithfulness and patience.

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**PRAY AND STAND  
TOGETHER**

Dn Doni Raja, S.J.

**(EDITORIAL)**

In normal circumstances, the month of June will bring many anxieties about finding and applying to respectful schools and colleges to hope for a safe and secure future of our children. Now, the second wave of corona has added anxiety to those already mounting uncertainties. We, ordinary people are helpless in the face of crumbling health system and power-hungry leaders. We look forward to pre-corona times. Will we ever get there? Will we have a June that makes us stand in queues to ensure a decent quality education for our children? More than the infection, the uncertainties surrounding Covid – beds in a hospital, unhindered supply of oxygen in these times, vaccines and their efficacy, lockdown and livelihood – seem to burden us with other worries and fears. How are we to cope with the uncertain future? Will we learn lessons of life-changing significance after having witnessed the unbearable loss of those whom we loved, and the cries of so many people on streets and doors of the hospitals? What is God trying to tell us through this tragedy

furthered and aggravated by the portion of the irresponsible humanity?

Coincidentally in this month the Church celebrates the solemnities of 'The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ' and 'The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.' We are reminded of the Body that is broken for the sake of standing for love and of the blood that is shed for the redemption of the fallen. This virus is testing our ability to live as community and our limits of love for others. We have seen opulent people leaving the country. Many of the complacent, comfortable and salaried people try to form a bubble among themselves. Perhaps it is time to stand with those who have lost their life and livelihood. We need to offer the same solace and assurance that Jesus offered us from the cross. Many people today are carrying the cross. If we could give them our shoulders, even at a distance, it will ease their burdens, half their sorrows and may give reasons to hope for a new beginning. Let us stand with each other and for each other. Offer a little help that we can. Let us pray that we emerge as one human community that shares the image of divinity even when tested with the decimation of an unkind pandemic.

**01 TUE**  
**CITIZENS OF GOD AND**  
**WORLD**

Denis Kumar, S.J.

Tb 2:9-14  
Mk 12:13-17

*“Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God”*

aware of his noble virtues of charity, righteousness, and other God-given qualities.

Problems and heartaches in our lives are inevitable. When everything goes wrong and we are in a thicket, we lose patience, get upset, feel angry, and hurt. Lack of confidence in oneself and trust in the other person, turn out to be a herculean task. This is what happened with Tobit and his wife Anna, as the first reading illustrates. Anna reminds Tobit to be

of charity, righteousness, and

In the Gospel reading, Jesus comes across problems with the Jews, the Pharisees, and Herodians. Here, Jesus very interestingly answers and teaches them a lesson; by asking them whose “image” is upon the coin! He reminds them that humans are made in the image of God. Here the coin bears the image of the emperor, but we human beings bear the ‘image of God’. Jesus clearly distinguishes the material from the spiritual, the political from the religious, and the earthly from the heavenly realms. Further, he says that give to the emperor what is his. These are money, power, respect, authority, and all such types of vain glories. And give to God whatever belongs to Him! We need to reflect on what in us belongs to God and how we need to give it back to God. In caring for others we can bring glory to God. Directly we can hardly bring glory to God but through how we pray and what we do, we can try to bring glory to God.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, help us to become aware of our true identity. Give us the grace to know who we are and how to love and serve others.

Today Jesus wants us to know that God is of living and not of the dead. By saying this Jesus makes us aware of equality in the presence of God. We are all one in God. There exists no gender, caste, race, Jew and Gentile. God loves us all equally without any discrimination. The Sadducees have come up with yet another question to trap Jesus. This time the question was on the resurrection. The

Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus reveals the truth that there is resurrection after death. Our souls have no death. They continue to live in a spiritual way, even after the death of our bodies. Thus Jesus invites all of us to listen to the Spirit of God rather than obeying earthly authorities who can punish only the body.

In the first reading, we see that Tobit acknowledges his mistakes of not following the commandments of God. We could see his sincerity of heart. Most of us lack this sincere acknowledgement of our mistakes in life. As humans, we are prone to make mistakes but how many of us acknowledge sincerely that we have done something wrong? Today the Catholic Church wants us to reflect on how unworthy we are and how merciful the heavenly Father is. When we come with contrite heart our Heavenly Father forgives all our sins and accepts us as His children. We need to see how we can acknowledge what is wrong and how to rectify: also, we will have to help each other to know what amends we can make to heal our broken lives and the broken world.

**Pray and Practise:** Dear Lord, help us to be humble that we may lead our lives in sincerity and truth. Amen.

**02 WED (Sts. Marcellinus and Peter)**

**BE HUMBLE AND SINCERE**

Devadoss, S.J.

Tb 3:1-11a, 16-17a

Mk 12:18-27

*"God is of the living"*

**03 THU (S. Charles Lwanga)**  
**LOVE OF GOD AND OF NEIGHBOUR**

Fr Selvam, S.J.

Tb 6:10-11; 7:1, 9-14;  
8:4-7

Mk 12: 28-34

*"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Today's theme is 'Love of God and of neighbour' which are essentially the two sides of the same coin. One without the other cannot stand at all nor is complete. In connection with this theme, there are a few phrases in today's readings. We read the 'first' and 'second' commandments: of God and of neighbour from the Gospel. Note that the phrase that precedes these commandments is, 'Listen, O Israel'. It is an active listening

to our hearts! In other words, God wants us to first keep our inner ears open to His Promptings. Listening to these promptings will certainly lead us in His paths of love, justice and peace. Whenever we fail to love God and neighbours, it is a sign that we have not adequately listened to our hearts because they invite us to live in love.

