

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

July 5, 2020 Cycle A

**Facilitator:** *Let us take a minute to consciously acknowledge that we are in the presence of God and ask him to help us to hear the Word he wants us to hear this week.*

**Pause for a moment and then play a religious song.**

**Opening prayer:** *Jesus, meek and humble of heart, you invite us to come to you when we are weary and find life burdensome. You do not promise to remove our burdens, but you do promise to help us carry them and to give us refreshment when we are tired. Be with us today as we share your Word. Bless us with your wisdom and discernment so that we may know the message you have for us. Amen.*

**Response to last week's Word:** [Facilitator briefly recalls last week's Gospel.] *Let us spend a few minutes sharing how the Word we heard God speak to us last week has unfolded in our lives during the week.*

**Facilitator reads focus statement:** In the first reading, Zechariah paints a picture of a gentle, meek and peaceful Messiah. This image is fulfilled in the portrayal of Jesus in the Gospel, where he describes himself as meek and humble of heart. In the second reading, Paul calls the Romans to live in the spirit of Jesus.

*Let us listen to God's Word to hear what it is he wants to say to us in these readings today. As you hear a word, you may want to underline it or write it down to remember.*

Read the first reading, the psalm and the second reading, pausing briefly after each one.

### FIRST READING: Zechariah 9:9-10

These verses are chosen for this Sunday because they describe a meek and humble Messiah, which Jesus is. The meek donkey is contrasted to the warrior horse which is a symbol of war. Zion (another name for Jerusalem) will shout for joy when the King arrives in the city – not as a mighty conquering warrior but as a just Savior who will banish war and institute peace.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM 145

This psalm extols God's kindness and compassion as well as his outreach to the lowly and forgotten.

### SECOND READING: Romans 8:9, 11-13

Paul continues his discussion on baptism. Living out one's baptism means that one will live in the spirit of Jesus as opposed to "living in the flesh." To live "life in the flesh" is to live life independent of God: self-sufficient and self-reliant with no relationship with God. On the contrary, one who uses his/her personal freedom to tune in and respond to the leadings of the Holy Spirit lives a "life in the spirit" which is centered on God and his values. Life in the flesh leads to death while life in the spirit leads to eternal life.

### PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL: Matt. 11:25-30

*As we listen to this first reading of the Gospel, let us listen with our minds for the content.*

**A participant reads the Gospel,  
then all pause to reflect.**

*As we listen to this second reading of the Gospel, let us listen with our hearts to what Jesus is saying to us. Be aware of what draws us in and what part of the Gospel might be a challenge to embrace. You may want to underline or write down the word you hear.*

### GOSPEL: Matthew 11:25-30

This Gospel begins with Jesus' shout of joy, *not* on account of the so-called "wise and learned" who do not recognize his true identity, but for the "little ones" with humble and open hearts who 'get it.' A 'know-it-all' attitude is a huge block hindering us from receiving God's self-revelation.

Jesus speaks about the special and unique relationship that exists between him and his Father. It is really a statement about the divinity of Christ. In Jesus we find the Wisdom of God. He reveals the mind and heart of God to us.

The reading ends with Jesus' beautiful invitation to the "heavy burdened" to come to him. The Pharisees and scribes have made the Law of Moses a heavy burden by adding to it a multitude of legalisms. On another level, faith in Christ helps all of us to deal with the burdens of life.

### FAITH-SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Turn to the person next to you and share what verse or image in the readings caught your attention or drew you in. Was there a verse or aspect of the readings that challenged you?

*The facilitator can decide which is more helpful: to share the next questions with the whole group, or to share in smaller groups of three or four.*

2. What makes you "shout for joy"?
3. What might cause us or others to live self-sufficient lives independent of God?
4. Can you name any heavy burden or cross that has turned out to be a blessing?
5. In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that he is gentle and humble of heart. Who models this spirit for you? What can help us grow in gentleness and humility?
6. Name one thing today's Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed and act on.

### RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Share with the person next to you one way you can act on this week's readings. Suggestions: Tackle with prayer and effort one 'flesh attitude' that hinders your spiritual growth. Give your burdens to Christ. Reach out to someone who is carrying a heavy burden.

**JOURNALING.** *Having listened to God's Word and listened to others' reflections on it, take a quiet moment to reflect on what you are hearing God say to you. Your response will be what you bring to Eucharist on Sunday, asking Jesus to help you respond as he asks of you. When ready, jot down your reflections.*

### PRAYING WITH THE WORD

**Facilitator:** Let us now pause to see how something(s) said in the reading might lead us into shared prayer. Suggestion: *Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart more like yours.*

### CONCLUDE WITH PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING, PETITION AND INTERCESSION

**Facilitator:** What are we grateful for? For what and for whom do we need to pray? If someone in the group is carrying a heavy burden at this time, perhaps the group can gather around that person and pray over him/her. Pray for the grace to be meek and humble of heart and do what you can to lighten the burden of someone who is carrying a heavy load.

### CLOSING PRAYER (together)

#### For Trust And Confidence In God

**My God, I want to have confidence in your love, but so many things seem to hold me back: past wounds, past hurts, past betrayals, past sins—mine and others'.**

**Open my eyes. Open my heart.**

**Enable me to take the leap of faith that is needed now.**

**Holiness isn't a matter of starting to love you some time in the future, or even tomorrow.**

**I don't have to wait until I become a better person, more worthy, more virtuous.**

**It's a matter of trusting in your mercy today, just as I am.**

**You showed this to the saints; show me, too, and give me a spirit of great confidence.**

**I ask this through your beloved Son, our merciful Saviour.**

**Amen.**

- Elizabeth Ruth Obbard