



AMDG  
TWELFTH SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
YEAR A  
21ST JUNE 2020



**Jesus instructed the Twelve:  
'Do not be afraid'.**

OPENING PRAYER

Grant, O Lord,  
that we may always revere and love your holy name,  
for you never deprive of your guidance  
those you set firm on the foundation of your love.

Today's readings are very apt for our current times, where many of us are experiencing vulnerability, tension, and unpredictability. Yet as followers of Christ, we are being called to trust in God our Father, who knows us intimately and understands our needs.

In the *First Reading*, we hear Jeremiah's challenging voice giving an unpopular message to the people, who must change their self-centred way of living. In his isolation, Jeremiah turns to the Lord to ask for help, for he needs friendship in very real ways in his difficulties.

The *Psalms* is a cry of anguish from one in great danger. Yet despite his distress, the psalmist has confidence in the great love of God.

Paul teaches that the consequence of sin is 'death': a death that includes the death of our friendship with God. But Paul also emphasises the abundant reality of divine grace; a free gift introduced into the world through Christ Jesus (*Second Reading*).

In today's *Gospel*, Jesus reminds the Twelve that they are not promised success; they will suffer. Yet he bids them repeatedly, 'Do not be afraid'. The Father's tender care will never desert them. God is on their side: not as a remote figure, but as a Father who has intimate knowledge of and care for each of them.

In these our own times of trial and vulnerability, we pray for God's guidance and teaching. 'Lord, you invite us to cry out with complete confidence in the Father's boundless love. This day we offer you praise and thanks for your abundant gifts to us in our poverty and weakness.'

## PSALM 68 (69)

*R./ In your great love, answer me, O God.*

**I**t is for you I suffer taunts, that shame covers my face,  
that I have become a stranger to my brothers,  
an alien to my own mother's sons.  
I burn with zeal for your house  
and taunts against you fall on me.

This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favour.  
In your great love, answer me, O God,  
with your help that never fails:  
Lord, answer, for your love is kind:  
in your compassion turn towards me.

The poor when they see it will be glad  
and God-seeking hearts will revive;  
for the Lord listens to the needy  
and does not spurn his servants in their chains.  
Let the heavens and the earth give him praise,  
the sea and all its living creatures.

I begin my prayer slowly, becoming aware of any internal distractions ...  
my thoughts, emotions, sensations.

I ask the Lord to hold them ... to draw my inner attention towards him with a  
God-seeking heart.

I read this psalm of lament reflectively, with an open mind and spirit.  
What do I notice? What speaks to my heart?

Perhaps the opening words give voice to my own grievances, allowing me to  
complain to God. If so, I tell him about my own suffering and anxieties,  
and the suffering of our interconnected world.

Maybe I allow my prayer to turn into a request ... beseeching God for answers  
for myself ... my family ... our hurting world?

I take my laments and entreaties to my loving, powerful Father, sharing from the  
depths of my being. I allow myself to sit in silence with the Lord.

Towards the end of my prayer, I ask for the grace of a radical, child-like trust to  
depend on God to help set things right, to restore balance to our lives and our  
world.

*Our Father....*

## GOSPEL MATTHEW 10: 26–33

**J**esus instructed the Twelve as follows: ‘Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the rooftops.

‘Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

‘So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.’

I become aware of the God who desires me and seeks my company now ... conscious of his loving attention in this moment.

I ask his living Spirit to pray in me, with me, through me.

I read Jesus’s teachings prayerfully, a couple of times.

Maybe I can sense his presence as I read? I listen to the qualities of his voice, and the words he uses as he instructs his disciples.

As I linger here, what responses in me arise?

I try to find my own words ...

or I may simply rest in deep shared silence with Jesus.

Perhaps I am conscious of my fears for myself and my loved ones; for the marginalised peoples of our interconnected world at this time of pandemic.

As a disciple of Jesus, can I open my heart to hear and pray his repeated words: ‘*Do not be afraid (my name) ...*’?

Or perhaps I find myself really struggling to trust in the promises of Jesus, and to have confidence in the Father’s intimate care?

Whatever arises within me, I take care not to judge. I can speak openly to the Lord about it. I ask him to help me trust in his universal power and care for us during these confusing and unpredictable days.

As I slowly end my prayer, I give thanks for my own worth as seen through God’s eyes. I ask the Spirit for the grace I need to be a courageous, faithful disciple.

## Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

Save us, Lord, who share in your life, and give us your blessing.

*Entrance Antiphon*

The Lord listens to the needy

and does not spurn his servants in their chains.

*Psalm*

It is certain that divine grace, coming through the one man,  
Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift.

*Second Reading*

*This week's texts if you want to explore further:*

*Jeremiah 20: 1-13; Psalm 68 (69); Romans 5: 12-15; Matthew 10: 26-33*



'Why, every hair on your head has been counted.  
So there is no need to be afraid!'

*Gospel*



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LDS