Knowing is one thing but giving expression to this is altogether another thing! A mere knowledge of love is insufficient to know who God is. Only by the materialization of love, we come to interiorly experience the Kingdom of God. In sum, love is not a vague concept nor a lofty idea nor something we are born with. It has to be learnt, nurtured and be concretely expressed in word and deed. Love means, first of all, to recognize and respect the dignity of EVERY HUMAN PERSON irrespective of religion, language, caste, colour, and academic qualifications; love means to generously see the best in others and appreciate them genuinely; love means to help and share with the needy whatever we can! Love is to look for the best in others; Doing so will let Jesus tell us, 'You are already in the Kingdom of God'.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, Help us Love you, ourselves and others!

Why does Jesus question the Jews on their claim that the Messiah will be the son of David? The Jews and the Pharisees believed that the Messiah would come as a conquering hero. They also believed that the ceremonial rites such as the shedding of the blood of a bull or a ram somehow set the captives free or gave hope

to the depressed and oppressed. For many of them, their relationship with God seemed to consist of these "rites." However, did they truly know God?

Here, Jesus poses the question to make his hearers understand in the true sense that the Messiah is more than the son of David. He provoked people to think about who he really was. Jesus, who took up our human nature for our sake, is not only the son of David but also he is the Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. But the way Jesus established his Kingdom is totally different from the expectations of God's people, the Israelites. Jesus comes to rule the hearts of people and not territories and kingdoms. He comes to free people from the worst tyranny, slavery to sin. He leads us to the fullness of love and life. Today may be an opportune time for us to ask ourselves. Do I truly know Jesus? Do I love God? Do I go to Church to worship God and to celebrate my relationship with God? Or do I simply attend Eucharist because it is something I am supposed to do?

**Pray and Practise:** We pray to the Lord that we may know Jesus more clearly, love him more dearly and follow him more nearly.

**04 FRI**

## **WHO IS JESUS?**

Jeevan Isaac, S.J.

Tb 11:5-15

Mk 12:35-37

*"David himself calls him Lord."*

**05 SAT**

**ATTITUDE OF GIVING**

Saji Geroge, S.J.

Tb 12:1, 5-15, 20

Mk 12:38-44

*“A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents.”*

of us might be absolute religious hypocrites through our ritualistic and dogmatic practices but in real-life situations, we fail to be generous or kind or loving.

At first, the widow may not seem to be a model for us because she contributes her whole livelihood. But later we might see her as the inspiration, of faith in God. It might denote that by offering to God all that she had, she is placing her trust in God that God will surely provide for her needs. Could there be any better example of selflessness than her? St. Teresa of Calcutta famously said, “Give, but give until it hurts.” The faith of Jesus Christ is not a self-centred faith. It is a faith which is sacrificial, a faith that bears the cross. In short, the faith in Jesus Christ is not about us. It’s not about you and me. It’s about what and how we give to God and what is our attitude in all this!

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, grant us the grace to retrospect our attitude towards you and your people.

The purpose of Eucharist is to 'thank, glorify, love and serve God with our lives. In a true manner, the Eucharist only makes sense when it becomes Eucharist in action. Jesus gives himself as food and drink to his followers. Obviously, it has cultic and ritualistic dimensions. While continuing with the tradition, Jesus also brings newer elements: love and service are intertwined into a ritual. Sharing the meal and washing of the feet go together.

## **06 SUN (The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ)**

### **THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST**

*Lijo Antony, S.J.*

Ex 24:3-8

Heb 9:11-15

Mk 14:12-16, 22-26

*"Anyone who eats this bread will live forever"*

Whenever we come to the Eucharist, we make a number of important statements. We acknowledge Jesus as living bread of life, as the one who alone can satisfy our deepest hunger. We also declare that we will throw in our lot with him, as it were, that we will follow in his way and be faithful to him all our lives, in response to his faithfulness to us. In that sense, celebrating the Eucharist is not something we should take for granted. Our familiarity with the Eucharist and the frequency with which we celebrate it can dull our senses to the full significance of what we are doing. Every time we gather for the Eucharist, we find ourselves once more in that upper room with the first disciples, during Jesus' last supper.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, give us the grace that we may move from ritual to reality to serve the world in our daily actions.

**07 MON**

**BE HAPPY ATTITUDES**

Yesubabu, ADL

2 Cor 1:1-7

Mt 5:1-12

*“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great...”*

we find happiness and how we are totally blessed. His view of happiness is different from others. His happiness is in being humble, gentle, kind, making peace, and fighting injustice.

This happiness or blessedness is the source of our joy. This is not a set of regulations, but a vision of where true happiness lies. We can observe how Jesus might have lived; how he himself was merciful, pure in heart and a peacemaker. In fact, Jesus knew each of the Beatitudes. He knew just where the blessing and presence of God may be found. When the world sees something as tragic or empty, Jesus sees it as a blessing: humility, mourning, gentleness, peacefulness and other virtues likewise. Jesus lived by these virtues himself and we can notice them in his words and actions during his life. He encourages us to live in the spirit of the beatitudes because he himself lived them and knew that a life of integrity and honesty is indeed a blessed life. Pope Francis says, “Beatitudes are the Lord’s new law for us”.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus, teach us to be happy in going about doing good, as you did.

