

## **Funeral mass for a miscarried child / stillborn baby**

Reading: Wisdom 4:7–15; Gospel: Mark 10:13–16

Theme: “Held in the Arms of Christ”

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is a touching story about a woman who planted a tree in memory of the child she never got to hold in her arms. Every year, she would sit beneath that tree and weep. One day a little girl from the neighbourhood asked her, “Why do you come here so often?” The woman answered, “Because my baby is here in my heart.” The child replied innocently, “Then your baby must be very loved.” That simple sentence changed the mother forever. She realized that although her child’s life on earth was brief, the love remained real, living, and eternal.

Today we gather with heavy hearts. The pain of losing a child before birth, or shortly after birth, is a sorrow difficult to explain. There are no memories of birthdays, no first words, no tiny footsteps around the house. Yet there was already love, hope, dreams, and a place prepared in the hearts of the parents and family.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus says, “Let the little children come to me.” These words become a source of consolation for us today. The child whom we mourn was not forgotten by God even for a single moment. Though this little life seemed hidden from the world, it was fully known and deeply loved by the Lord.

As we stand before God carrying grief, questions, and even silent tears, let us place ourselves in the arms of Christ who welcomes

every little child with tenderness and mercy. Let us now acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord for pardon and peace.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you gathered little children into your loving embrace and blessed them with tenderness: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you wept with those who mourn and brought hope to the sorrowing: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you opened the gates of eternal life to all who belong to you: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God, who knows every hidden sorrow and treasures every human life from its beginning, forgive us our sins, comfort us in our grief, strengthen us with the hope of eternal life, and bring us to everlasting peace. **Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

God of infinite tenderness,  
you know the love that was already growing  
in the hearts of this family  
before this child ever opened earthly eyes.  
In your mercy, receive this little one into your eternal embrace,  
heal the wounds of those who mourn,  
and strengthen our faith in your promise  
that no life is ever lost in your sight.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A nurse once told the story of a father whose baby was stillborn after many years of waiting and prayer. The father asked if he could hold the child. The nurse gently placed the tiny baby into his arms. For a long time he said nothing. Then, with tears running down his face, he whispered, "You were here long enough to teach me how deeply I can love."

That is the mystery we stand before today.

Some lives are long like mighty rivers. Others are brief like a drop of morning dew sparkling in the sunlight before disappearing. Yet both reflect the same sun. The value of life is not measured by its length but by its love.

The Book of Wisdom tells us: "The righteous one, though he die early, shall be at rest." Humanly speaking, we ask painful questions: Why so soon? Why before birth? Why before a name could even be spoken aloud? Scripture does not answer every question, but it tells us something greater: every life belongs to God.

Jesus in today's Gospel does something beautiful. He does not ignore children. He does not push them aside as unimportant. Instead, He becomes upset when others try to keep them away. He says, "Let the little children come to me." Then He takes them into His arms and blesses them.

Today those words become deeply personal. We entrust this child into those same arms of Jesus.

There is an old Christian story about a woman who dreamt she entered heaven and saw countless children playing in brilliant light. Among them was one child who ran toward her laughing joyfully. She asked an angel, "Who is that child?" The angel answered, "That is the child you lost before birth. The child was always alive in God."

What a beautiful truth. A child may not have lived long on earth, but the child was never without a soul known by God, never without dignity, never without eternal value.

For parents, this grief is unique. Often there are no photographs, no public memories, no shared stories. Sometimes the sorrow remains silent and hidden. Yet God sees the tears nobody else notices.

A priest once said that when a child dies before birth, the parents become witnesses to pure hope. They loved someone they could not fully see. Is that not also what faith is? Loving and trusting the God whom we do not yet fully see?

The cross teaches us that God Himself understands the pain of losing a beloved Son. Therefore, our suffering is never faced alone. Christ walks with grieving parents, grieving families, and all whose hearts are broken today.

And yet today's Mass is not only about grief. It is also about hope.

Christian hope does not say, "Nothing happened." It says, "Love is stronger than death." This child's life, however brief, has already changed hearts forever. Love has been awakened. Compassion has

deepened. Heaven itself has become more personal because someone we love is already there.

There is a final story told of a little boy who asked his mother after the death of his baby sister, "Where is she now?" The mother answered, "She is with Jesus." The boy thought quietly for a moment and then smiled, saying, "Then she must be very safe."

Yes. Safe in the arms of Christ. Safe in eternal love. Safe forever.

And one day, by God's mercy, every tear will be wiped away, and what was entrusted to God in sorrow will be received again in joy. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

God our Father lovingly knows every human life from its very beginning. Trusting in His mercy and comfort, let us bring before Him our prayers for this child, the grieving family, and the whole world.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may always proclaim the dignity and sacredness of every human life, especially the weakest and most vulnerable, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all parents and families grieving the loss of a child through miscarriage or stillbirth, that Christ may surround them with compassion, healing, and supportive hearts, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For doctors, nurses, counsellors, and all who care for grieving families, that they may serve with tenderness, patience, and understanding, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all of us gathered here, that our faith in the resurrection may grow stronger and that we may trust more deeply in God's eternal love, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For this little child whom we entrust to the mercy of God, and for all the faithful departed, that they may rest forever in the peace and joy of heaven, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father,  
you are the source of all life and the comfort of all who mourn.  
Hear the prayers we place before you today,  
and strengthen us with the hope  
that your love is stronger than death.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts of bread and wine, together with the love, sorrow, and hope we carry in our hearts for this little child, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive the offerings we place before you  
as we entrust this little child to your loving care.  
May this sacrifice bring comfort to all who mourn  
and deepen our trust in your mercy,  
for you never forget the smallest and most fragile of your children.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you are the giver of every human life,  
and before we were formed in the womb,  
you already knew us and loved us.  
Even when a life seems brief in human eyes,  
it remains precious before you forever.

In your Son Jesus Christ,  
you revealed your tenderness toward little children,  
taking them into your arms and blessing them.  
And so today we trust this child  
to the same loving embrace of your Son,  
believing that your mercy is greater than our sorrow  
and your eternal love stronger than death.

Through Christ, the hope of all who mourn,  
we await the day when every tear will be wiped away  
and all your children will rejoice in your kingdom forever.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...*

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With trust in the Father who knows every child by name and whose  
love reaches beyond death itself, let us pray together in the words  
Jesus taught us.

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and gently sustain all who carry the hidden sorrow  
of losing a child. In moments when grief becomes heavy  
and questions remain unanswered,  
strengthen us with the peace that comes from trusting in your love.  
By the help of your mercy,  
keep us free from despair and safe in your compassion,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.  
Look with tenderness upon all parents and families  
whose hearts are wounded by the loss of this child.  
When sorrow disturbs their peace  
and silence deepens their pain,  
let your gentle presence remain close to them.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who gathers every little child into the peace of his eternal  
embrace.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus,  
you gathered children into your arms and blessed them.  
Today we place into those same arms  
this precious child whom we mourn.  
When our hearts struggle with silence and unanswered questions,  
teach us to trust that your love never fails.  
May the hope of heaven strengthen this family,  
and may the memory of this little life  
always lead them closer to you.  
For what is loved in God is never lost.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these holy mysteries  
you have strengthened us with the promise of eternal life.  
Bring comfort to those who grieve this child,  
and help us to trust that all your children  
are safely held in your everlasting love.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation  
gently heal your sorrow  
and strengthen your hearts with the hope of eternal life.

**Amen.**

May Christ, who welcomed little children with love,  
hold this child forever in His eternal embrace  
and remain close to you in every moment of grief.

**Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,  
source of peace and comfort,  
give you strength today and in the days ahead.

**Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trusting that the love of God is stronger than death and  
that this little child rests forever in the arms of Christ.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“A life need not be long to be eternal in love.  
What is held in the arms of Christ is never lost.”

## 2. Infant or Young Child

**Isaiah 25:6–9** — “He will destroy death forever.”

**Matthew 18:1–5** — “Whoever welcomes one child such as this...”

**Theme: “Held in the Hands of God”**

### INTRODUCTION

There is a touching story of a little child who, before going to sleep each night, would place a tiny candle near the window. When the mother asked why, the child replied, “So that no one will ever feel alone in the dark.” Children often teach us truths that adults struggle to understand. Their innocence, trust, and love become small lights in a world that can sometimes feel heavy with sorrow.

Today, as we gather around this tiny coffin, our hearts carry questions, tears, and perhaps even silence too deep for words. The death of a child seems to interrupt the natural order of life. We wonder why such a brief life was given only to be taken so soon. Yet the Word of God today gently reminds us that every child is precious in the eyes of God.

In the Gospel, Jesus places a child at the centre and says: “Whoever welcomes one child such as this in my name welcomes me.” And through the prophet Isaiah, God promises a day when He “will destroy death forever” and wipe away every tear from our eyes. Today, we cling not to explanations, but to promises — the promise that this child is safe in the embrace of God.

As we begin these sacred mysteries, we acknowledge that in moments of grief we may have questioned God, struggled to trust

Him, or failed to notice His presence beside us. Therefore, with humble hearts, let us ask the Lord for mercy and peace.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You welcomed little children and blessed them with tender love: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You carried our sorrows and promised to wipe away every tear: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You opened the gates of eternal life to all who trust in You: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the loving God,  
who gathers little children into His kingdom  
and wipes away every tear from our eyes,  
have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God,  
whose beloved Son took little children into His arms  
and revealed to us the beauty of trust and innocence,  
look with compassion upon this grieving family  
and strengthen them with the hope  
that death is not the end for those who belong to You.  
Grant that we who mourn today may find comfort in Your promise  
to wipe away every tear and to destroy death forever.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A teacher once asked her students to draw a picture of heaven. Most children drew clouds, angels, and shining stars. But one little boy simply drew two hands holding a very tiny hand. When the teacher asked him what it meant, he answered, "It's God taking a child home."

That simple image captures the pain and the hope we bring to this funeral today.

There are some deaths we can somehow prepare for — after old age, after illness, after a long journey through life. But the death of a child feels different. It shakes us deeply because a child represents beginnings, laughter, dreams, and innocence. We feel as though a beautiful song ended before it was completed.

And yet today the Gospel places a child at the very centre. The disciples were arguing about greatness — who mattered most in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus answered not with power or prestige, but by calling a little child forward. Imagine the scene: tiny feet walking toward Jesus, small hands perhaps reaching for Him, innocent eyes looking up without fear. Jesus embraces the child and says, "Whoever welcomes one child such as this in my name welcomes me."

In the eyes of the world, children may seem small. But in the eyes of God, they are treasures.

There is a story of a father who lost his young daughter in an accident. For months he could not pray. One evening he entered a church and saw a stained-glass window of Jesus carrying a lamb on His shoulders. He broke down in tears and whispered, "If I cannot carry her anymore, Lord, then You carry her for me." That father discovered something important: when our hands can no longer hold those we love, God's hands still can.

The first reading from Isaiah gives us one of the most beautiful promises in Scripture: "He will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from every face." Notice that God does not ignore tears. He wipes them away personally. Every tear shed by parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends is seen by Him.

Sometimes children change lives not by how long they live, but by how deeply they love. A short life can still be a complete gift. Think of a candle: even if it burns only briefly, it still gives light. This child's life, though short, has brought tenderness, unity, compassion, and love into many hearts.

A nurse once spoke about children in hospital wards. She said that sick children often worry less about themselves and more about their parents being sad. Even in suffering, children have a mysterious purity that reflects heaven itself. Perhaps that is why Jesus said we must become like children to enter the Kingdom of God.

Today we entrust this beloved child into the arms of Jesus. We do not do so with despair, but with faith. Death does not have the final word. Christ does. The tomb is not the end of the story. Easter teaches us that love is stronger than death.

And so we continue to grieve, because love always grieves. But we also continue to hope.

There is an old Christian story about a mother who lost her little son. Every night she looked at the stars and imagined heaven very far away. One evening her older daughter told her, “Mama, heaven is not far away. It is only on the other side of God.”

