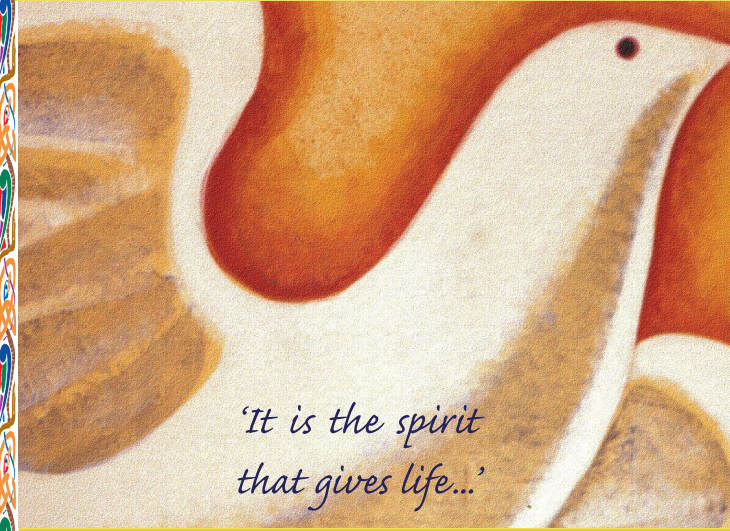


focus on sunday

TWENTY - FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 22nd August 2021

God gives us the freedom of choice. He forces no one to obey him. He leaves us free. Our world is full of contradictory voices and false prophets. May we not be led astray. Only Jesus can give us eternal life.



'It is the spirit that gives life...'



The deepest loves are the loves which say 'forever', as in marriage and many other relationships. Jesus in the gospel today is saying that his gift is forever. His love shown in death and resurrection is for all time, for all of us. This can be said to be the meaning of the Eucharist.

Each time we take part in the Mass we are 'present' at the death and resurrection of the Lord. Mass is not just a social gathering, or an ordinary prayer meeting. It is the highest point of Christian prayer, as we join in this love of God in Jesus, given for all time.

This gift of love is received or rejected. Jesus was in a way testing his disciples by asking them 'will you too go away?' knowing that they would stay even though there would be unfaithfulness and one would leave him. They would find out that staying with him would mean trying to share and live out love like he did.

The 'Holy One of God' is the One who loves all God's people to the end. Our Mass is also our thanks to God for this love and for God's call to be part of this love, sharing in his death and resurrection.

Donal Neary SJ (editor Sacred Heart Messenger)

RESPONSORIAL PSALM P.S. 33:2-3.16-23

R. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

1. I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad. [R]
2. The Lord turns his face against the wicked
to destroy their remembrance from the earth.
The Lord turns his eyes to the just
and his ears to their appeal. [R]
3. They call and the Lord hears
and rescues them in all their distress.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save [R]
4. Many are the trials of the just man
but from them all the Lord will rescue him.
He will keep guard over all his bones,
not one of his bones shall be broken. [R]
5. Evil brings death to the wicked;
those who hate the good are doomed.
The Lord ransoms the souls of his servants.
Those who hide in him shall not be condemned. [R]

SECOND READING Ephesians 5:25-32 (shorter form)

A reading from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians

Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!
Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life:
you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!**

GOSPEL John 6:60-69

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

After hearing his doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before? 'It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
May almighty God have mercy on us... **Amen**



THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us; For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.



OPENING PRAYER

O God, who cause the minds of the faithful to unite in a single purpose, grant your people to love what you command and to desire what you promise, that, amid the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.....

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Joshua 24:1-2; 15-18

A reading from the book of Joshua

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem; then he called the elders, leaders, judges and scribes of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. Then Joshua said to all the people: 'If you will not serve the Lord, choose today whom you wish to serve, whether the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are now living. As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.'

The people answered, 'We have no intention of deserting the Lord our God and serving other gods. Was it not the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors out of the land of Egypt, the house of slavery, who worked those great wonders before our eyes and preserved us all along the way we travelled and among all the peoples through whom we journeyed? We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God.'

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.



'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.' After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?' Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

All bow for following two lines: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Keep your family safe, O Lord, and grant them the abundance of your mercies, that they may find growth through your teachings and the gifts of heaven. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God,..... **Amen.**

Go forth, the Mass is ended.
Thanks be to God.