Today the Church celebrates the feast of Mariam Thresia who says, "From childhood, my soul agonized with an intense desire to love God". The kind of response she gave by saying 'yes' fulfils an expectation. In the first reading St Paul also affirms that he is fully faithful to God as He is faithful to Him. When St Paul said, "Yes", or "No", there was no expected agreement as well as a

negative response. What he said, he meant it sincerely. Having sealed us means the expression of the effect of baptism to all believers by which the spirit as a promise of the future fulfilment of glory to the Father in heaven.

The real purpose of servant Israel was to be 'a light to the nations'. Thus Christians are called to be a living covenant through demonstration of their covenantal faithfulness. Christians are supposed to draw all people and nations into a bonded relationship with God the Father. So when the disciples are told that, "You are the salt of the earth", they are to be permanent living people, the covenant that would draw others together into a living relationship with God. The light to the nations emphasizes the individual's responsibility as a lamp that illuminates the whole house. Through Jesus, we have received light and it is our duty to shine and show the path towards heaven.

**Pray and Practise:** Almighty Father, You are the light of our lives. May we walk in your light so that we may not dwell in darkness but have a covenantal relationship with you till the end of our lives.

**08 TUE (St. Mariam Thresia Chiramel)**

**GLORY TO FATHER IN HEAVEN**

Bulla Peter, S.J.

2 Cor 1:18-22

Mt 5:13-16

*"You are the light of the world"*

**09 WED**

**HIS LAWS ARE TO  
BUILD US**

Prabhakar, S.J.

2 Cor 3:4-11

Mt 5:17-19

*“I have come not to  
abolish but to fulfil”*

We hear Jesus saying that he has come not to abolish the law but to fulfil it. The law of God is meant to build us. It reminds us of God’s covenant with Moses on Mount Sinai, which was the basis of life for the Israelites. It gave the terms under which Israelites were to be God’s people and a revelation of the nature of God Himself. A lot of Christian practices have emerged from those Laws. An acceptance

of the Ten Commandments is a duty to one another, generosity, fidelity to God, repentance and forgiveness to oneself and others.

For Jesus, the law was made to help people become liberated and more purposeful. As we know that in all human civilizations laws are present to instill and promote order and discipline in society. Mostly these laws ensure peace, order and justice in society. The same laws which are supposed to help people to create a peaceful atmosphere become burdensome, for some because people in power and authority use these laws to subjugate the common people. Jesus questions the scribes and Pharisees of that time, who knew the laws very well and forgot the true spirit of the law. Breaking God’s law is bad but worst is to teach others to break it. Therefore, we have a greater responsibility in fulfilling God’s law and also helping others to observe and obey it.

**Pray and Practise:** Dear Lord, help us to be faithful to your commands and guide us to know its worth.

New life in Christ gives us a new identity. We are transformed from an old self into a new self. Jesus has gained freedom for us from the clutches of sin; therefore, we no longer hid ourselves from the presence of the Lord but become ministers of the Gospel. Jesus has won favour for us in the sight of God and made us worthy hearers and doers of the Gospel. But some remain closed to this gift because the glory of this world

blinds them from seeing the glory of Christ who is the visible image of invisible God. This passage from Corinthians is the call to accept the transformation in Christ Jesus.

In the Gospel, Jesus calls everyone to be transformed beings. He says, do not get hooked on past hurt, enmity and damages but get reconciled and come to the altar of God. Come to another level of righteousness which is not that of scribes and Pharisees. Today's readings are very straightforward and at the same time challenging. "The door to heaven is narrow" as it said in the Gospel and we cannot enter through it with a heavy heart. Let us lighten the burden of sin and carry the cross that Jesus gives us, so that we may see the glory of God.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus, help us to forgive and ask for forgiveness before we enter into your holy presence.

**10 THU**

## **TRANSFORMATION IN CHRIST JESUS**

Wellington Patil, S.J.

2 Cor 3:15-4:1, 3-6

Mt 5:20-26

*"First be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift."*

**11 FRI (Sacred Heart of Jesus)**

HAVE HIS HEART

Pratap Samad, S.J.

Hos 11:1, 3-4, 8-9

Eph 3:8-12,14-19

Jn 19:31-37

*“...immediately there flowed out blood and water.”*

“They shall look on Him whom they have pierced” (Jn 19:35-37) is at the foundation of the whole tradition of devotion to the Divine Heart. From Jesus’ pierced heart life-giving and spirit-giving blood and water flow out. “Jesus has loved us all with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by our sins and for our salvation. It is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that love” (CCC 478).

The first reading of the day lets us know that God considered Israel as his child. Here, we see that God protected and led Israel with cords of kindness. God’s love, kindness, compassion and tender heart is always there for Israel. This very nature of God the Father is found in Christ where we find the merciful love of Christ, a love He offers to all who come to Him with Faith and the willingness to obey His teaching. In the second reading, St Paul writes to the Ephesians praying for them that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith and that they may be filled with all the fullness of God. It is Paul who tells us to accept Christ as King of our hearts, as our constant companion, as our Brother and as our Friend in our daily life. Jesus was faithful to God and to Himself till the death on a cross and he desires that we give up our hearts in love for our brothers and sisters.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, may the love you poured into us enable us to love just like you did.

The Heart of Mary is the source of her burning love for God and her desire to bring souls to Jesus. Jesus grew up and displayed his compassionate heart in his teaching, healing and table fellowship from the Immaculate Heart of Mother Mary. The love of a mother cannot be defined in words. It has to be experienced and lived out. The love of a mother is the purest and most

## **12 SAT (Immaculate Heart of Mary)**

### **LOVE OF A MOTHER**

*Rajeev Ranjan, S.J.*

Is 61:9-11

Lk 2:41-51

*“Child, why have you treated us like this?”*

unconditional love. Jesus experienced and lived out this kind of love. Like any simple mother, Mary was troubled in her heart when she did not find twelve year old Jesus with her. After finding Jesus in the temple, she expressed her anxiety and trouble to Jesus saying, “Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.” Our Blessed Mother had a pure heart for her Son Jesus. She certainly has pure love for us also. It means to say that we should also love her in return.