That is our faith today. This child is not lost in darkness. This child is safe on the other side of God — held forever in the loving embrace of Christ, who said: “Let the little children come to me.”

### **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

My dear brothers and sisters,  
with trust in the God who loves every child and promises to wipe away every tear, let us bring before Him our prayers for this child, for the grieving family, and for the whole world.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to proclaim the hope of the resurrection and bring comfort to all who mourn, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For the parents and family of this beloved child, that the Lord may strengthen them in their sorrow, surround them with loving support, and give them peace of heart, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For all children who suffer from sickness, poverty, neglect, or violence, that they may be protected with love and dignity and experience the tenderness of God through caring people, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all of us gathered here, that this child’s brief but precious life may inspire us to live with greater love, kindness, and trust in God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For this dear child and for all the faithful departed, especially children who have died at a young age, that they may rejoice forever in the peace and light of God’s kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, you know the sorrow hidden in every heart and the love we carry for this precious child.  
Hear the prayers we offer with faith and trust,  
and keep us firm in the hope  
that death will one day be destroyed forever  
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that these gifts of bread and wine,  
and the love and tears we place beside them today,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive with kindness these offerings  
which we place upon your altar  
as we entrust this precious child to your loving care.  
May this sacrifice strengthen our faith,  
comfort our sorrow,  
and deepen our hope in the resurrection promised by your Son,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your infinite love  
you created every human life as a gift,  
and in your Son Jesus Christ  
you revealed a special tenderness toward little children.  
He welcomed them, blessed them,  
and taught us that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.

Though our hearts are burdened with grief today,  
faith assures us that death does not separate your children from your  
love.  
In Christ's resurrection  
you have broken the power of the grave  
and opened for us the gates of eternal life.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
and with all those little ones who now rejoice before your face,  
we proclaim your glory as we sing: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say the prayer  
that unites heaven and earth,  
trusting like little children in the love of our heavenly Father:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress;  
and in moments when grief feels overwhelming  
and our hearts struggle to understand,  
teach us to trust you with childlike faith,  
knowing that those who belong to you are never lost  
but live forever in your love,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.  
You welcomed little children with tenderness  
and promised rest to all who are weary and burdened;  
look with compassion upon this grieving family  
and upon all whose hearts are wounded by loss.  
When sorrow brings confusion, grant them peace;  
when loneliness surrounds them, let them feel your presence;  
and when tears fall silently, remind them  
that this precious child now rests safely in your eternal embrace.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who gathers the little ones into His loving embrace  
and takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Love never measures life by years alone. Some stars shine only briefly, yet their beauty is remembered forever. Today we believe that this child now sees the face of God, free from pain, fear, and sorrow. Though our arms feel empty, heaven is fuller. And Christ, who once said, "Let the little children come to me," continues to hold this precious child close to His heart.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son,  
we ask you, merciful Father,  
to strengthen us with the comfort of faith  
and the hope of eternal life.  
May the promise of the resurrection  
bring peace to this grieving family  
and remind us that those who sleep in Christ  
will rise with Him in glory.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation bless you in your sorrow and  
strengthen you in hope.  
**Amen.**

May Christ, who welcomed little children into His embrace, grant  
peace to this child and comfort to all who mourn.  
**Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit, giver of life and source of healing, remain with  
you and guide you in faith and love.  
**Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, trusting that the Lord who conquered death now holds  
this child forever in His love.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

"Some lives are not measured by how long they last, but by how  
much love they leave behind."

### 3. Teenager / Young Person

**Rom 8:31–39** — Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.

**Jn 11:17–27** — “I am the resurrection and the life.”

**Theme:** “The Music of Love Continues Beyond the Silence of Death”

#### Core Message

*Although this young life seemed unfinished and was taken from our sight too soon, the love of God has not ended. Human life may be interrupted by death, but God’s love never is. Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, continues the “music” of this young person’s life in eternity.*

#### INTRODUCTION

A young violinist once performed at a school concert. Halfway through the performance, one of the strings of the violin suddenly snapped. The audience thought he would stop. But the young musician continued playing with the remaining strings and finished the melody beautifully. Later someone asked him how he managed to continue. He replied, “The music was still inside me.”

Dear brothers and sisters, today our hearts are wounded because a young life has ended far too soon. Dreams remain unfinished, laughter has fallen silent, and many questions remain unanswered. Death at a young age shakes us deeply because it reminds us how fragile life truly is.

Yet the Word of God today tells us that even when earthly life seems incomplete, God’s love is never interrupted. Jesus says: “I am the resurrection and the life.” Saint Paul assures us that nothing — not

even death — can separate us from the love of Christ. The music of God’s love continues beyond the silence of the grave.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us place before the Lord our sorrow, our fears, our regrets, and our sins. Let us ask Christ, who conquered death and opens eternal life to His children, to grant mercy to the departed and peace to our hearts.

#### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus,  
You wept at the tomb of Your friend Lazarus and You comfort all who mourn:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus,  
You are the resurrection and the life, and in You death is transformed into eternal hope:

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus,  
nothing can separate us from Your faithful and eternal love:

**Lord, have mercy.**

#### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God,  
who sent His Son to conquer sin and death,  
comfort us in our sorrow, strengthen us in faith,  
forgive us our sins,  
and lead us from the darkness of grief  
to eternal light and everlasting life.

**Amen.**

## COLLECT

O God,  
source of all life and unfailing love,  
You know the pain we carry  
when death takes one so young and dear to us.  
In the midst of our sorrow,  
strengthen our faith in Your Son,  
who is the resurrection and the life,  
and teach us to trust  
that no life entrusted to You is ever lost.  
Grant eternal joy to Your servant N.,  
and fill our hearts with the hope  
of meeting again in Your heavenly kingdom.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A teacher once gave her students a blank sheet of paper with only one tiny black dot in the middle. She asked them, “What do you see?”

Every student answered, “A black dot.”

Then the teacher smiled sadly and said, “None of you saw the large white space around it.”

Today, dear friends, our eyes are fixed on the dark dot of death. It hurts deeply, especially because this life was so young, so full of promise, energy, dreams, and love. A teenager’s death shakes us differently. It feels unnatural. Parents should not have to bury their children. Friends should not have to say goodbye so early.

And yet, while grief fills our hearts, today’s readings invite us to see not only the darkness of death but also the larger space of God’s eternal love surrounding it.

In the Gospel, Martha is devastated by the death of her brother Lazarus. She is not pretending to be strong. She weeps. She questions. She struggles. The beautiful thing is that Jesus does not reject her sorrow. Instead, He enters into it.

Christian faith never tells us not to cry. Even Jesus Himself wept at the tomb of Lazarus.

There is a story of a father who lost his teenage daughter in an accident. Someone told him after the funeral, “You must be strong.” The father replied, “Strength is not pretending not to cry. Strength is continuing to trust God while crying.”

That is exactly what Martha did. And perhaps that is what we are called to do today.

Jesus says to her:

**“I am the resurrection and the life.”**

Notice carefully: Jesus does not merely say, “I can give resurrection.” He says, “*I AM the resurrection.*”

Where Jesus is present, death never has the final word.

Our beloved young one’s earthly journey was short, but the value of life is not measured by length alone.

Some candles burn for many hours. Others burn only briefly — yet they fill the room with light while they last.

Many saints died young:

Saint Maria Goretti died at 11.

Saint Dominic Savio died at 14.  
Blessed Carlo Acutis died at 15.  
Yet their short lives touched countless souls.

Sometimes God measures life not by years but by love.

Saint Paul today gives us one of the most powerful passages in all Scripture:

**“Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.”**

Not sickness.  
Not tragedy.  
Not confusion.  
Not even death.

A mother once kept the voicemail messages of her deceased son on her phone because she could not bear to delete his voice. One day she said through tears, “I am afraid I will forget him.”  
But love never forgets. And if human love remembers, how much more does God remember?

The prophet Isaiah says:  
*“Can a mother forget her child? Even if she forgets, I will never forget you.”*

Today we entrust this young soul to a God whose memory is eternal and whose mercy is infinite.

And perhaps this death also speaks quietly to all of us — especially to the young people present here.

Life is fragile. We often live as though tomorrow is guaranteed. We postpone forgiveness. We delay prayer. We think we have unlimited time.

A priest once visited a cemetery and noticed that on many gravestones there was only a short dash between two dates:  
1999 — 2016  
1980 — 2022

He later told his parishioners: “Life is not only about the dates. It is about what we do with the dash in between.”

Our beloved young one’s “dash” may seem short to us, but perhaps it contained more love, kindness, laughter, and goodness than many long lives.

Today Jesus stands before us as He stood before Martha and asks:  
**“Do you believe this?”**

Do we believe that death is not the end?  
Do we believe that Christ has prepared a place for us?  
Do we believe that love is stronger than the grave?

A little boy once stood beside the coffin of his older brother and asked his mother, “Where is my brother now?”  
The mother pointed to the crucifix and answered softly, “He is with the One who loves him more than we do.” That is our hope today.

We now place this beloved young person into the pierced hands of Jesus — hands that were stretched out on the Cross, hands that conquered the tomb, hands that never let go of those entrusted to Him.

And though today we walk through tears, we do not walk without hope. For Christ says to us still:

**“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.”**

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Dear brothers and sisters,  
Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life, and nothing can separate us from His love. Trusting in His mercy and strengthened by the hope of eternal life, let us bring our prayers before Him.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to proclaim hope to those who mourn and bring the light of Christ to all who live in sorrow and fear, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all young people, that they may discover the beauty and purpose of life, walk in the ways of goodness and faith, and grow always in the love of God, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For the family and friends of N., and for all whose hearts are broken by this loss, that the Lord may comfort them in their grief and strengthen them with the promise of the resurrection, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all who care for the grieving — priests, counsellors, teachers, relatives, and friends — that through their kindness and presence they may become instruments of God's compassion and peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For our departed brother/sister N., and for all the faithful departed, especially young people whose lives ended too soon, that Christ may welcome them into the joy of His heavenly kingdom where every tear is wiped away, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and compassion,  
You know the sorrow we carry and the hope we place in Your Son.

Hear the prayers we offer today for ourselves and for our beloved departed. Strengthen us with the assurance that Your love is stronger than death, and lead us one day to the joy of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that this sacrifice, offered in sorrow yet sustained by hope, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord,  
receive the gifts we place upon Your altar  
as we entrust to You this beloved young soul.  
May this sacrifice of Christ,  
who destroyed death and opened the gates of eternal life,  
bring purification, peace, and everlasting joy  
to Your servant N.,  
and strengthen us who remain behind  
with the hope that Your love never ends.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For even in the sorrow of death,  
You call us to trust in the victory of Christ.  
When a young life is taken from our sight,  
our hearts are filled with grief,

yet Your Son reminds us:  
“I am the resurrection and the life.”

In Him, no goodness is lost,  
no love is forgotten,  
and no faithful soul is abandoned.  
For Your love is stronger than death,  
and nothing can separate us  
from the love revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Through Him the hope of eternal life shines upon us,  
and so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of Your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...**

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

Because we believe that God is our loving Father,  
who never abandons His children even in death,  
let us pray with confidence in the words Jesus taught us:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
from the bitterness that grief can bring,  
from the darkness of despair,  
from the questions that trouble our hearts,  
and from the fear that death has the final word.

In this moment of sorrow,  
strengthen us with the promise of Your Son,

who said: “I am the resurrection and the life.”  
Teach us to trust that those who sleep in Christ  
are held forever in Your love,  
where no tears are shed and no young life is ever lost in vain.

Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that by the help of Your mercy we may be always free from sin  
and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You stood beside the tomb of Lazarus  
and You understand the tears of grieving hearts.  
You know the pain we feel  
when death comes too soon  
and when dreams remain unfinished.

