



AMDG
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
YEAR A
5TH JULY 2020



‘Come to me, and I will give you rest’

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who in the abasement of your Son
have raised up a fallen world,
fill your faithful with holy joy,
for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin
you bestow eternal gladness.

There is a very welcome thread of joy and encouragement woven throughout the readings for this Sunday.

The *First Reading* is a foretelling of the joyous Kingdom over which Jesus will reign, and a prophecy of his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem before his death and resurrection. His way is a way of simplicity and humility, bringing peace to all nations.

Today's *Psalms* is at the heart of Jewish worship, and is recited three times a day. It joyfully declares that God our King rules the whole of creation with compassion and love; he is faithful and lifts up all those who are bowed down.

In Paul's letter to the Romans, we are reminded that we are not fully alive until we wake up to the reality of Christ's Spirit living within us (*Second Reading*).

It is in this same Spirit that Jesus declares in the *Gospel* – that he is one with the Father, and that all things have been entrusted to him. He invites all those who are overburdened to come to him, for his yoke is easy, his burden light.

The Spirit of Christ living within us gives us hope, that even in the midst of the trials of our times, Jesus is with us, sharing in our suffering, carrying us in ways that we may not yet even recognise. Let us pray that we, as the body of Christ in the world today, will have the courage and strength to carry compassionately all those who feel weighed down by the effects of the recent pandemic.

FIRST READING ZECHARIAH 9: 9–10

The Lord says this:
‘Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion!
Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem!
See now, your king comes to you; he is victorious,
he is triumphant, humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will banish chariots from Ephraim
and horses from Jerusalem;
the bow of war will be banished.
He will proclaim peace for the nations.
His empire shall stretch from sea to sea,
from the River to the ends of the earth.’

In preparation for my prayer today, I look back over the past few days,
and ponder ...

Where have I noticed God at work in my life?
When has it been hard for me to recognise God's presence?
How do I feel now as I enter this time of prayer?

I bring these thoughts and feelings before God. Holding them gently in mind,
I allow myself slowly to become still.

I take a few long, slow, deep breaths, imagining God's love filling my being with
each one. I then let my breath return to its natural rhythm.

Once I feel ready, I turn carefully to the text and read it through at a gentle,
flowing pace. I pause in silence for a short while, then read the prophecy again,
pondering over each phrase.

Is there a word or image to which my heart is drawn?
I let my prayer rest on this moment, repeating the phrases, or allowing my
imagination to explore the pictures that may form in my mind.

How do I feel now?

As I pray with these hope-filled words of prophecy, for what do I long?
What do I desire for myself, my community and for the world?

I share my longings with the Lord as I would with a close and trusted friend.
I wait upon the Lord ... I listen ...

As slowly as I entered prayer, I bring it to a close, saying
‘Glory be to the Father ...’

GOSPEL MATTHEW 11: 25–30

Jesus exclaimed, ‘I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.’

My mind may be burdened with thoughts, regrets and loss from the past, as well as worries and ruminations as to what the future may hold. But now, in prayer, I desire to call my mind to awareness of the present moment.

God is eternally present in the here and now of my life. This is where God greets me, not in the past or future ... but now, in this very moment.

To help my wandering mind, I gently call the focus of my attention to what I can feel in my body, and see or hear around me.

I may softly focus on a candle, an icon, the cross, or anything that speaks to me of the presence of God.

I rest and linger in this presence for as long as I need, before turning to the Gospel. I read it reverently several times, until the passage becomes familiar to me.

I may choose to imagine Jesus speaking these words.

Does the tone of his voice change as he moves from talking with the Father to talking to the people?

As I listen, what do I notice arising within me?

I am free to focus my prayer on a part or the whole of this Gospel ... or perhaps I see Jesus looking deep into my being and saying,

‘Come to me [my name], you who labour and are overburdened ...’

I let these words resonate within me, and share the depths of my feelings and thoughts with Jesus. I take time to listen ... to be aware of my needs.

I finish by praying ‘*Our Father ...*’, together with Jesus.

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

Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion!
Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem!

First Reading

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

Psalms

Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and
humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Gospel

*This week's texts if you want to explore further:
Zechariah 9: 9–10; Ps. 143 (144); Rom. 8: 9, 11–13; Matthew 11: 25–30*



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