However, she knows that many would go away from her Son because they choose to follow the prince of darkness and ways of this most troubled world. She is disturbed and troubled in her heart to see her children going away from the love of Jesus. She treasures all these things in her heart. She is asking each one of us “Child, why are you treating me like this? I am in great anxiety.”

**Pray and Practise:** Immaculate Heart of Mary, draw me near the Sacred Heart of Jesus and take away all of the anxiety from our hearts and lives.

### **13 SUN (XI SUNDAY OF THE YEAR)**

#### **KINGDOM OF GOD**

Prashant Shaharao,  
S.J.

Ez 17:22-24

2 Cor 5:6-11

Mk 4: 26-34

*“Birds of all kinds  
will nest in it and find  
shelter in its branches.”*

the readings talk about the Mother Church. Jesus through his teachings had sown the seed into the hearts of his followers and they, by their works of evangelization made it a worldwide church. It is said, “Birds of all kinds will find shelter in its branches.” Here the word birds refer to people of all faiths and backgrounds.

Today the Mother Church is open for all. Therefore we need to be more inclusive in our dealing with the people of other faiths. We need to adopt the new ways of evangelization and strive to make a better community of people belonging to different religions without any discrimination. That would be the true kingdom of God that Jesus always wanted to establish on this earth. Let us work for peace and justice in the world and contribute our bit to establish God’s kingdom on this earth.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, help us to bring about your kingdom in this world.

The word of God talks to us today about the new life. Through prophet Ezekiel, God conveys to us about planting the tree on a high mountain. It will become a mighty tree and birds of the air will take shelter in it. Similarly, in the Gospel, Jesus talks about the kingdom of God. He compares it to a seed scattered by a man in the soil. We don’t even know how it sprouts and brings forth a huge tree which becomes a shelter for many. Thus both

Revenge and retaliation are some of the words that the world values. But these words have no relevance in the Gospel of Jesus. It is very hard to follow this teaching of Jesus. How can we show the left cheek when somebody slaps the right? We find this verse a little foolish and highly exaggerated. But, Jesus in a stronger way asks all his followers to go against our basic instincts. Jesus Christ practiced this teaching during his crucifixion and underlines that as Christians we need to be the promoters of peace and love.

**14 MON**

## **CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS**

Steevensen, S.J.

2 Cor 6:1-10

Mt 5:38-42

*“If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.”*

Through this Gospel reading, Jesus asks us to swim against the current. As Christians we cannot promote violence and killings. We, Christians, should not promote our religion through violence and war. Christians have been persecuted right from its inception yet forgiveness and reconciliation have been the hallmark of all Christians. The entire world was shocked when St. John Paul II forgave the man named Mehmet Ali Agca who shot him. This is a word that followed the teachings of Jesus. We are in a world where tradition and culture promote revenge. The world has witnessed many murders due to this glorification of violence and revenge. This is not the path of Christians. We need to coexist with all the religions in the world. Mutual respect and tolerance are the way forward for the peaceful existence of this world. We are ambassadors of love.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus, give us your grace so that we learn to love those whom we do not feel comfortable with.

**15 TUE**

**LOVE YOUR ENEMIES**

*Stephen Lalruatsaka,  
S.J.*

2 Cor 8:1-9

Mt 5:43-48

*“But I say to you, love  
your enemies and  
pray.....”*

Jesus is inviting us today, to extend our love to the enemy and challenging us not to confine our love to our neighbour alone. Jesus bases the command on the nature of God who loves all impartially. In the Gospel, Jesus makes, love of God and neighbour the fundamental command on which all else depends and makes the command to love enemies specific and concrete. This teaching is

radical because he is inviting us to reciprocate evil with good things and pray for our enemies.

As followers of Christ, we are called to imitate Jesus Christ, who prays for his enemies even on the point of his death. Jesus has shown us the way forward on how to love and such love can come only from the grace of God. We are also invited to be perfect like our Master to serve God wholeheartedly, to be single-minded in devotion to the one God, just as God is one. Love your enemies implies thinking about their well-being and welfare despite our differences. Love your enemies' demands going beyond our comfort zone as it requires extra grace from God. Love needs to be shown in deeds rather than in words. For St. Paul giving heartily amidst affliction, exhibits an understanding that the life of faith is not an escape. Grace and joy in the midst of affliction, far from being a sign of God's absence, is instead a sure sign of God's power.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus, give us the grace to go out of our comfort zone to love everyone equally.

Today's readings invite us to grow in love for neighbour in action. In the first reading, we hear that God loves a cheerful giver. We are called to be generous. We are invited to share whatever we have as our own, our talents, our ability and our time for the greater glory of God.

**16 WED**

**CALL TO LOVE IN ACTION**

*Thomaiar Charles, ADL*

2 Cor 9:6-11

Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

In today's Gospel, we see that Jesus warns us not to do good deeds simply so others will think

*"God loves a cheerful giver"*

well of us. Jesus wants us to be aware of our motivation for what we do. He wants us to do what is right or good because we desire to help, love and make the world a better place. Jesus is not primarily concerned about our actions rather he is concerned about our motivations. Jesus expects that our actions and decisions must flow from the love of God, of the Gospel and for the people and the world. Loving unconditionally is all that matters. How often do we stop and examine our motivations? Are we concerned about others or are we too preoccupied to even notice the people around us? I believe that the majority of people in the world want to be good people. Most people do care for others and desire to help others. Today God gives us one more opportunity to purify our motives that we may do everything with pure intentions.