Yet You also spoke words of eternal hope:  
“I am the resurrection and the life.”  
Look with compassion upon this family and all who mourn today.  
Calm troubled hearts,  
strengthen weakened faith,  
heal the silent wounds carried within us,  
and grant us the peace that only You can give —  
the peace that comes from knowing  
that nothing can separate us from Your love.

Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold Jesus Christ,  
the resurrection and the life,  
who promises that whoever believes in Him shall never die forever.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

A candle may burn only for a short while,  
yet its light remains in the hearts of those who saw it shine.

Today we remember a young life  
that touched many hearts with love, laughter, friendship, and  
presence.

Though death has taken that presence from our eyes,  
it cannot remove the love that was shared.

In this Eucharist, Christ assures us once again  
that death is not the end of the story.

The One who gave Himself to us in Holy Communion  
is the same Lord who conquered the tomb.

And so we entrust our beloved N.  
into the hands of Christ,  
believing that where human strength ends,  
God's eternal love continues forever.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
You have given us strength in our grief  
and renewed us with the hope of eternal life.  
May the Body and Blood of Your Son, received in faith,

bring light, mercy, and everlasting peace  
to Your servant N.,  
and teach us to live each day  
in faithful readiness for Your kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation,  
who alone is the source of every healing and peace,  
grant you the grace of His comfort. **Amen.**

May Christ,  
who conquered death and rose to eternal life,  
strengthen your faith and sustain your hope. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,  
who helps us in our weakness and sorrow,  
fill your hearts with peace and trust in God's eternal love. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

In the sure hope of the resurrection,  
go forth in the peace of Christ.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Life is not measured only by how long we live,  
but by how deeply we love.

And when love is placed into the hands of Christ,  
even death cannot destroy it.

#### 4. Young Adult Dying Suddenly

**Ecclesiastes 3:1–11** — “There is a time for everything.”

**Lk 24:13–35** — The disciples on the road to Emmaus.

**Theme:** “The Risen Christ walks with us through the moments we do not understand.”

*The sudden death of a young adult leaves hearts stunned and questions unanswered. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, the family and friends gathered today walk through sorrow, confusion, and shattered expectations. Yet the Gospel reminds us that even when we do not recognize Him, Christ walks beside us. Ecclesiastes tells us that there is “a time for everything,” even when that time seems painfully short to us. The liturgy therefore moves from shock to trust, from darkness to recognition, from tears to hope in the risen Lord who never abandons His people.*

#### INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a university student who once missed the last train home after a long day of exams. Frustrated and tired, he began walking alone through the cold night streets. After some time, he noticed an older man quietly walking beside him. They spoke for nearly an hour about life, fears, dreams, and disappointments. When they finally reached the student’s street, the older man smiled and said, “Sometimes the longest roads become bearable simply because someone walks with us.” Years later, the student said he remembered almost nothing of the conversation, but he never forgot the comfort of not walking alone.

Today many hearts feel like that lonely road. The sudden loss of a young life leaves us shocked, confused, and asking questions for

which there seem to be no answers. We come carrying grief, unfinished conversations, broken dreams, and the painful feeling that time has been cut short.

Yet the Gospel presents two disciples walking the road to Emmaus after tragedy had shattered their hopes. They thought they were alone, but the risen Jesus was walking beside them even in their sorrow. Slowly He transformed their despair into hope.

As we begin this Eucharist, we acknowledge that in moments of pain we do not always recognize the Lord’s presence beside us. We ask pardon for our doubts, our anger, and our failure to trust His loving guidance, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

#### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you walk beside us in moments of confusion and sorrow:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you open our hearts when hope seems lost:  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you reveal yourself as the risen Lord who conquers death forever:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

#### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who accompanies His people through every road of sorrow  
and leads them toward the light of eternal life,  
have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.  
Amen.

## COLLECT

O God,  
whose Son walked beside the sorrowful disciples  
and turned their grief into hope,  
look with compassion upon your people gathered in mourning today.  
Comfort us in our sadness, strengthen our faith when life seems  
uncertain,  
and help us to recognize the presence of Christ  
who remains near to us even in the darkest moments.  
Grant that our departed brother/sister may now walk in the fullness of  
eternal joy and peace with you forever.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY

A teacher once asked her students to write what they wanted most in life. Most wrote about success, money, travel, or achievements. One quiet student wrote only one sentence: "I just hope the people I love know how much I love them before it is too late."

Years later, that young man died suddenly in an accident at the age of twenty-three. At his funeral, his mother held that paper in her hands with tears in her eyes. She said, "He did not have many years, but he taught us how precious every day truly is."

That is the painful lesson that confronts us today.

The death of a young person shakes us differently. When an elderly person dies, we grieve deeply, but we also understand that life has completed its natural course. But when a young adult dies suddenly,

we feel interrupted. Plans remain unfinished. Dreams remain unrealized. We ask, "Why now? Why so soon?"

The first reading from Ecclesiastes speaks honestly to the human heart: "There is a time for everything." There is a time to be born and a time to die. Those words are not meant to make grief smaller. They remind us that human life remains in God's hands, even when we cannot understand His timing.

The disciples on the road to Emmaus also struggled with shattered expectations. They had dreamed of a glorious future with Jesus. Instead, they witnessed suffering, humiliation, and death. The Gospel says they walked away from Jerusalem sad and disappointed. Their hopes had collapsed.

And yet, the most beautiful detail of the Gospel is this: Jesus came near and walked with them.

Not ahead of them.

Not behind them.

Beside them.

Sometimes God does not immediately answer our questions. Instead, He first gives us His presence.

There is a story of a father whose son died unexpectedly. A friend visited him every evening for weeks. They rarely spoke. Sometimes they simply sat in silence. One day the grieving father said, "You never gave me explanations, but your presence helped me survive." That is often how Christ works. He walks beside us quietly until our hearts slowly begin to breathe again.

The Emmaus disciples recognized Jesus only in the breaking of the bread. That is why this Eucharist matters so deeply today. In this

Mass, Christ again comes among grieving people. He comes not to erase our tears instantly, but to assure us that death does not have the final word.

The resurrection of Jesus changes everything. Death becomes not a wall but a doorway. The journey does not end in the grave. The One who walked out of the tomb now walks beside His people through every valley of sorrow.

A nurse who worked in palliative care once said that many dying young people worried less about possessions and more about relationships. One patient told her, "I wish people knew that life is not measured by how long we live, but by how deeply we love."

That is profoundly Christian. Jesus Himself lived only thirty-three years. Yet His life transformed the world because it was filled completely with love.

Today we entrust our beloved departed to that same loving Christ.

And perhaps this funeral also speaks to those of us still living. Life is fragile. We postpone forgiveness. We delay kindness. We assume there will always be more time. But Ecclesiastes reminds us that every season is precious and every moment is a gift.

A young violinist once performed at a concert shortly before dying unexpectedly. After her death, someone found a note she had written inside her music case. It said: "Play every note as if it might be your last chance to give beauty to the world."

That may be one of the greatest lessons we can take from today. We do not know how many years we are given. But we can choose how we walk the road before us.

And if we walk with Christ, then even the darkest road eventually leads to light.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Trusting that the risen Lord walks beside His people in every sorrow, let us bring our prayers before God our loving Father.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may bring hope and consolation to all who mourn and proclaim with confidence the victory of Christ over death, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For young people everywhere, that they may value the gift of life, live with faith and purpose, and always know that Christ walks beside them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families grieving the sudden loss of loved ones, that God may strengthen them in moments of confusion, loneliness, and pain, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all gathered here today, that this Eucharist may renew our awareness of how fragile and precious life is, and inspire us to live each day with love and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For our departed brother/sister and for all the faithful departed, especially those who died suddenly or unexpectedly, that they may now share the eternal joy of the risen Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy,  
you know the sorrow and the hopes within our hearts.  
Hear the prayers we offer with trust and lead us safely along the path that leads to eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that through these gifts of bread and wine, placed upon the altar amid our grief and hope, God may help us recognize Christ who walks beside His people through every sorrow, and that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive the gifts we offer in faith and sorrow.  
As your Son revealed Himself to the disciples in the breaking of bread,  
grant that this Eucharist may strengthen our hearts with the hope of resurrection.  
May our departed brother/sister be welcomed into the eternal banquet of heaven,  
where every tear is wiped away and peace endures forever.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For in moments when sorrow overwhelms us  
and death seems to silence hope,  
your Son draws near to His people as He did to the disciples on the road to Emmaus.  
He walks beside the grieving,  
speaks peace to troubled hearts,  
and reveals the light of His resurrection.

Through His victory over death,  
the darkness of the grave has become the promise of eternal life.  
And though our hearts mourn the sudden passing of one so young,  
faith assures us that those who walk with Christ in this life  
shall also live with Him forever.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say the prayer that unites all God's children  
and reminds us that none of us walks alone:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that in moments when life feels fragile  
and our hearts are burdened with grief,  
we may find strength in knowing  
that your risen Son walks beside us on every road of sorrow.  
Keep us from despair, deepen our trust in your loving providence,  
and lead us safely toward the day when every tear will be wiped  
away and death shall be no more.  
As we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
on the road to Emmaus you drew near to disciples whose hearts  
were broken and confused,  
and through your presence you restored their peace and hope.  
Look with compassion upon your people gathered in sorrow today.  
Calm troubled hearts, strengthen those weighed down by grief,  
and help us to trust that even when we do not understand the path  
before us,  
you never cease to walk beside us.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who walks beside His people  
and leads them from death to eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord Jesus,  
sometimes we do not recognize you in the brokenness of life,  
in hospital rooms, silent tears, unfinished dreams,  
or graveside sorrow. Yet today, in the breaking of the bread,  
you remind us that you are still here. Stay with us, Lord,  
when the road feels long and our hearts feel heavy.  
Teach us to trust that no life lived in love is ever lost,  
and that those who walk with you on earth  
shall one day walk with you in eternal light.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God, through this sacred mystery  
you have nourished us with the Body and Blood of your Son.  
Strengthen us with the hope of the resurrection  
and help us to recognize Christ's presence beside us in every  
moment of life.  
May our departed brother/sister,  
who has now completed the journey of this earthly life,  
rejoice forever in your heavenly kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation  
comfort you in your sorrow and strengthen you in hope. Amen.

May Christ, who walked beside the disciples on the road to Emmaus,  
remain close to you in every dark and uncertain moment. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit fill your hearts with peace  
and guide you safely toward the joy of eternal life. Amen.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, trusting that the risen Lord walks beside you always.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

Life is not measured only by its length, but by the love we give and  
receive along the journey. Even on the darkest road, Christ walks  
beside us.

## 5. Suicide / Mental Health Struggle

**Rom 8:35–39** — Nothing can separate us from God’s love.

**Mt 11:28–30** — “Come to me all who labour...”

**THEME:** “Held in a Love That Never Lets Go.”

*Even in darkness, confusion, exhaustion, or silent suffering, God never abandons His children. Christ says, “Come to me,” not only to the strong, but especially to the weary and burdened. And Saint Paul assures us that nothing — not anguish, fear, despair, nor even death itself — can separate us from the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a lighthouse keeper who lived alone on a stormy coast. One night, after days of violent weather, he noticed a faint signal far out at sea. A small boat had lost its bearings in the darkness. The keeper immediately turned the great light toward the ocean, and though the sailors could not yet see the shore, they later said that the single beam of light kept them from giving up hope.

Many people carry storms within themselves that others never fully see. Some smiles hide deep exhaustion; some silence hides heavy battles. Today we gather with sorrow, with questions, and perhaps with feelings we cannot easily put into words. Yet the Gospel reminds us that Jesus does not turn away from the weary. He says tenderly: “Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Saint Paul, too, speaks words that become an anchor for us today: nothing can separate us from the love of God. Not suffering, not fear,

not confusion, not even death. God’s love is greater than the darkness we sometimes encounter in human life.

