

Order for Liturgy of the Word

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Entrance Antiphon: Leader

All peoples, clap your hands. Cry to God with shouts of joy!

Ps 47(46):2



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Sisters and Brothers, God desires to converse with us through his Word. Let us bless him for his goodness. Blessed be God forever. **Response:** Blessed be God forever.

Introduction: Leader

We gather today to celebrate the Lord's Day. One with our sisters and brothers and with the entire Church, we will listen to God's Word and join in prayer. So, as we prepare to hear of God's love poured out through Christ, let us acknowledge that He is the source of pardon and strength.

All: *The Confiteor*

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Leader: In acknowledgement and thanksgiving for God's mercy we offer our praise:

All: *The Gloria*

Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace to men 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 the 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.

Leader: Let us pray

O God, who through the grace of adoption chose us to be children of light, grant, we pray, that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

First reading: A reading from the Book of the Second Book of Kings: **4:8-11, 14-16a**

One day Elisha came to Shunem, where there was a woman of influence, who urged him to dine with her. Afterward, whenever he passed by, he used to stop there to dine. So she said to her husband, "I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often, let us arrange a little room on the roof and furnish it for him with a bed, table, chair, and lamp, so that when he comes to us he can stay there." Sometime later Elisha arrived and stayed in the room overnight. Later Elisha asked, "Can something be done for her?" His servant Gehazi answered, "Yes! She has no son, and her husband is getting on in years." Elisha said, "Call her." When the woman had been called and stood at the door, Elisha promised, "This time next year you will be fondling a baby son."

The word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19

R.(2a) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

The promises of the LORD I will sing forever, through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness. For you have said, "My kindness is established forever;" in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Blessed the people who know the joyful shout; in the light of your countenance, O LORD, they walk. At your name they rejoice all the day, and through your justice they are exalted. **R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

You are the splendor of their strength, and by your favor our horn is exalted. For to the LORD belongs our shield, and the Holy One of Israel, our king.

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord

Second reading:

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

6:3-4, 8-11

Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives for God. Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus. The word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God

Gospel acclamation:

R. Alleluia, alleluia

1 Pt 2:9

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel proclamation:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew:

10:37-42

Jesus said to his apostles: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple— amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward."

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

Having listened to God's word in these passages from Holy Scripture we now profess our faith in all that He has revealed:

All—Profession of Faith:

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate, he suffered
death and was buried, and rose

again on the third day in accordance
with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated
at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the
Son,

Who with the Father and the Son is
adored and glorified, who has spoken
through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism
for the forgiveness of sins and I look
forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful—Leader

Introduction: Standing in the bright light of truth we humbly bring our petitions before our Lord:

Intentions: For Pope Francis: that God who has called him to shepherd His flock will continue to strengthen, guard, and guide him as he leads His holy Church; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For Christians everywhere: that we will be examples to others of trust in God's providence as we strive to live lives of hospitality, justice and mercy; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For our nation: that we will soon be healed by incarnating the forgiveness and reconciliation taught by Jesus; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For our youth: that God will guide them through the challenges and confusion of these days and give them wisdom and maturity to proceed in faith with courage and hope; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are ill, anxious and fearful during these times of uncertainty: may they take up their cross and follow our Lord to newness of life; we pray to the Lord. **Response:** Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died: may they receive the righteous man's reward and now rest in the presence and peace of Christ; we pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

Prayer: Lord, we who have died with you in baptism and now live in newness of life with you, humbly offer these prayers. May we, your chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, always faithfully announce the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His wonderful light. We offer this and all our prayers through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

Leader: Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Leader: With the love of Christ, let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Leader: Communion Antiphon:

Cf. Ps 103 (102):1

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, his holy name.

All—Spiritual Communion:

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Leader: Prayer After Communion

May this divine sacrifice we have offered and received fill us with life, O Lord, we pray, so that, bound to you in lasting charity, we may bear fruit that lasts for ever. Through Christ our Lord. **Response:** Amen.

Blessing—making the sign of the cross:

Leader: May the Lord bless us, protect us, and bring us to everlasting life.

Response: Amen.