**Pray and Practise:** Dear Lord, grant us special grace today to grow in love in action that we may be channels of your love here on earth.

**17 THU**

**PRAISE AND  
PETITION**

*Antony Albert Suresh,*  
S.J.

2 Cor 11:1-11  
Mt 6:7-15

*“Give us today our  
daily bread.”*

The last part of the second letter to the Corinthians is one big outburst of uncontrolled anger. St. Paul does not like what he does. He calls it “a little foolishness from me”. He asks his readers – and that includes us – to tolerate it. We gladly do. It is consoling for us to see that great saints too had weaknesses. The saints above, the saints we love are bathed in heaven’s glory.

All prayers turn around the two poles: praise and petition. In the Lord’s Prayer, every one of the seven petitions contains praise of the Father, one aspect of what God means for us, and every praise leads to a petition, prayer for what could make one a good person. Every petition tells us what God wants us to be. The holiness of God manifests itself more and more to us. The more he reveals himself, the more we become one mind and heart with God. His demands on us we cannot escape. What he demands is for our good. Yet we often fail but find him merciful and powerful to protect us from all evil. There is the danger that even this prayer becomes babble unless we give it spirit and life through our meditation. Neither will we pray rightly until we stand before God, with all our brothers and sisters and ask God to share His glory with all of us and pray for our daily bread and forgiveness of the sins of us all.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, teach us to pray.

We often experience that certain things give us tremendous joy, happiness, satisfaction in our life. We understand their value; as a result, we are ready to forgo any amount of suffering, pain and agony till we achieve them. This is exactly what happened to St Paul, which we find in today's first reading. He knew that his belief in Jesus Christ would bring love, peace, unity and finally secure eternal life. Such profound belief led him to confront lashes, stoning, robbers, shipwrecks, life threat, thirst and hunger because he found his treasure in our Lord Jesus Christ.

**18 FRI**

**THE TRUE  
TREASURE**

Felix Tete, S.J.

2 Cor 11:18, 21-30  
Mt 6:19-23

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth.”*

The Gospel reading speaks of treasure we are expected to store up for heaven. Our treasure is love, service and faith in God. We fail multiple times to find this treasure because we are distracted by other things. We find it difficult to listen to our inner self. We come across many people finding their treasures in the Bible such as the Good Samaritan, Samaritan woman, Zacchaeus, Levi (Mathew) the disciple of Jesus. They have shown us how to find the treasures in their lives. Their treasures were love, compassion, kindness, humility, forgiveness and obedience. Today are we ready to realize ours? How are we using them if we have found them? Let us ask the compassionate, kind, loving and merciful God for His blessings and grace to find our treasures so that we may help people to recognize and experience the love and peace of God.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, help us seek for you and when we find you, help us leave everything in love for you.

**19 SAT**  
**STRIVE FOR THE**  
**KINGDOM OF GOD**

Alex Diamond, SG  
2 Cor 12:1-10  
Mt 6:24-34

*“So do not worry  
about tomorrow...  
Today’s trouble is  
enough for today.”*

It seems that whatever we do nowadays, we can’t escape from stress. Corona pandemic is one such example where we came to know that stress is the greatest debilitating illness in modern society. All our modern gadgets were designed to reduce stress but seem to have the opposite effect. Anxiety strikes everyone. The rich person is anxious about how to become wealthier by accumulating things. The middle class person is anxious about health insurance, car payments, job security, tuition fee for kids etc., the poor person is worried about having a proper roof overhead and daily food on the table.

As Ruth Graham Bell says: “I learned that worship and worry cannot live in the same heart: they are mutually exclusive.” So God, who gave us life, will also provide for our sustenance. We have financial needs, and Jesus says that God understands that. However, it is a promise that, in life and death, we belong to God and, in life and death, God will take care of our needs. To strive for the Kingdom of God is nothing less than accepting Jesus in our lives: to submit to him all the activities of our lives. The Kingdom of God is an attitude of heart, a pattern of behaviour, which is measured in humility, self-sacrifice and dependence. And the realization of that in our hearts is the coming of the Kingdom of God.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, help us and strengthen us to strive for the Kingdom of God so that we may become the true disciples of Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life.

Today's all three readings draw the readers' attention towards the realization of the unseen hands of God in the daily happenings of our lives. Job was challenged by God to admit that it's the Lord who gives and that it's the Lord who takes away. If we accept happiness from His hands, should not we accept sadness? He realized his limitation and powerlessness as being a mere mortal. The God who is beyond human comprehension has manifested his image and supremacy through his created world.

**20 SUN (XII  
SUNDAY OF THE  
YEAR)**

Father's Day/World  
Refugee Day

**NOT TO PUNISH  
BUT TO AWAKEN**

Sr. Stella, PR

Job 38:1, 8-11

2 Cor 5:14-17

Mk 4:35-41

This sovereignty of God is further emphasised through the miracle of calming the storm. The helplessness of the disciples is visible. Here are men, who were thought to be masters of the sea through their acquaintance with the sea as fishermen. They fail to realize that there is a divine power among them who can control and subdue any force within and outside. Jesus is the embodiment of that Divine Power. He manifests it through a command. The narrative ends with a stunning remark from Jesus: "Why are you so frightened? Do you still have no faith?" He chides them about their lack of faith, despite having Him in their midst. God, who created us, knows every minute detail of our journey through life. He wants us to trust him completely. Regardless of our circumstances, God says to each one of us "Trust Me." He will do the right thing at the right time. Having God in our boat doesn't mean that we will not face any storms. It means that no storm can sink our boat. Let's walk in that faith.