As we begin this Eucharist, we entrust N. into the compassionate heart of Christ. And acknowledging that we too are wounded, burdened, and in need of mercy, let us ask the Lord for pardon and peace.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you invite the weary and burdened to find rest in your compassionate heart: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you remain close to those who walk through darkness, fear, and loneliness: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, nothing can separate us from your faithful and eternal love: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who is rich in mercy and gentle toward the broken-hearted,  
forgive us our sins, heal our wounded spirits, strengthen us in hope,  
and bring us one day into the peace of His eternal life. Amen.

### COLLECT

O God, Father of tenderness and unfailing compassion,  
your Son invited the weary to come to Him  
and promised rest to all who are burdened.  
Hear the prayers we offer today for N.,  
and in your merciful love  
bring comfort to all who mourn in sorrow and confusion.

Strengthen our faith in your promise  
that nothing can separate us from your love,  
and lead us safely into the peace of your Kingdom.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY

A young violinist once performed at a concert hall filled with people. The audience applauded loudly after every piece, yet after the concert someone found the musician sitting alone backstage in tears. “Everyone loved your music,” a friend said. The violinist replied quietly, “They heard the music, but no one heard my heart.”

Many people around us carry hidden pain. Sometimes those who seem strongest are silently struggling the most. Mental and emotional suffering can become so overwhelming that a person begins to believe there is no light ahead, no rest, no escape from the burden within.

This is why today’s Gospel is so important. Jesus says: “Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened.” He does not say, “Come only when you are strong.” He does not say, “Come only when your faith is perfect.” He speaks to the weary, the exhausted, the broken-hearted. The heart of Christ is not a courtroom eager to condemn; it is a refuge eager to receive.

There is an old story of a monk who once asked his superior, “What surprises you most about God?” The older monk answered, “That after every time humanity runs away from Him, God still keeps looking for us.” That is the mystery of divine mercy. Even when

human beings cannot understand themselves, God understands them completely.

The Church approaches moments like this with humility. We do not stand here to judge the depths of another person’s suffering. Only God fully sees the wounds, fears, chemical struggles, loneliness, trauma, or despair a person may carry. We place our trust not in human calculations, but in the infinite compassion of Christ.

Saint Paul today gives us one of the most beautiful promises in Scripture: “Nothing can separate us from the love of God.” Notice that he says *nothing*. Not anguish. Not distress. Not darkness. Not even death itself. Human love sometimes fails; human strength sometimes collapses; but God’s love remains steadfast.

A doctor once spoke about a patient who had survived a severe depression. The patient later said, “What saved me was not great advice. It was one person who sat beside me and refused to leave.” That is also how God loves us. Sometimes silently. Sometimes invisibly. But He remains beside us even when we cannot feel Him.

And perhaps today’s funeral speaks not only about the deceased, but also about us. There may be people here carrying hidden burdens, silent anxiety, deep loneliness, exhaustion, or grief. The Gospel today is for you too. Christ still says: “Come to me.” The Church must become a place where people are safe to speak, safe to cry, safe to seek help, safe to hope again.

There is a touching story from a hospital chaplain who visited a dying man filled with regret and sadness. The man whispered, “I am afraid God has forgotten me.” The chaplain took his hand and said, “You may stop holding onto God at times, but God never stops holding onto you.” The man died in peace.

That is our hope today. We entrust N. into the hands of a God whose mercy is deeper than our understanding and whose love never lets go. And we pray that one day, beyond every wound and every darkness, Christ Himself may lead N. into eternal rest, where every burden is lifted and every tear is wiped away forever.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Trusting in the mercy of God, who never abandons His children and who hears the cries of the weary, let us place before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and for N.

1. For the Church, that she may always be a place of compassion, understanding, and hope for those struggling with mental, emotional, or spiritual burdens, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For those who suffer from depression, anxiety, loneliness, or despair, that they may encounter people who listen, support them with love, and lead them toward hope and healing, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For families and friends grieving the loss of loved ones, especially in painful and difficult circumstances, that God may comfort them with His peace and strengthen them day by day, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For all healthcare workers, counsellors, chaplains, and caregivers who accompany those struggling in darkness, that God may bless their work with wisdom, patience, and compassion, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For N., whom we entrust today to the mercy of God, that Christ, who invited the weary to come to Him, may now grant eternal rest, healing, and peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Merciful Father,  
you know the burdens hidden within every human heart.  
Receive the prayers we offer with trust and hope,  
and keep us always in the embrace of your unfailing love.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that through these gifts of bread and wine, placed upon the altar with our grief, our questions, and our hope, God may remind us that His mercy is greater than every human darkness and His love never abandons His children, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive with kindness the gifts we offer  
as we entrust N. to your compassionate care.  
May this sacrifice of Christ,  
who carried the burdens of humanity upon the Cross,  
bring healing to troubled hearts, peace to those who mourn,  
and renewed trust in your unfailing mercy.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your Son Jesus Christ  
you revealed a love that seeks the lost,  
comforts the weary, and remains close to all who suffer in silence.

When human strength fails  
and hearts grow heavy with burdens,  
your compassion does not abandon your children.

In Christ you remind us  
that no darkness is stronger than your mercy  
and no sorrow greater than your saving love.  
Even death itself cannot separate us from you,  
for through the Resurrection of your Son  
you opened for us the gates of eternal peace.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: *Holy, Holy, Holy...*

#### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to pray with confidence to the Father  
whose love never abandons His children:

#### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
from despair, loneliness, and fear,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by your mercy,  
we may never lose hope in your loving presence  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

#### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you said to your Apostles:  
"Peace I leave you, my peace I give you."  
Look not on our sins,  
but upon the pain and burdens carried by your people,  
and graciously grant us the peace and hope  
that flow from your compassionate heart.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold Him who carries our burdens  
and never abandons us in our darkness.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

#### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The Lord we receive in this Eucharist is the same Lord who said,  
"Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened." He does not  
turn away from wounded hearts. He walks gently beside the weary,  
the grieving, and the broken. Today we place our trust not in our  
understanding, but in His mercy. And we pray that the love from  
which nothing can separate us may now surround N. in eternal  
peace.

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through this holy sacrament  
you have nourished us with the Body and Blood of your Son,  
who came to heal the broken-hearted

and bring rest to those who are weary.  
Remain close to us in our grief,  
strengthen us with the hope of eternal life,  
and keep us always secure in your unfailing love.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all compassion  
comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you with the certainty of His love. **Amen.**

May Christ, who invited the weary to come to Him,  
grant peace to N. and hope to all who mourn. **Amen.**

And may the Holy Spirit  
heal wounded hearts  
and guide you always in the light of hope. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, trusting that the love of God is stronger than every  
darkness and that nothing can separate us from Christ our Lord.

### **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

When human strength fails and answers seem beyond reach,  
God's love remains.  
Christ never abandons the weary,  
and nothing — not suffering, not confusion, not even death itself —  
can separate us from His compassionate and eternal love.

## **6. Accident Victim**

**Wis 3:1–9** — “The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.”

**Jn 14:1–6** — “In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.”

**Theme: “Held in God's Hands on the Journey Home.”**

*Life can change in a single moment. An accident shatters plans, leaves hearts wounded, and confronts us with questions we cannot fully answer. Yet today's readings remind us that even when life seems suddenly broken, no one falls outside the loving hands of God. The Gospel assures us that Christ has gone ahead to prepare a place for us, while the Book of Wisdom proclaims that the souls of the righteous are safely held by God. Our journey on earth may end unexpectedly, but our true destination remains the Father's house.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

A traveller once spoke about driving through a violent storm at night. Rain covered the windshield, lightning flashed across the sky, and for a few moments he could hardly see the road ahead. Then he noticed the tail lights of a truck in front of him. He simply followed those lights until the storm passed safely. Later he said, “I could not see the whole road, but I trusted the one who was ahead of me.”

Today many of us feel as though we are standing in such a storm. The sudden death of our dear brother/sister through an accident has shaken us deeply. We struggle with the pain of something that happened too quickly, too unexpectedly, too painfully. Yet in the midst of our confusion, Christ says to us in today's Gospel: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” He walks ahead of us through the darkness and leads us toward the Father's house.

The Book of Wisdom gives us another consoling image: “The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.” Human hands may lose their grip, accidents may happen in a moment, but God’s hands never fail. Even death cannot separate us from His love and care.

As we gather around this altar seeking comfort, healing, and hope, let us first acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord for mercy, trusting that His compassion is greater than our fears and His light stronger than our darkness.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, You walk with us through the darkest valleys and lead us safely home: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You prepare for Your faithful people a dwelling place in the Father’s house: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You hold the souls of the righteous in the loving hands of the Father: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God,  
who never abandons His children  
in moments of sorrow and confusion,  
comfort us with the hope of eternal life,  
strengthen us in our grief,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

**Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God,  
whose Son consoled His disciples  
with the promise of eternal dwelling places,  
look with mercy upon Your people gathered in sorrow today.  
Amid the pain of sudden loss,  
strengthen our faith that our departed brother/sister  
is safely held in Your loving hands.  
Grant us the courage to continue our earthly journey in hope,  
until we are reunited in the peace of Your heavenly home.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

A rescue worker once shared how, after a terrible highway accident, he found a small child sitting quietly beside the wreckage. The child was frightened and crying, but holding tightly to the hand of the rescuer. Later the worker said, “The child did not understand what had happened, but trusted the hand that was holding him.”

That image helps us understand today’s readings. Death through an accident leaves us shocked because it comes suddenly. One ordinary moment changes everything. Plans disappear. Conversations remain unfinished. Hearts are left wounded. In such moments we often ask: “Why did this happen?” Yet the Word of God today does not give us explanations as much as it gives us assurance: even when life breaks suddenly, God never lets go of His children.

The first reading from the Book of Wisdom tells us: “The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.” Notice those words carefully — *in the hands of God*. Human life is fragile. Roads can become dangerous. Circumstances can change in seconds. But there is one place where no accident can reach us: the loving hands of God.

There is a story of a father teaching his daughter to swim. At first she was terrified to enter the deep water. The father stood nearby and said, “You do not need to hold the water up. You only need to trust that I will hold you.” Slowly she relaxed because she trusted the one beside her more than she feared the water beneath her.

That is faith. Faith does not remove sorrow. Even Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. Faith does not deny pain. But faith tells us that beneath the waves of grief there are everlasting arms holding us securely.

In today’s Gospel Jesus says, “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Those words are not spoken by someone far away from suffering. They are spoken by Christ who Himself passed through betrayal, violence, suffering, and death. Yet He also conquered death. That is why He can promise: “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.” Our final home is not a grave, not ashes, not silence — our final home is with the Father.

A priest once visited a dying man in hospital after a serious accident. The man whispered, “Father, I am afraid because I do not know the road ahead.” The priest replied gently, “You do not need to know the whole road. You only need to know the One who walks with you.” That is exactly what Jesus says today: “I am the way.” Christianity is not simply about knowing answers; it is about trusting a Person.

Today we commend our dear brother/sister into those faithful hands of God. We grieve because love always grieves when separated. But we do not grieve without hope. Christ has gone ahead of us like the light before the traveller in the storm. He prepares a place for all who trust Him.

There is an old Christian story about monks travelling through the desert at night. One young monk became afraid because he could not see the path clearly. The older monk pointed to the stars and said, “You do not need to see the entire road. You only need enough light for the next step.” Life is often like that. We rarely understand everything. But God gives enough grace for each step until He finally leads us home.

And perhaps that is the message our departed loved one leaves behind today: life is precious, fragile, and temporary. We spend so much time worrying about tomorrow that we sometimes forget to love today. Death reminds us not to postpone kindness, forgiveness, prayer, or love.

In the end, we place our trust not in the certainty of earthly life but in the certainty of God’s love. The same Christ who welcomed children, forgave sinners, calmed storms, and rose from the dead now says to our departed brother/sister: “Come home.”