Leader: Let us go in peace.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Get A Life

When a pharmaceutical company says, “Live well!” we know their blessing envisions a judicious use of their products to enhance our remaining years on this earth. When the beer people remind us that we “only go round once,” we know that they want us to include an enjoyment of their product as we try to squeeze the most pleasure out of this short life.

And when the cotton people show us touching video clips of joyful family moments while a soulful voice sings about “the fabric of our lives,” we know whose fabric they want us to be wearing during these special times. In each case, the language of life points to the biological life that ends, sooner than we expect, in death.

How remarkably different is the language of life that we find in Scripture! While the Bible acknowledges the goodness and shortness of biological life, it also makes bold to stretch the words we use for life and death and apply them in a fresh way to the death-defying covenant-life we share with God. And it does so in a way that must sound to the uninitiated like double talk—as, for example, in the saying of Jesus quoted at the head of this reflection, “whoever finds his life will lose it.” This is worth a closer look.

When we hear Jesus, in his mission charge to the Twelve, say, “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it,” we know that we are hearing paradox. And paradox forces us to make sense of the language by taking it beyond the obvious sense. If we wonder in what sense “finding life” constitutes loss, we get help from Matthew 16:25-26: “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?” In that context, the false “finding” of life is the result of misguided life-saving efforts such as gaining more and more possessions, whereas the life that one gains by losing it for the sake of Jesus is the everlasting life of the kingdom of God—which does indeed begin in this biological life but perdures beyond biological death.

When Paul writes to the Romans about his understanding of the change that occurs in baptism, he indulges in the same paradoxical language that Jesus used. It helps to recall that Paul is reflecting on a ritual that involved, in his day, the total immersion in water of the baptized person. That complete immersion symbolized, first of all, not cleansing but dying. The baptized person dies to sinful solidarity with Adam, and then surfacing to breathe air once again, rises to share in the new life of the risen Christ, the life of the Christian community. Paul shares with the Fourth Gospel a way of understanding Christian life as a new level of existence, such that he, like John, can say that the Christian has already passed through death and now shares in an eternal life that biological death is unable to interrupt.

This Sunday’s readings invite us to reflect on another dimension of that life, hospitality. When the woman from *Shunem* extends to the prophet Elisha the generous hospitality of having a special guest room especially for him, she is rewarded with an unexpected gift of life: her sterility is healed and she conceives and bears a son. And even when that son dies an early death, she receives the surprising gift of his resuscitation.

Jesus’ mission discourse concludes with words elaborating that theme of hospitality and its rewards. Jesus assures his disciples that mission in his name will involve them in an adventure of hospitality that will bless abundantly those that receive them. As in the case of the *Shunammite* woman and Elisha, Jesus promises, “whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet, receives a prophet's reward.” An even larger context is revealed in the words “whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me” (Gospel). In other words, *Christian mission and hospitality are nothing less than living out a relationship with God.*

Life becomes larger than it seems. The Gospel vision denies none of the goodness of beer, cotton, and good medicine in this short biological life, but it asserts a broad network of relationships that exceeds the limitations of biological life and requires us to stretch the normal meanings of our human language about life and death.

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THE FIRST READING : [2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a](#)

“I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often, let us arrange a little room on the roof. ... ”

When prophets, such as a Romero, speak, they lay down their lives.

If we are not ready to go that far, to speak out loud and clear,
then give us the grace to stand by them, and learn ...

...learn to speak quietly, each in our own way, for you.

THE SECOND READING : [Romans 6:3-4, 8-11](#)

... You too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.

What does it mean O Christ?

First, to receive prophets, and other times to become one?

Will you help us offer a cup of cold water, and let us receive it?

Be with us every minute of our lives.

THE GOSPEL : [Matthew 10:37-42](#)

And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple —amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.

What is needed most now?

For our whole earth, it is clean air, it's a vaccine for a virus end,
it's a meal for the hungry.

For our racial problems it is justice and love,
for all who thirst, it's a cup of water.

O God, you ask little of us.

Please help us give each other the “cup of water” we all need.

Give us desire and your knowledge and insight

Let us not ignore even one soul's need.

Every one of us thirsts for you.

Anne Osdieck