*"Why are you afraid?  
Have you still no  
faith?"*

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, nurture the seed of faith in me. May this faith help me to cast my fears and worries into your hands.

**21 MON (St. Aloysius Gonzaga)**

**DO NOT JUDGE**

*Sr. Rose Usha Kujur*

Gen 12:1-9

Mt 7:1-5

*“For with the judgment you make you will be judged...”*

be aware of one's prejudices, and for strength to remove them. Let us become compassionate towards ourselves and towards those whose opinions and behaviour we find difficult to accept.

In the first reading, the call of Abram reminds us of our call. God told Abram to leave and go but he did not reveal the destination. What did this mean for Abram and each one of us? To leave one's country means leaving behind one's identity. To leave one's kindred is to forsake intimacy. To leave the father's house is a call to abandon the ultimate security. Today God is calling each of us to leave everything behind. God is calling us for a special purpose, to hear the cry of the poor people, migrant workers, farmers etc. Are we willing to leave our identity, intimacy, security, comfort in order to raise the dignity of humanity?

**Pray and Practise:** Lord strengthen my call to serve others more and more, not to judge others but to love them.

Today's readings invite all of us to ruminate on the precious gift of our life and it gives us the golden rule for life in Christ. As a follower of Christ, our purpose of being on this earth is to have life in Christ. To have life in Christ is not an easy task as the path is very hard to follow because it is filled with lots of pains and sacrifices. We cannot follow Him without taking up the daily crosses.

**22 TUE**

**ONLY A FEW WILL  
FIND IT**

Antony Eugin, ADL

Gen 13:2, 5-18

Mt 7:6, 12-14

*"Do to others as you would have them do to you."*

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus is calling us to think about how we would want to be treated by others. It is indeed a call to loving action. This action may sound easy but often not easy as it seems. Implementing this act is not an easy task because the world is where we are living, we pay little attention towards others but we expect attention from others. But today Jesus is telling us that to have life in Him we need to take the narrow road which is hard to find and difficult to follow. One cannot bring everything with them. However, with this hard road, there is life. And those who enter through the narrow gate find their path constricted and at the end will find life and will have union with Jesus Christ.

**Pray and Practise:** God our Loving Father, give us hearts and minds to make the right decision in our daily lives, to act according to your will.

23 WED

**BEAR GOOD FRUITS**

Bhadagi Jayanti, S.J.

Gen 15:1-12, 17-18

Mt 7: 15-20

*“You will know them by their fruits.”*

fruits.

All human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, all human beings are fundamentally good, but some of them have failed to recognize the goodness within themselves or failed to experience the unconditional love of God. Jesus addresses this problem in today's Gospel reading. Jesus gives warning to his disciples to be careful of false prophets and bad

Jesus says that a tree is known by its fruit. So, he is using an allegory to point out the falsehood of a person. Many people may appear like prophets or angels. But we need to be careful of these people because they may take us away from God. Their language will be flowery, but it will deceive us, and we may fall into the trap of evil ways. So, we need to watch their deeds and words whether it takes us to God or away from God. But for a person who has a deep relationship with God, his/her actions will be according to Christ's values. If a person has experienced the love of God, he/she will bear good fruits. They will love one another and will even forgive their enemies. People who listen to the word of God and follow it, bear good fruits. They receive blessings and experience transformation in their lives. Then, they try to bring peace, love and hope to society.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus, gives us the spirit of discernment so that we may differentiate between good and evil and give us the grace to bear good fruits always.

Today's readings tell us about the salvific plan of God, and our role in it. God has this plan for all of us and the entire universe. He invites each one of us to work for the same. In the Old Testament, He called Isaiah and many others to be His servants to fulfil His plan. Later in the New Testament, God called John the Baptist to continue the work of preparing the way for the coming of Jesus. Now it is our time to respond to the call of God to continue His salvific plan.

## **24 THU (Nativity of John the Baptist)**

### **THE SALVIFIC PLAN OF GOD**

Felix Raj, S.J.

Is 49:1-6

Acts 13:22-26

Lk 1:57-66, 80

*"The Lord called me before I was born..."*

God is calling each one of us every moment of the day. Do we listen with the ears of the heart and so respond to His call? Though God has made the plan, He did not make it for His sake, but for our sake out of His love for us to work our salvation by cooperating with the movements of the Spirit. Therefore, we need to understand with our mind and accept with all our heart. Then only will we be able to participate in His salvific plan as we respond with love to his call every moment of our day-to-day life? As we grow in experiencing His love and in doing His will, our relationship with Him will grow, and we will also be able to bring others into this relationship to discover God's saving plan for each individual.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord, may you give us strength to respond to your call and to fulfil your saving plan for every person.

**25 FRI**

**WALKING IN HIS PRESENCE**

Sunil Gaikwad, S.J.

Gen 17:1, 9-10; 15-22

Mt 8:1-4

*“I will bless him and make him fruitful...”*

and being without blame was an invitation from God that demanded much. This is not an ‘easy go invitation’. But, God in His holiness and kindness made it possible for Abraham to walk in His presence and promised him ‘to make him the father of a multitude’. All those who are called by God to be faithful too are demanded to walk in God’s presence and be without blame. This is possible only with God and not on our own.