A woman once placed on her husband’s grave a simple inscription: “Safe in God’s hands.” Those four words contain the whole hope of today’s liturgy. Roads may end suddenly on earth, but for those who trust in Christ, the journey continues into the Father’s house where every tear shall be wiped away and where love will never again be separated by death. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Trusting in Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, let us bring our prayers before our heavenly Father, who holds His children safely in His loving hands.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to bring hope and consolation to those who mourn and proclaim the promise of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all who have died suddenly through accidents, violence, or tragedy, that Christ may welcome them into the eternal dwelling places prepared for them, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For grieving families and friends, especially those gathered here today, that God may heal their wounded hearts and strengthen them with His peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For doctors, nurses, rescue workers, police officers, and all who care for victims of accidents and tragedy, that God may bless them with compassion, courage, and strength, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For ourselves, that remembering the fragility of life, we may live each day with faith, forgiveness, and love, ready to meet the Lord whenever He calls us home, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, You are our refuge and our hope in every storm of life. Hear the prayers we place before You today, and strengthen us with the promise that those who trust in Your Son will dwell forever in Your house. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that through these gifts of bread and wine, placed upon this altar with our sorrow and our hope, God may strengthen our trust that Christ leads His faithful people safely through death into the eternal dwelling places prepared by the Father, and that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive these offerings  
which we place before You in faith and sorrow.  
As Your Son gave comfort to troubled hearts,  
grant that through this sacrifice  
we may find strength in the promise of eternal life  
and peace in the assurance  
that our departed brother/sister rests in Your loving hands.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the midst of life's uncertainty  
You never abandon Your people.  
When sorrow and sudden loss overwhelm us,  
You speak words of hope through Your Son,  
who has gone before us  
to prepare a dwelling place in Your heavenly kingdom.

In Him death is not the end of the journey  
but the doorway to eternal life.  
For though earthly roads may end unexpectedly,  
those who place their trust in Christ  
are led safely into the peace of Your presence.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
we praise You, as without end we acclaim:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...**

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,  
let us pray with confidence to the Father  
who welcomes His children into the eternal home prepared for them:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and in the midst of life's uncertainties grant us your peace.  
When sudden sorrow shakes our hearts  
and grief darkens our path,  
strengthen us with the assurance  
that Your Son has gone before us  
to prepare a place in the Father's house.  
Keep us faithful through the changing roads of this earthly life,  
safe in the shelter of Your mercy,  
free from sin and protected from despair,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You said to Your Apostles:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.  
In moments when tragedy and sudden loss trouble our hearts,  
teach us to trust in Your presence and Your promises.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will.  
May Your comforting peace rest upon this grieving family  
and upon all who struggle to understand the mystery of suffering and  
death. Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who leads His people through death into eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Life often feels like a road whose turns we cannot predict.  
Sometimes the journey is peaceful; sometimes it changes suddenly  
and painfully. Yet today Christ reminds us that no road travelled in  
faith ends in darkness. He walks before us, beside us, and beyond  
us. The One who said, "I am the way," now leads our departed loved  
one toward the eternal home prepared by the Father.

Even in grief, we are not abandoned. The hands that broke bread  
with His disciples, blessed the sick, and were stretched out upon the  
cross are the same hands that now hold our loved one in eternal  
peace. Let us leave this Eucharist trusting that love is stronger than  
death and that every faithful journey ends in the Father's house.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by the Body and Blood of Your Son,  
we ask You, Lord,  
to strengthen us with the hope of resurrection.  
In moments of sorrow and uncertainty,  
keep our hearts fixed on the eternal dwelling places  
prepared for Your faithful people,  
and grant that we may one day rejoice together  
in the peace of Your heavenly kingdom.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation  
comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you with the hope of eternal life.  
**Amen.**

May Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life,  
lead you safely through every trial  
and bring you one day to the Father's house.  
**Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit  
heal your wounded hearts  
and fill you with peace and courage.  
**Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in the peace of Christ, trusting that the souls of the faithful are  
safely held in the loving hands of God.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Life’s road may end suddenly, but those who walk with Christ are  
never lost — they are safely led into the Father’s house.”

## 7. Long Illness / Cancer

**2 Cor 4:14 - 5:1** — “Our earthly dwelling is destroyed... an eternal dwelling awaits.”

**Mk 5:25–34** — The woman suffering for many years.

**Theme:** *“Touched by Christ, Held Through Suffering, Led into Eternal Life.”*

### INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, a nurse in a hospice recounted the final days of a cancer patient who had suffered greatly. One evening, after a particularly painful day, the patient quietly said: “I no longer ask God why I am suffering. I only ask Him to stay close.” The nurse later said that from that moment, the room seemed filled not with despair, but with peace.

Today, we gather with sorrow because long illness slowly changed the life of our departed loved one and deeply affected all who walked this difficult road together. We remember hospital visits, moments of fear, fragile hopes, silent prayers, and the courage it took to face each new day. Illness may weaken the body, but it can also reveal the strength of love, faith, patience, and human tenderness.

In the Gospel, the woman who had suffered for many years reached out and touched the cloak of Jesus. That touch became a moment of healing, dignity, and hope. Saint Paul reminds us in the second reading that though our earthly dwelling passes away, God prepares for us an eternal home that no illness can destroy.

As we place our grief and our hope before the Lord, we also acknowledge the moments when fear overcame faith, when exhaustion weakened our charity, and when suffering left us

wounded in spirit. Therefore, let us ask God for mercy and peace as we begin these sacred mysteries.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you drew near to those who suffered in body and spirit:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you gave hope to those who carried long burdens and hidden pain: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you lead your faithful from earthly suffering into eternal life: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who knows the burdens we carry and the tears we hide,  
comfort us in our sorrow, strengthen us in faith,  
forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God,  
source of strength for the weary  
and hope for all who suffer,  
you accompanied your servant through the long journey of illness  
and now call him/her into the peace of your eternal dwelling.  
Comfort those who mourn, heal hearts wounded by grief,  
and deepen our trust in your promise  
that life is transformed, not ended.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A doctor once told the story of a woman dying from cancer who had spent months in treatment. Near the end of her life, he apologized because medicine could no longer cure her. She smiled gently and replied: “Doctor, you could not cure me, but you never stopped caring for me. That made all the difference.” The doctor later admitted that he learned more about humanity from that patient than from all his years in medical school.

The Gospel today speaks about another woman who suffered for many years. Twelve long years of pain, disappointment, isolation, and exhaustion. She had spent everything she had searching for healing. Many people around her probably stopped noticing her suffering. Yet Jesus noticed her immediately.

What is beautiful in this Gospel is not only the miracle itself, but the tenderness of Jesus. The woman quietly touched His cloak hoping not to be seen, but Jesus stopped and called her forward. He restored not only her health, but also her dignity. He wanted her to know that she mattered.

Long illness often becomes more than physical pain. It can bring loneliness, fear, frustration, dependence on others, and moments of deep discouragement. Families also suffer silently. They watch someone they love slowly weaken while feeling helpless themselves.

There is a story of a little boy whose mother was dying of cancer. Every evening he sat beside her bed and read stories to her, even when she was too weak to respond. After her death, someone asked him why he kept reading when she could barely hear. The child answered: “Because love still listens.”

That is what sustained many families through illness — love that remained faithful even when words became few. Caregivers, relatives, nurses, doctors, and friends became instruments of God’s compassion. Sometimes the greatest healing is not the removal of pain, but the discovery that one is not abandoned in pain.

Saint Paul today speaks with remarkable hope: “Though our earthly dwelling is destroyed, we have a building from God, eternal in heaven.” Our bodies are fragile. Illness reminds us painfully that earthly life is temporary. Yet faith tells us that suffering and death do not have the final word.

A priest once visited an elderly cancer patient who was very close to death. The priest asked softly, “Are you afraid?” The man replied, “A little. But I think it is like walking through a dark tunnel while holding someone’s hand. I may not see clearly, but I trust the One leading me.”

That is Christian hope. We do not pretend suffering is easy. Even Jesus wept before the grave of Lazarus. But we believe Christ walks with us through suffering and beyond death itself.

Today, we entrust our beloved departed into the hands of the Lord who never abandons His children. The illness has ended. The pain has ended. The sleepless nights and anxious days have ended. What remains now is the promise of Christ: eternal life, eternal peace, eternal love.

And perhaps the greatest lesson long illness teaches us is this: life is not measured by how strong the body remains, but by how deeply the heart learns to love.

There is an old Christian story about a candle burning in a dark chapel. As the candle grew smaller, someone remarked sadly, “It is

disappearing.” An old monk replied, “No, it is giving its light.” In much the same way, the life of our departed loved one, even amid suffering, became a light of courage, patience, faith, and love for others.

May Christ, whose healing touch brought hope to the suffering woman in the Gospel, now receive our beloved into the eternal dwelling prepared by the Father. And may He strengthen us until the day we meet again in His kingdom.

### **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Trusting in Christ, who walks with His people through suffering and leads them into eternal life, let us bring our prayers before the Father.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to bring comfort, compassion, and hope to the sick, the dying, and all who suffer, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For doctors, nurses, caregivers, and all who accompany the seriously ill, that God may strengthen them in patience, wisdom, and kindness, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For those suffering from cancer, chronic illness, or emotional pain, that they may experience the healing presence of Christ and the support of loving people around them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For our departed brother/sister N., that Christ who conquered suffering and death may welcome him/her into the eternal dwelling prepared in heaven, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that this moment of farewell may deepen our faith, strengthen our compassion, and renew our hope in eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and compassion, hear the prayers we place before you in faith and hope. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that through these gifts of bread and wine, offered with our sorrow and our hope, God may strengthen our trust that those who suffer with Christ will also share in His eternal life, and that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts placed upon your altar  
as signs of our faith and hope.

Through this sacrifice,  
bring comfort to those who mourn,  
peace to your departed servant,  
and healing to hearts burdened by sorrow.  
May the mystery we celebrate remind us  
that Christ remains close to all who suffer  
and leads His faithful into eternal joy.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your Son, Jesus Christ,  
you revealed your compassion for the suffering  
and your victory over death itself.  
He touched the wounded with mercy,  
strengthened the weary with hope,  
and promised eternal life to those who trust in Him.

Though illness weakens the body  
and sorrow burdens the human heart,  
your faithful are never abandoned.  
In every moment of pain, your grace sustains us,  
and beyond the passing trials of this earthly life  
you prepare for your children  
an eternal dwelling in your kingdom.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With confidence in the Father  
who remains close to His children in every suffering  
and who prepares for us an eternal dwelling beyond death,  
let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that amid the sufferings and uncertainties of this life  
we may never lose trust in your presence.  
Comfort all who mourn,  
strengthen those who care for the sick,  
and fill our hearts with the hope  
that Christ has prepared an eternal home for His faithful.  
As we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you stood beside the suffering,  
gave courage to the weary,  
and brought peace to troubled hearts.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who carried our sorrows  
and opened for us the way to eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord Jesus,  
in this Eucharist you have touched us once again with your healing presence.

You remind us that suffering does not separate us from your love, and death does not destroy the bonds of faith.

Remain close to all who grieve today.

Teach us to trust that our departed loved one now rests in the peace of your eternal embrace,  
where every tear is wiped away  
and every wound is healed forever.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through this sacrament of hope and salvation,  
comfort your people in their sorrow  
and strengthen us with the promise of eternal life.

May your departed servant,  
freed from all suffering and pain,  
rejoice forever in your presence,  
and may we who continue our earthly journey  
walk in faith until we are gathered together in your kingdom.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation  
comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you in hope.

**Amen.**

May Christ,  
who showed compassion to the suffering  
and conquered death by His Resurrection,  
grant peace to your departed loved one  
and courage to all who mourn.

**Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit  
remain close to you in moments of grief  
and fill your hearts with the promise of eternal life.

**Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, trusting that Christ walks with His people through suffering and leads His faithful into everlasting life.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Sometimes God does not immediately remove suffering, but He never stops holding the hand of the one who suffers. In Christ, every pain entrusted to love becomes a path toward eternal life.”

