

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord forever.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:6-9.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 145.

RESPONSE:

The Lord is close to all who call him.

1. I will bless you day after day, and praise your name forever and ever. The Lord is great and highly to be praised; his greatness cannot be measured. *R*
2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in mercy. How good is the Lord to all, compassionate to all his creatures. *R*
3. The Lord is just in all his ways, and holy in all his deeds. The Lord is close to all who call him, who call on him in truth. *R*

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:20-24, 27.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! Open our hearts, O Lord, that we may listen to the words of your Son. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 25 Sep Liturgy of the Day

Ezra 1:1-6; Psalm 126; Luke 8:16-18

Do we allow people to feel comfortable because the Gospel we have grown comfortable with offers them no challenge? Has our Christianity become anonymous, with no-one noticing the difference in our values?

Tue 26 Sep (Ss Cosmas & Damian, Ms)

Ezra 6:7-8, 12, 14-20; Psalm 122; Luke 8:19-21

Christianity is full of paradoxes: the blind see; the apparently irreligious enter the kingdom first; the cross leads to life; and in giving we receive. In actively applying our faith we find that it is deepened, not depleted.

Wed 27 Sep St Vincent de Paul, Pr

Ezra 9:5-9; Psalm: Tobit 13:1-4, 6, 8; Luke 9:1-6

In today's Gospel, Jesus' instructions are not just handy tips for travelers. He teaches the values of simplicity and trust. Perhaps we should re-examine our daily routines, our material goods, and even our cluttered minds.

Thu 28 Sep (St Wenceslaus, M)

Haggai 1:1-8; Psalm 149; Luke 9:7-9

Herod knew that if he were to listen to Jesus, he would have to change. But he didn't want that. Are we attentive enough to what Jesus is saying to us in his Word, or do we quietly dismiss the things we do not want to hear?

Fri 29 Sep ARCHANGELS MICHAEL, GABRIEL & RAPHAEL

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Psalm 138; John 1:47-51

"We are all the same... all the same... longing to find our way back... back to the One... back to the only One." – Rumi

Sat 30 Sep St Jerome, PrD

Zechariah 2:1-5, 10-11; Jeremiah 31:10-13; Luke 9:43-45

"The Scriptures are shallow enough for a babe to come and drink without fear of drowning, and deep enough for theologians to swim in without ever reaching the bottom." – St Jerome

Sun 1 Oct 26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Ezekiel 18:25-28; Psalm 25; Matthew 21:28-32

"A quiet light shines in every heart. It draws no attention to itself, though it is always secretly there. It is what illuminates our minds to see beauty, our desire to seek possibility and our hearts to love life." – J. O'Donohue

(KEY: **SOLEMNITY:** FEAST; Memorial; (Optional Memorial) Ms= Martyrs; Pr= Priest; D= Doctor

Catholic Link

GOD WHO HEALS

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A
Divine Office: Week 1 • 24 September 2023



Affect of Illness on Family and Friends

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There is surely no greater anguish for a family than when a child becomes severely sick. The family dynamics shift as all emotional and other resources are directed towards the care of the sick child. Years later, perhaps in adult life, this may be talked about by the other siblings who felt sidelined while parents focussed on the sick one.

Irrespective of the age of the sick family member, a serious illness in the family leaves no one untouched. It brings the fragility of the human body and the temporal nature of our earthly existence into sharp focus.

When the illness includes a diagnosis of being terminal, there is a kaleidoscope of emotions. Everyone reacts differently. I know of a teenage sister who refused to leave her room for days. The mother, in initial denial, carried on as if nothing had happened. The sole breadwinner would have given anything to stay at home and care for his wife and daughter, but someone had to pay the bills. Friends watched from the outside feeling helpless.

These are, of course, only some of the outward manifestations of trying to cope not only with the physical illness, but also the spiritual battle of trying to find divine answers. Catholics, and Christians in general, know by faith that suffering can be a share in the Cross of Christ, so that, as St Paul teaches, we may share in the joy of his Resurrection. It's not always easy to see that, at least initially, but prayer and picking up the Bible, and talking with others about questions of faith, can give us something to hold onto as we are gradually

led by the Holy Spirit to deeper understanding and acceptance.

Pope Francis says that questioning why God allows suffering is futile. Instead, he suggests, "in those moments of suffering, prayers that do not ask for explanations but instead beg the Lord to accompany us in suffering, are the most useful."

Similarly, our Christian response as family and friends of those who suffer illness, is to accompany them with love, even when sometimes the sick person's complaining makes them hard to love. We must accompany the sick simply by listening – without judgement – to how they are coping physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Other times may call for more practical gestures, like bringing around a meal, helping to fetch the children from school, buying groceries, or taking the sick person to their medical appointments.

In their pain, as suggested above, the sick person may struggle to see the face of the suffering Christ. But they can see the caring face of those who help them to carry their burden. In our responsibility of caring and praying for the sick person, we become the face of Christ who helps them to find the strength they need to heal, or if necessary, the peace to come to terms with their mortality.

Families caring for a sick member need care. As parish communities, we pray for families that are suffering, and provide practical pastoral and spiritual help to equip them with courage and faith to carry the cross of illness with their loved ones.

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