God’s covenantal relationship comes to fullness in His only Son Jesus Christ who Himself fulfils the demands and draws all people to God by His life, death and resurrection. The Gospel reading presents the cure of a leper by Jesus Christ. Jesus gives us the right perspective of what it means to ‘walk in the presence of God and be without blame’ by touching the leper and cleansing him. Thus, Jesus restored his human dignity. He reunited him with human society. We can be the channel to bring someone with us into God’s presence. By being faithful to God and by doing His will we can make ourselves the medium for someone to reach God today.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus Christ, give me the grace to see you in my fellow human beings and by doing so I may serve you in them and walk in your presence with faithfulness.

The world today runs behind all pleasures and comforts. Nobody wants to turn their eyes from the world. Everybody thinks that he or she is worthy enough to possess everything as much as they desire. As a result, greed enters the hearts of people. It is against this attitude that the Centurion utters his revolutionary words!

## 26 SAT

### AM I WORTHY TO HAVE HIM?

Tinto, CST

Gen 18:1-15

Mt 8:5-17

'I am not worthy' – this phrase describes the humility and faith of the Centurion. It is a realization of one's identity. The Centurion

*“Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof...”*

knows who Jesus is, and surrendered himself to His holy presence. It is his littleness that provokes him to utter these words! Jesus confirms to him that he shall come and cure the person. There is assurance in the words of Jesus. The Centurion, at once, realizes his emptiness. Who am I to receive the great holy person to my house? There are two things that keep the Centurion distant from the Lord. He is a non-Jew and a sinner. Thus, the centurion had two realizations – physical as well as spiritual. We are always aware of who we are, and what are we in society, but often forget the second aspect, our spiritual reality. Everyone should have both the realizations in day-to-day life to come to God. Before receiving the Holy Communion, we recite this prayer daily that the Centurion had uttered. Do we think about its importance and significance in our lives? Let us have this thought of welcoming this holy person Jesus to the unholy person that we are, the pure to the impure, the just to the unjust, and the worthy to the unworthy!

**Pray and Practise:** Let us make sure to recite this prayer of the Centurion “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed”.

**27 SUN (XIII SUNDAY  
OF THE YEAR)**

**FAITH IN JESUS  
GIVES LIFE**

Nirmal Kullu, S.J.

Wis 1:13-15, 2:23-24

2 Cor 8:7-9, 13-15

Mk 5:21-43

*“Your faith has made  
you well, go in peace”*

In the first part of the Gospel, a woman suffering from hemorrhage for the past twelve years comes with the intention, the intense desire and with unshakable faith in Jesus surreptitiously touches the hem of his garment. She is instantly cured. In my everyday life, how much desire do I have for God, with what intention and faith do I come to participate in the Eucharist and prayer and service? In the second part of the Gospel, the daughter of Jairus who was sick, and finally dies, is brought back to life by Jesus. In our lives, we also go through suffering, pain, failure, stress, turmoil, and inner conflict, helplessness and hopeless situations. During this time when we experience dryness and the feeling of absence of God, Jesus assures us saying, “Do not fear, only believe.” Our faith in Jesus will make us well. It will give us strength to face the reality and bring the turbulent situation to a stillness that Jesus alone can give.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus, increase our faith so that we may experience inner healing for all our hurts, real or imaginary.

Today's both readings are calling us to follow Jesus and respond to God's call. In the first reading, we see Abraham being called to bless the nation by the power of God, and make the path for Jesus Christ to come. But on his calling Abraham bargains with the Lord for the righteous to be given justice, not to treat with the wicked people. Thus, God listens to Abraham and promises him and his offspring to set apart to promote righteousness while living in the midst of the nations. And today we are blessed to see the seed grow into the mature tree of faith. This is the fruit of Abraham's relationship with God.

**28 MON**

**GOD IS CALLING**

*Manoj Lakra, S.J.*

Gen 18:16-33

Mt 8:18-22

*"Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go"*

Jesus through this Gospel is calling us to follow him. This call is not just but radical call that needs constant renunciation; sacrifice everything that is dear to us. Thus, following Jesus is not easy but to make the decision to follow Him must entail full commitment, total surrender and total trust. This call is to give priority to God by setting Him first above everything and everyone. This call demands willingness to follow Jesus wherever or whatever costs even to the extent of losing family, friends, and comfort zones, the most loved things and beings.

**Pray and Practise:** Lord Jesus we, humans want to follow you closely but it is our humanness that leads us to look back and give priority to other things rather than to you. Be our companion and anchor of lives, give us your love and grace so that we may not desire anything but you.

**29 TUE (Sts Peter and Paul)**

**RECOGNIZING THE LIVING CHRIST**

Joji, S.J.

Acts 12:1-11

2 Tim 4:6-8, 17-18

Mt 16:13-19

*“Simon Peter answered,  
“You are the Messiah...”*

Today's First Reading speaks about experiencing God's helping hand. The Second Reading speaks about the satisfaction that comes from doing the will of God and the Gospel speaks about witnessing, recognizing and making real the presence of the living Christ in the way we carry ourselves. St. Peter denied Christ and St. Paul persecuted Christ. Yet, both of them are stalwarts and are considered the pillars of the Church. Passionately they have become witnesses of Christ.