## 8. Dementia / Alzheimer's

**Isaiah 49:14–16** — “I will never forget you.”

**John 6:37–40** — “I shall not lose anyone given to me.”

**Theme: “Never Forgotten in the Heart of God”**

*Even when memory fades on earth, God never forgets the person He has lovingly created. In moments when names, faces, and stories disappeared from human memory, the dignity and identity of N. remained forever held in the faithful memory of God. Today we entrust N. into those loving hands, confident in Christ's promise: “I shall not lose anyone given to me.”*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a touching story about an elderly woman living with Alzheimer's disease. One afternoon she no longer recognized her own daughter. The daughter began to cry quietly and asked, “Mother, do you know who I am?” The elderly woman looked at her tenderly and answered, “No... but whoever you are, I know you belong to me.” Even when memory had faded, love remained.

That is one of the painful mysteries of dementia. Memories disappear, familiar faces become strangers, and words slowly fade away. Families suffer a hidden grief, losing someone little by little long before death finally comes. Yet today the Word of God speaks a message stronger than forgetfulness itself.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God tells us: “I will never forget you.” And Jesus assures us in the Gospel: “I shall not lose anyone given to me.” Human memory may fail, but God's love never fails. Even when N. could no longer remember others, God never stopped remembering N. by name.

As we gather with sorrow and gratitude, we also recognize our own weakness and frailty before God. Trusting in His mercy, and asking Him to heal every wound of sin and fear, let us now prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you remember each person with an everlasting love even when the world forgets them: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you remained close to the suffering, the confused, and the forgotten: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you promised that none entrusted to you would ever be lost: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who never forgets His children and whose mercy is stronger than all human weakness, forgive us our sins, heal the wounds of our hearts, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God, faithful and tender Father, whose love never fades and whose memory of your children is eternal, look with compassion upon your servants gathered today. Comfort us in our grief, strengthen us in hope, and help us to trust that N., whose earthly memory slowly faded, is forever remembered in your loving heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## HOMILY

A priest once visited a nursing home where many residents suffered from dementia. One old man sat quietly near the window, unable to speak clearly anymore. During the visit, the priest began praying the “Our Father.” Suddenly the old man, who had barely spoken all day, softly joined in: “Our Father... who art in heaven...” The caregivers were astonished. So much had disappeared from his memory, yet somewhere deep within him, faith remained alive.

That scene helps us understand today’s Gospel. Jesus says: “I shall not lose anyone given to me.” Dementia may take away memories, language, recognition, and independence — but it cannot erase the soul. Beneath confusion and silence, the human person remains precious before God.

Families who care for loved ones with Alzheimer’s often experience a long farewell. A husband no longer recognized by his wife. A daughter becoming a stranger to her own mother. A father forgetting the stories he once loved to tell. It is a suffering that is quiet and exhausting. Many caregivers carry hidden tears.

There is a story of a husband who visited his wife every single day in the nursing home. One nurse asked him, “Why do you keep coming? She doesn’t even know who you are anymore.” The man smiled gently and answered, “She may not know who I am, but I still know who she is.” That is love. And if human love can remain faithful like that, how much greater is the faithfulness of God?

The prophet Isaiah gives us one of the most beautiful images in Scripture: “Can a mother forget her child? Even if she could, I will never forget you.” God carries each person engraved upon His

hands. N.’s identity was never lost before God. Even in moments of confusion, agitation, silence, or fear, the Lord remained close.

Dementia also teaches us something profound about human dignity. Our value does not depend on intelligence, productivity, memory, or independence. A person is precious simply because they are loved by God. In a society that often values people only for what they can do, Christ reminds us that every human life has sacred worth until its final breath.

A woman once said about her father with Alzheimer’s: “I learned to stop asking whether he remembered me, and instead to ask whether I loved him well today.” That change transformed her suffering. Love became more important than memory.

Perhaps that is what heaven will finally be: not the recovery of facts and dates and names, but the fullness of love. In heaven nothing good is lost. Every tear is remembered. Every act of care matters. Every sleepless night beside a hospital bed matters. Every patient repetition of a forgotten answer matters. Love remembers what the mind cannot.

And so today we entrust N. into the hands of Christ. The illness may have erased many earthly memories, but it could never erase God’s image within N. Jesus now fulfills His promise: “I shall not lose anyone given to me.”

There is an old Jewish saying: “To be forgotten is to truly die.” But for those who belong to God, that never happens. In the Kingdom of Heaven, no one is forgotten. N. now lives forever in the eternal memory and love of God.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

### Celebrant's Introduction

Brothers and sisters, trusting in the Lord who never abandons His children and who remembers each one with eternal love, let us bring before Him our prayers and petitions.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to defend the dignity of the elderly, the sick, and the forgotten, and be a compassionate presence to families caring for those with dementia.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For doctors, nurses, caregivers, and all who accompany those suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia, that they may be strengthened with patience, tenderness, and hope.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families who experience the long sorrow of memory loss in a loved one, that God may console their hearts and sustain them in faithful love.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For N., that Christ, who promised never to lose those entrusted to Him, may welcome N. into the peace and joy of eternal life.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that this Eucharist may deepen our trust that no life is ever forgotten by God.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of everlasting love, you know each of us by name and hold us forever in your heart. Hear the prayers we offer today through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that through these gifts of bread and wine,  
placed upon the altar with our sorrow and our hope,  
God may strengthen our trust that those whom human memory  
forgets are forever remembered in His eternal love,  
and that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive these gifts offered in faith and love for your servant N.  
As earthly memories fade away,  
let the promise of your eternal remembrance  
shine brightly before us.  
May this sacrifice bring comfort to the living  
and peace to the departed.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### PREFACE

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For you created each person in love  
and engraved every life upon your heart.  
Even when human strength declines  
and memory fades with age and illness,  
your faithful love never weakens,  
and your mercy never forgets your children.

In Christ your Son,  
you have given us the promise  
that none entrusted to Him will ever be lost.  
Through His Death and Resurrection  
the darkness of suffering is transformed by hope,  
and death itself becomes the doorway to eternal life.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

Even when words fail and memories fade,  
the deepest cry of the human heart remains the longing for the  
Father's love.  
Trusting in the God who never forgets His children  
and united as one family in Christ,  
we now pray in the words our Saviour himself taught us:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that amid the frailty of human life  
and the fears that come with suffering and loss,  
we may be sustained by the hope  
that no one is ever forgotten in your sight.  
As we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you remained close to the weak, the suffering, and the forgotten,  
and in your mercy you promised  
that none entrusted to you would ever be lost.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb,  
for Christ remembers each of us with an everlasting love.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Love is deeper than memory.  
Long after names are forgotten and words disappear,  
love continues to remain.  
Today Christ has fed us with the Bread of Life  
and reminded us that no human life is ever lost in God.  
May we leave this church carrying a renewed tenderness  
toward the elderly, the sick, and the vulnerable,  
trusting that one day we too shall be remembered forever  
in the loving heart of God.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through this holy Eucharist  
you have strengthened us with the hope of eternal life.  
Comfort all who mourn N.,  
and help us to trust more deeply  
in your unfailing love and mercy.  
May the promise of Christ,  
that none given to Him will be lost,  
remain always in our hearts.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God who never forgets His children  
hold you in His peace and strengthen you in hope. **Amen.**

May Christ, who promised that none entrusted to Him would be lost,  
comfort you in your sorrow and guide you toward eternal life. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit bring healing to wounded hearts  
and remain with you always. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, trusting that those who belong to God are never forgotten.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Human memory may fade, but God’s love never forgets.”

## 9. Elderly Person / Peaceful Death

**2 Tim 4:6–8** — “I have fought the good fight.”

**Lk 2:25–32** — Simeon: “Now let your servant go in peace.”

**Theme: “Now let your servant go in peace.”**

*A faithful life, patiently lived in God’s presence, finds its fulfillment not in fear, but in peaceful surrender into the hands of the Lord.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a touching custom in some families: before an elderly parent goes to sleep, the children gently ask, “Are you comfortable? Do you need anything?” Often the parent simply smiles and says, “No, I am at peace now.” After many years of work, sacrifice, joys, and wounds, peace becomes more precious than strength.

Today we gather with gratitude for a life that journeyed through many seasons. Like Simeon in the Gospel, N. had waited, hoped, prayed, endured, and learned to place life into God’s hands. And like Saint Paul, N. could say in the quiet of the heart: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

Old age teaches us something the world easily forgets: life is not measured by speed or success, but by faithfulness — by the quiet courage to continue loving, forgiving, praying, and trusting through the years.

As we stand before God today, we also recognize our own need for mercy. There were moments when we failed to trust God’s timing, moments when fear overcame peace, moments when love was withheld. Let us therefore ask the Lord for pardon and peace as we begin these sacred mysteries.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are the faithful companion who walks with us through every season of life: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you are the peace of those who place their lives into your hands: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you open the gates of eternal life to those who trust in you: **Lord, have mercy.**

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins, strengthen us in faith during the journey of life,  
calm every fear within us,  
and bring us one day to the peace of everlasting life.

**Amen.**

## COLLECT

God of tenderness and peace,  
you guided your servant N. through the changing seasons of life  
and sustained him/her with your faithful love.

As Simeon rejoiced to rest in your promise  
and Saint Paul trusted in the crown prepared for him,  
grant that we too may live with faithful hearts  
and depart this world in the peace of Christ.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## HOMILY

A nurse once spoke about an elderly man in a hospital who sensed that his final hours were near. His family stood around his bed, anxious and tearful. But the old man looked at them calmly and whispered, "Do not be afraid for me. I have been carried by God all my life. Why would He drop me now?" Those words changed the atmosphere in the room. Tears remained, but fear slowly gave way to peace. That is the spirit of today's readings.

In the Gospel, Simeon is an old man who has waited many years. We are not told about his achievements, his possessions, or his reputation. We are told only that he was faithful and attentive to God. And when he finally holds the child Jesus in his arms, he says: "Now, Lord, let your servant go in peace."

What beautiful words. Simeon does not cling desperately to life. He does not complain that his years are ending. He is at peace because he knows that his life has reached its fulfillment in God.

Old age often strips away illusions. The elderly know that strength fades, plans remain unfinished, and the body weakens. Yet they also know something precious: what truly lasts is love, faith, kindness, forgiveness, and trust in God.

There is a story of an elderly grandmother who every evening sat quietly by her window with a rosary in her hand. One of her grandchildren once asked, "Grandma, why do you pray so much?" She smiled and replied, "Because when you walk a long road, you learn to hold tightly to the hand that leads you home."

That is what faith becomes in old age: not complicated theology, but a hand held tightly.

Saint Paul speaks today with the same serenity: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Notice that Paul does not say he lived a perfect life. He says he remained faithful in the struggle. Every long life carries victories and regrets, joys and wounds, moments of generosity and moments of weakness. But God does not measure life only by perfection. He looks at the heart that continues returning to Him.

Many elderly people teach their families far more through quiet endurance than through words. A grandfather patiently suffering illness. A mother continuing to pray for her children. A widowed person learning to live with loneliness yet remaining gentle and thankful. Such lives preach powerful sermons.

An old priest once visited a dying farmer. The priest asked him, "Are you afraid?" The farmer answered, "No, Father. I have known the Lord since childhood. It would be strange to fear meeting Him now." That is Christian hope.

Today we entrust N. into the hands of God. We grieve because love always grieves. Yet beneath our sorrow stands something deeper than sadness: trust. The Lord who accompanied N. through childhood, work, family life, sickness, aging, and all the hidden moments in between, will not abandon him/her now.

And perhaps this funeral also speaks quietly to us who are still walking the road. One day our own hair will gray, our own strength

will fade, and our own race will end. The important question is not how long we live, but whether we learn to live close to God.

A man once carved these words onto the walking stick he used in old age: "Every step brings me nearer home." That is the Christian journey. Not wandering aimlessly toward darkness, but walking steadily toward the Father's house.

