

**SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A**  
**13 September 2020**  
**For Families and Households during Social Isolation**

The Introductory Rites

*A Bible may be placed on a table together with a candle and a cross.*

*Sign of the Cross*

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
**All:** **Amen.**

*Greeting*

**Leader:** Blessed be Jesus who makes us one, and strengthens us  
by the power of his Spirit.  
**All:** **Blessed be God forever.**

**Leader**

**(in these or similar words):** Friends in Christ,  
although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day, we gather in God's name  
for when two or more come together God is always with us.  
We worship in union with the whole Church keeping this day of the Lord holy.

**Leader:** Before listening to the Word of God let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

*A brief period of silence follows.*

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, we belong to you: Lord, have mercy.

**All:** **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you teach us how to forgive: Christ, have mercy.

**All:** **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you lavish us with mercy and compassion: Lord, have mercy.

**All:** **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** **Amen.**

*Opening Prayer.*

**Leader:** Let us pray.

*All pause for silent prayer.*

God of mercy  
you give pardon and peace to sinners  
for your love knows no bounds.  
Give us hearts that remember your mercy.  
May we always be ready to forgive others  
when they do wrong.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, one God,  
for ever and ever.

**All:** **Amen.**

## The Liturgy of the Word

### First Reading

Sirach 27:30 – 28:7

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus

*Forgive your neighbour's faults and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.*

Resentment and anger, these are foul things,  
and both are found with the sinner.  
He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord,  
who keeps strict account of sin.  
Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you,  
and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.  
If a man nurses anger against another,  
can he then demand compassion from the Lord?  
Showing no pity for a man like himself,  
can he then plead for his own sins?  
Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment;  
who will forgive him his sins?  
Remember the last things, and stop hating,  
remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments.  
Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will;  
remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

**All:**                   The word of the Lord.  
                          **Thanks be to God.**

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 102:1-4. 9-12. R. v.8

**(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful; slow to anger and rich in compassion.**

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,  
all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings. **(R.)**
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the grave,  
who crowns you with love and compassion. **(R.)**
3. His wrath will come to an end;  
he will not be angry for ever.  
He does not treat us according to our sins  
nor repay us according to our faults **(R.)**
4. For as the heavens are high above the earth  
so strong is his love for those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west  
so far does he remove our sins. **(R.)**

### Second Reading

Rom 14:7-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

*Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord.*

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The word of the Lord.  
**All: Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel**

Mt 18:21-35

**Reader:** From the holy Gospel according to Matthew.  
**All: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*I tell you that you forgive not seven times but seventy times seven.*

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times. 'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me", he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said. "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

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

*A short period of reflection may be observed.*

### *Profession of Faith*

**Leader:** In union with the whole Church let us profess our faith.  
**All: I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.*

**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.**

### *Universal Prayer*

**Leader:** We ask God our Father to grant us to share in his work of mercy, the mercy which makes sense of all that we endure in our lives on earth.

1. For the Pope and the bishops: that they may be a sign of God's mercy, showing to the world that God is with us, and may they protect the rights and dignity of the young and vulnerable. Lord, hear us.
2. For doctors, nurses and all healthcare workers caring for those with Covid-19, and all who are suffering from the virus. Lord, hear us.
3. For families: that they may grow stronger and more resilient in their love and care for one another so that children are raised in safe and nurturing environments. Lord, hear us.
4. For those whose lives have been traumatised through abuse: that they may find the courage to share their story and to find lasting peace and healing. Lord, hear us.
5. For our parishes as they seek to follow the example of Christ and the teachings of his Church: that we will work to ensure that policies and procedures are implemented to protect children, young people and the vulnerable in our society. Lord, hear us.
6. For those who have died recently, especially Ernestina De Martinis, Frances Catherine Smith, Pauline Gardiner, Carmela Spinoso, Rachela Natalizio, those who have died with Covid-19, and those whose anniversaries occur. Lord, hear us.

**Leader:** God our loving Father,  
in your mercy we ask you to hear the prayers we offer  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

**Leader:** At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

**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.**

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

### *The Concluding Rite*

Blessing

**Leader:** May the Lord be with us and protect us now and for ever.  
*All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.*

**All:** **Amen.**

*Dismissal*

**Leader:** Let us go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.  
**All:** **Thanks be to God.**

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