Jesus asks his disciples “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” The disciples answered by naming prominent and famous personalities like John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets; actually, they were no more. Only Peter said “You are the Christ,” Not a mere ordinary expression or statement but it's prophetic. It opens doors towards realizing that Christ had come and was with them. Intimacy, encountering and witnessing Christ prompted Peter to acknowledge the presence of Christ. These words come from the depths of his heart. Similarly, Paul encountered and witnessed the resurrected Christ on the way to Damascus in order to persecute the Christians. Paul spent his entire life toiling tirelessly to spread and proclaim the good news to the ends of the earth. Peter and Paul faced tremendous challenges yet never gave up their faith and mission. They constantly imitated and ceaselessly walked in the footsteps of the living Christ who was with them. At the end of their lives both joyfully would say that they have run the race and they kept up the faith. It is our turn to recognize Christ in our daily life and pass on the faith to others.

**Pray and Practise:** We pray for the grace that we may bear witness and recognize the living Christ in our lives.

In today's Gospel, something unusual is taking place. Driving out demons was never straightforward, even for Jesus. Unlike in the other miracles, Jesus here encounters opposition and resistance, but in the end, he prevails. Evil is a powerful force in our world, seemingly present everywhere and it is so difficult to eradicate. But as we look to Jesus who prevails against it, we ask for his help never to give up in our struggle against the evil around us.

**30 WED (First Roman Martyrs)**

**THEY WENT TO THE OTHER SIDE**

Vivian Lopes, S.J.

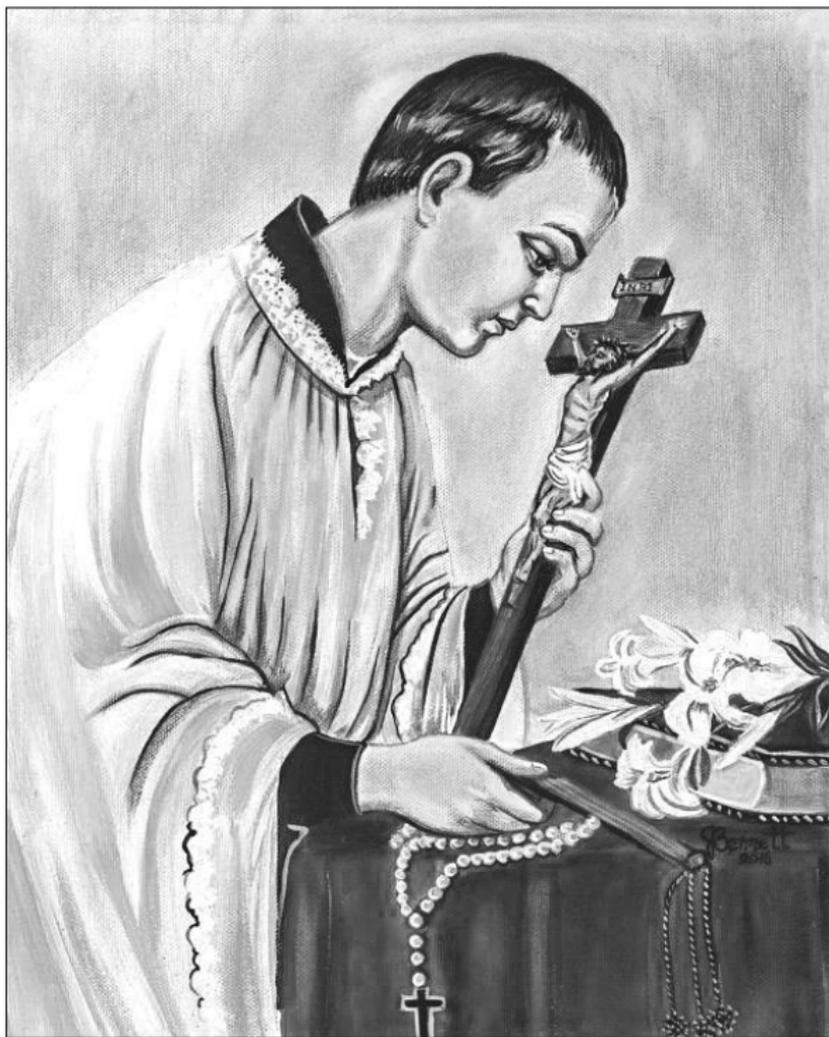
Gen 21:5, 8-20

Mt 8:28-34

*“When he came to the other side...”*

The location of this story says a lot about Jesus. It is in the gentile territory, where Jews would not normally go. Jesus was a man 'of the other side'. He moved to the gentile areas with little thought to his own safety, intent on the mission of his Father. There he met the forces of evil, of prejudice and hatred. His vision is to reconcile the goodness and evil in every human heart and to reconcile us to ourselves in the love of the Father who loves us as we are. Similarly, in today's First Reading from Genesis, we see the plight of Hagar as she wanders through the wilderness with her son. Without our Lord, Hagar had no hope. God heard the boy's cry and knew the distress that his mother was feeling. God's messenger told his mother not to fear and promised to do great things for them. This ancient passage holds a message that is truly timeless. There is always hope with God on our side.

**Pray and Practise:** May we be drawn to what is good and turn easily from what is evil.



**“I am a piece of twisted iron, I entered the religious life to get twisted straight.”**

“He who wishes to love God does not truly love Him, if he has not an ardent and constant desire to suffer for His sake.”  
St. Aloysius Gonzaga

## COVER

The Holy Spirit, the all pervading presence of God in Jesus Christ, is symbolised by the dove. The Spirit envelops the entire world with God's grace and action. May the Spirit guide us in our experience of the Divine, enlighten our lives through daily reflection on the Scriptures — the 'AVE'.

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