So today we pray not only for N., but also for ourselves: that when our own final hour comes, we too may be able to say with peaceful hearts, "Lord, now let your servant go in peace."

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

God our Father guides us through every season of life and never abandons those who trust in him. With confidence, let us place our prayers before him.

1. For the Church throughout the world: that she may continue to bring comfort, hope, and peace to the elderly, the sick, and the dying, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For all who care for aging parents, grandparents, and the lonely elderly: that their kindness and patience may reflect the tenderness of Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For those who fear illness, weakness, or death: that the Lord may fill them with courage and deep trust in his promises, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all our departed loved ones, and especially for N.: that having finished the race of life, they may now rest in the peace and joy of God's kingdom, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For ourselves gathered here: that we may learn to live faithfully, forgive generously, and walk peacefully with God each day of our lives, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and peace,  
you know the hopes and burdens we carry in our hearts.  
Hear the prayers we offer with faith  
and keep us always close to you.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that these gifts, offered with gratitude for a life faithfully lived,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

#### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts which we place upon your altar  
as we commend your servant N. into your loving care.  
May this sacrifice strengthen our hope  
that those who trusted in you during earthly life  
will find everlasting peace in your kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

#### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you accompany your children through every season of life.  
In youth you guide them with hope,  
in adulthood you strengthen them with grace,  
and in old age you sustain them with your faithful love.  
Even when human strength fades,  
your mercy remains unchanging.

In your Son Jesus Christ,  
you have transformed death itself into the doorway to eternal peace.  
He comforted the aged Simeon with the joy of salvation  
and assured all who trust in him  
that they will never walk alone into eternity.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
we proclaim your glory, as without end we acclaim:

#### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With trust in the Father who leads his children safely home, let us  
pray in the words Jesus himself taught us.

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and gently free our hearts from fear and anxiety.  
As you guided your servant N. through the changing seasons of life  
and led him/her peacefully into your hands,  
grant us the grace to walk faithfully each day  
with trust in your love and confidence in your promises,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you comforted Simeon with the peace of salvation  
and strengthened Saint Paul to finish the race in faith.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant us that deep peace  
which the world cannot give —  
the peace that trusts you in life,  
rests in you at death,  
and hopes in you for eternity.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who gently leads his people through life and into eternal peace.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Life moves quickly. Childhood passes, strength fades, achievements disappear, and even cherished memories grow dim. But one thing remains: the faithful love of God.

Today we remember with gratitude the long journey of N. We entrust every joy, every sorrow, every sacrifice, and every silent prayer into the hands of the Lord. The God who walked beside N. through the years now welcomes him/her into eternal peace.

And we who continue the journey are reminded to live wisely, love deeply, forgive freely, and trust God patiently — so that one day we too may rest peacefully in His embrace.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
you strengthen us with the hope of eternal life.  
Comfort us in our sorrow  
and deepen our trust in your promises,  
that we may walk faithfully through the years of our earthly life  
until you welcome us into the peace of your kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation  
grant you peace in your sorrow and hope in your hearts.

May Christ, who conquered death,  
strengthen your faith and lead you safely through every season of  
life.

And may the Holy Spirit  
comfort you and keep you always in the love of God.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, ✠ and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trusting that the Lord accompanies his people in life, in  
death, and into eternal glory.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

A life becomes beautiful not because it is long or perfect, but  
because it is faithfully placed into the hands of God.

## 10. Practicing Catholic

**Rev 14:13** — “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.”

**Mt 25:31–40** — “Whatever you did for the least...”

**Theme: “Faith made visible through love.”**

*A practicing Catholic is remembered not only for prayers spoken in church, but for a faith lived through compassion, kindness, forgiveness, and service. Today we thank God for a disciple who tried to recognize Christ in others and now entrust this servant of God to the Lord who promises: “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.”*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a story of an elderly parish sacristan who came every morning before dawn to prepare the church for Mass. One winter morning, a young man asked him, “Why do you still do this at your age?” The old man smiled and replied, “Because one day, when I stand before God, I want Him to recognize me as someone who loved His house and His people.”

Today we gather with sorrow, gratitude, and faith as we commend our beloved departed to the Lord. We remember a life shaped by prayer, the sacraments, devotion to the Church, and care for others. Faith was not merely professed with words but practiced in daily life.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for Him. The Christian life is therefore not measured by achievements or possessions, but by love made visible in ordinary acts of mercy and goodness.

As we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries, let us also acknowledge the moments when our faith has failed to become love in action. Let us ask the Lord for pardon and peace.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, You taught us to recognize You in the hungry, the poor, and the forgotten: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You strengthened Your faithful people through Word and Sacrament: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You prepare a place in Your Kingdom for those who die in Your friendship: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

Merciful Father,  
You see not only our weaknesses  
but also every hidden act of goodness inspired by faith.  
Receive with kindness the prayers we offer today for Your servant,  
who sought to follow Christ through prayer, worship,  
and loving service.  
Forgive every sin, heal every failing,  
and welcome this faithful soul into the joy of Your heavenly Kingdom.  
Have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

**Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God,  
whose Son taught us that love shown  
to the least of our brothers and sisters is love shown to Him,  
grant that Your servant,  
who sought to live the Catholic faith through prayer and charity,  
may now receive the reward promised to the faithful  
who die in the Lord.  
Strengthen us who remain behind  
to live our faith with sincerity and compassion each day.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

A teacher once asked her students to write what they would like people to say about them after they died. One child wrote: "I hope people will say that I made life easier for someone." The teacher kept that paper for years because, she said, it contained the whole meaning of Christianity in one sentence.

Today's Gospel speaks about the final judgment, but it is not a frightening Gospel. It is deeply practical. Jesus does not ask how famous we became, how much wealth we accumulated, or how successful we appeared. He asks whether we fed the hungry, welcomed the stranger, comforted the suffering, and cared for those in need. In other words, He asks whether our faith became love.

The Book of Revelation gives us a beautiful promise: *“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.”* To die in the Lord means more than dying with a crucifix nearby or prayers being said at the bedside. It means living in friendship with Christ day after day.

There is a story about a woman in a parish who quietly washed and ironed altar linens for nearly forty years. Most parishioners never knew her name. When she died, the priest said, “Every Mass we celebrated was touched by her hidden love.” That is how Christian discipleship often works — quietly, faithfully, steadily.

Our departed loved one practiced the Catholic faith not only through attendance at Mass, but through countless ordinary acts that reflected the Gospel. Real holiness is often hidden in routine faithfulness: praying for family members, helping neighbours, forgiving injuries, supporting the Church, comforting the grieving, remaining faithful during illness, and trusting God during uncertainty.

Another story is told of St. Teresa of Calcutta. A volunteer once complained that the work among the poor seemed small compared to the world’s suffering. Mother Teresa replied, “We are not called to do great things, but small things with great love.” That is exactly what Jesus praises in today’s Gospel.

The Gospel also comforts us because the Lord identifies Himself with human weakness. “I was hungry... I was sick... I was lonely.” Christ was present in every person served with love. And now, at the end of life’s journey, the same Christ says to His faithful servant: “Come, blessed of my Father.”

For those of us who remain, this funeral is also an examination of conscience. Christianity is not simply about belonging to a religion; it is about becoming the presence of Christ for others. The best way to honour the dead is not only with flowers or words, but by continuing their goodness.

A young boy once visited his grandfather’s grave and asked his mother, “Where is Grandpa now?” She answered, “Wherever love lives, he is never far away.” The Christian faith goes even further: those who die in the Lord are alive in Him forever. Today we commend our beloved departed into the hands of the Good Shepherd, trusting that every prayer offered, every kindness given, and every act of faith completed in this life will now be crowned with eternal peace.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

My dear brothers and sisters,  
Jesus teaches us that whatever is done in love is remembered forever in the Kingdom of God. Trusting in His mercy and compassion, let us place our prayers before Him.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to reveal Christ through works of mercy, compassion, and faithful service to the poor, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For our departed brother/sister N., who practiced the faith through prayer and charity, that the Lord may welcome him/her into the company of the saints, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families who mourn the loss of loved ones, that Christ may strengthen them with the hope of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For those who care for the sick, elderly, lonely, and forgotten, that they may recognize Christ in those they serve, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that our faith may become visible through love, forgiveness, generosity, and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and love,

You know the goodness hidden within every faithful heart.

Hear the prayers we offer today and strengthen us to follow Christ more faithfully, until we are gathered together in Your eternal Kingdom.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,

that these gifts, and the loving service by which we seek to follow Christ each day, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive the gifts we place upon Your altar

as we commend to You Your servant N.,

who sought to worship You faithfully and serve Christ in others.

May this sacrifice bring forgiveness, peace, and eternal joy

to the one who has died in the Lord.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,

always and everywhere to give You thanks,

Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For You call Your people not only to believe in Christ

but to reveal Him through lives of love and mercy.

In every act of kindness, forgiveness, and compassion,

the light of the Gospel shines in our world.

And when the faithful complete their earthly pilgrimage,

You do not abandon them to death,

but welcome them into the Kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world.

There they rejoice forever among the saints,

with all whose lives were shaped by faith working through love.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,

with Thrones and Dominions,

and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,

we sing the hymn of Your glory,

as without end we acclaim:

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,

we dare to say the prayer

that unites God's family in faith, hope, and love:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by Your mercy,  
we may persevere in faith,  
serve You generously in our brothers and sisters,  
and live each day in readiness for Your Kingdom,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You taught us that whatever is done  
for the least of our brothers and sisters is done for You.  
Look not on our sins,  
but on the faith and loving service of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with Your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who calls the faithful into the eternal banquet of heaven.  
Happy are those who recognized Christ in others  
and are now invited to share forever in His Kingdom.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The Eucharist we have shared today reminds us that Christ remains close to His people in life, in death, and in eternity. The hands that once folded in prayer, served others, and received the Body of Christ are now entrusted to the mercy of God. May we continue the legacy of faith and kindness left to us, until we too are welcomed into the joy of the heavenly banquet.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord God, through this holy Sacrament  
You have nourished us with the Bread of eternal life.  
Grant that Your servant N.,  
who believed in Christ and sought to serve Him faithfully,  
may rejoice forever in the company of the saints.  
And may we who remain  
grow in faith, compassion, and love for one another.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation bless you in your sorrow and strengthen you in hope. **Amen.**  
May Christ, who promised eternal life to those who follow Him in love, receive our departed brother/sister into His Kingdom. **Amen.**  
May the Holy Spirit help us live our faith generously and faithfully each day. **Amen.**  
And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace,  
trusting that those who die in the Lord are blessed forever,  
and let your faith be made visible through love.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

At the end of life, faith is remembered not by words alone, but by love that became visible in daily acts of kindness, mercy, and fidelity to Christ.

## **11. Devoted Marian Soul (e.g. Legion of Mary member etc.)**

**Rev 21:1–7** — “He will wipe away every tear.”

**Jn 19:25–27** — “Behold your mother.”

**Theme:** “Mary leads her children home to the Father where every tear is wiped away.”

## **INTRODUCTION**

There is an old story of a fisherman who sailed every dawn from a small coastal village. Before leaving home, he would stop before a tiny statue of Our Lady near the harbour and whisper, “Mother, bring me home safely.” Years later, when he lay dying, his children noticed that the last thing he reached for was his rosary. The prayer he had begun in youth became the prayer that carried him into eternity.

Today we gather with sorrow, but not without hope. In the Gospel, Jesus from the cross entrusts Mary to the beloved disciple: “Behold your mother.” At the darkest moment of human history, Jesus gives us a mother who remains beside us in suffering, accompanies us through grief, and points us always toward her Son.

The Book of Revelation gives us the promise that sustains Christian mourning: a new heaven and a new earth where God wipes away every tear. Death does not have the final word. The loving God who accompanied N. throughout life now calls N. into the fullness of peace and joy.

Yet we know that we have not always trusted God as children trust a loving mother. We have wandered, doubted, and sinned. Therefore, trusting in the mercy of Christ and the maternal intercession of Mary, let us acknowledge our sins and so prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you gave us Mary as our mother and refuge beneath the cross: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you console the sorrowful and wipe away every tear: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you lead your faithful servants into the new heaven and new earth: **Lord, have mercy.**

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who in his mercy gives comfort to the sorrowing  
and hope to those who trust in him, forgive us our sins,  
strengthen us through the loving care of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
and bring us one day to everlasting life.

## COLLECT

O God, whose Son, while hanging upon the Cross,  
gave the Blessed Virgin Mary to us as our mother,  
grant that we who mourn today  
may find comfort in her loving care  
and place our hope firmly in your promise  
of a new heaven and a new earth.

As you welcomed your servant N. through the pilgrimage of this life,  
receive him/her now into the eternal dwelling  
where sorrow and death are no more.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY

A little boy once became lost in a crowded Marian procession in a large city. Frightened and crying, he wandered among strangers until a police officer approached him and asked, “Do you know where you live?” The boy shook his head. “Do you know your parents’ names?” Again, he could not answer clearly through his tears. Then suddenly the child pointed toward a banner of the Blessed Virgin Mary being carried through the street and said, “If you take me to my Mother, I will find my way home.”

That simple sentence contains the heart of today’s Gospel and perhaps the heart of N.’s spiritual life as well. “If you take me to my Mother, I will find my way home.”

At Calvary, Jesus was dying. Yet in the midst of his suffering, he was still giving gifts. One of his final gifts was Mary: “Behold your mother.” Jesus knew that his disciples would walk through fear, grief, loneliness, and death. So he gave them someone who would remain beside them as she remained beside him beneath the cross.

A devoted Marian soul understands something very profound: Mary never keeps anyone for herself; she always leads people to Jesus.

There is a beautiful story of an elderly woman who prayed the rosary every evening, even after arthritis bent her fingers and weakened her voice. One day her granddaughter asked, “Grandma, why do you still pray the rosary when you can barely hold it?” The old woman smiled and answered, “Because every Hail Mary is another step toward home.”

That is what devotion to Mary really is—not superstition, not empty repetition, but a journey toward Christ.

The first reading from Revelation gives us one of the most tender promises in Scripture: “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” Think about that image. God himself bending down to wipe away human tears. Every grief. Every regret. Every loneliness. Every fear of death. The God who created the stars also notices the tears of his children.

And perhaps Mary, who stood beneath the cross weeping with her Son, understands human tears better than anyone else except Jesus himself.

Many saints spoke about this maternal closeness of Mary. St. John Bosco once told his boys, “Trust in Mary and you will see what miracles are.” He was not speaking merely of extraordinary events. The greatest miracle is that a fearful heart becomes peaceful, a sinner finds mercy, and a dying Christian learns to trust God completely.

For many devoted Catholics, especially those formed by Marian devotion, the rosary becomes a lifelong companion. A nurse once shared the story of a dying man in hospital who had not spoken for several days. His family quietly began praying the Hail Mary beside him. Suddenly his lips began moving softly with the prayer. The final words they heard him say before he died were: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.” The prayer he had carried through life carried him into eternity.

That is the Christian hope we celebrate today. Death is painful, but it is not meaningless. Christ has passed through death and opened the gates of eternal life. Mary accompanies her children to the threshold of that eternal home.

Today we commend N. to the mercy of God. We entrust N. to the loving embrace of Christ and to the maternal care of Mary. And we who remain are reminded that our own lives are pilgrimages. One day each of us must also make that final journey.

The question is not whether we will die; the question is whether we will know the way home.

An old priest once visited a dying sailor. The man had spent decades crossing dangerous oceans. The priest asked him, “Are you afraid of the final voyage?” The sailor smiled weakly and pointed to a small image of Our Lady beside his bed. “No,” he whispered, “because the Mother of the harbour lights is waiting for me.”

That is our hope today. Mary does not replace Christ; she leads us to him. And where Christ leads, there is no more death, no more mourning, no more tears—only the eternal home prepared for God’s faithful children.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Trusting in God, who wipes away every tear and leads his children into eternal life, let us place before him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother/sister N.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to be a sign of hope and consolation to all who mourn, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all who are devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, that they may grow ever closer to Christ through her loving guidance, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, especially the family and friends of N., that God may wipe away their tears and

strengthen them with peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For the sick, the lonely, and the dying, that they may experience the comfort of Christ and the tender care of Mary, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For our departed brother/sister N., that having trusted in the Lord throughout life, he/she may now dwell forever in the new heaven and new earth prepared by God, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and God of all consolation, hear the prayers we bring before you with confidence and faith. Welcome our departed brother/sister N. into your eternal kingdom, where sorrow and death are no more. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered with faith and hope, may unite our prayers with the loving intercession of Mary and be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive the gifts we place upon your altar  
as we commend your servant N. to your mercy.  
Through the maternal care of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
strengthen our hope in the resurrection  
and lead us all toward the eternal home  
prepared for your faithful children.

Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your great love  
you gave the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Church  
as a mother and companion on life's journey.  
Standing beside the Cross of your Son,  
she shared in his suffering  
and became a sign of comfort and hope for all your people.

In Christ's resurrection  
you have conquered death forever  
and opened for us the new heaven and the new earth  
where every tear shall be wiped away.  
There your faithful servants find eternal peace,  
and all who trusted in your mercy rejoice forever in your presence.

And so, with Angels and Saints,  
and with Mary, Mother of your Son,  
we proclaim your glory as we sing:

**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say the prayer of God's children, trusting that the Father who welcomes us in life will also lead us safely home through death.

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and in moments of grief sustain us with the hope of eternal life.  
Through the loving intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
keep us faithful to your Son during the pilgrimage of this life,  
free us from sin and fear,  
and lead us safely to the new heaven and new earth  
where every tear shall be wiped away.  
As we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
through the love of your Mother  
you comfort the sorrowful  
and strengthen those who mourn.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who leads his faithful people into the eternal kingdom  
where every tear is wiped away.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

In this Eucharist we have encountered Christ, the Bread of Life, who  
strengthens us on our earthly pilgrimage. Mary, who once carried  
Jesus within her heart, continues to lead believers toward him. As we  
entrust N. to God today, may we leave this church renewed in hope,  
trusting that love is stronger than death and that those who walk with  
Christ never walk alone.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God, through these sacred mysteries  
you have nourished us with the Bread of eternal life.  
Strengthen our faith in the resurrection,  
comfort us in our sorrow, and keep us close to Christ  
through the loving care of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
until the day when you gather us  
into the joy of your heavenly kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation bless you and comfort you in your  
sorrow. Amen.

May Christ, who conquered death and opened the gates of eternal  
life, give you lasting hope and peace. Amen.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of mercy and refuge of sinners,  
accompany you and intercede for you always. Amen.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## DISMISSAL

Go in the peace of Christ.  
May the Blessed Virgin Mary accompany you,  
and may the hope of eternal life remain firm within your hearts.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“If you take me to my Mother, I will find my way home.”  
Mary always leads her children to Christ, and Christ leads them into  
eternal life where every tear is wiped away.

## 12. Husband

**Eph 5:25–33** — “Husbands, love your wives.”

**Jn 15:9–17** — “Love one another as I have loved you.”

**Theme: “Love made visible in daily faithfulness.”**

*The readings reveal that Christian love is not proved in grand gestures alone, but in daily sacrifice, steadfast companionship, forgiveness, protection, and quiet fidelity. A husband mirrors Christ most deeply when he loves with constancy, tenderness, and self-giving devotion.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a story of an elderly husband who visited his wife every day in a nursing home even after she no longer recognized him. One nurse asked him gently, “Why do you still come every day when she does not know who you are?” He smiled and answered, “She may not know me anymore, but I still know who she is.”

Today we gather with sorrow, gratitude, and faith as we commend our brother to the loving embrace of God. We remember him not only through achievements or words, but through the ordinary acts of love that shaped a marriage, a family, and a home. The Gospel reminds us that the deepest commandment of Christ is simple and demanding at once: “Love one another as I have loved you.”

Christian marriage becomes holy not because life is perfect, but because love remains faithful through joys and burdens alike. In countless quiet moments — working, providing, listening, forgiving, waiting, sacrificing — love becomes visible. Such love leaves a mark upon the hearts of those who received it.

As we stand before the Lord today, we also recognize the moments when our love has fallen short — the times we failed to cherish,

forgive, or give ourselves generously. Therefore, with humble hearts, let us ask God for mercy and peace.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you taught us that the greatest love is to give oneself for others: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you remained faithful in love even through suffering and death: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you prepare an eternal home for those who love in your name: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May Almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us the times we failed to love generously,  
heal the wounds caused by selfishness and impatience,  
and strengthen us to walk in faithful love toward one another,  
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

### **COLLECT**

O God, whose Son revealed the fullness of love  
through faithful and self-giving service,  
grant that we who mourn our brother today  
may be comforted by the witness of his devoted love  
and strengthened to live with greater patience, tenderness, and  
fidelity toward one another.  
May the bonds of love formed on earth  
find their fulfillment in your eternal kingdom.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **HOMILY**

A little boy once asked his grandfather, “Grandpa, how do you know you still love Grandma after all these years?” The old man smiled and pointed to his worn wedding ring. “Because every morning,” he said, “I still choose her.”

Love is not only a feeling. Feelings rise and fall. Christian love is a decision renewed day after day. That is exactly what Jesus speaks about in today’s Gospel: “Love one another as I have loved you.” Christ’s love was patient, sacrificial, forgiving, and faithful until the end.

St. Paul tells husbands: “Love your wives as Christ loved the Church.” Those are enormous words. Christ loved by serving. Christ loved by carrying burdens. Christ loved by staying when leaving would have been easier.

Much of married love is hidden from the world. People see anniversaries and photographs, but they do not always see the sacrifices underneath. They do not see the worries carried silently at night, the extra hours worked for the family, the arguments followed by reconciliation, the care given during sickness, or the quiet acts of tenderness that become the true language of marriage.

There is a story about a husband whose wife became seriously ill for many years. Every evening he brushed her hair before she slept. Someone asked him why he continued this small ritual. He answered, “Because love should never stop feeling personal.” That is what faithful love looks like. It pays attention. It remains present.

The love celebrated in Christian marriage is never perfect because human beings are not perfect. Every husband and wife fail each other at times. Yet enduring love is built not on perfection, but on

forgiveness. One of the greatest gifts in a marriage is the grace to begin again after disappointment and hurt.

And this is where today's funeral becomes more than remembrance. It becomes hope. The love we shared with one another does not disappear into nothingness. God, who is love itself, gathers every act of genuine love into eternity. Christ does not forget the sacrifices made in love.

A widow once found among her husband's belongings a small handwritten note that simply said: "Thank you for walking through life with me." Perhaps that is one of the most beautiful descriptions of marriage — walking through life together. Sometimes the road is joyful, sometimes difficult, sometimes frightening, but never meant to be walked alone.

Today, as we commend our brother to God, we give thanks for the ways love became visible through his life. We entrust him now to the Lord who is eternal love itself. And we who remain are reminded that the greatest legacy we leave behind will not be possessions or accomplishments, but the love we gave and the faithfulness with which we gave it.

And perhaps, one day in God's kingdom, all faithful love will finally hear the words every loving heart longs for: "Welcome home."

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

God is the source of all faithful love and the giver of eternal life. Trusting in his mercy and compassion, let us bring before him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to witness to Christ's faithful and sacrificial love in a wounded world, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For husbands and wives, that their love may be strengthened by patience, forgiveness, tenderness, and lifelong fidelity, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For families who grieve the loss of a husband, father, or grandfather, that God may console them with the hope of reunion in his kingdom, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For all who care lovingly for spouses in sickness, weakness, or old age, that their hidden sacrifices may be blessed and rewarded by God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For our departed brother, that the Lord who called him to live in faithful love on earth may now welcome him into the joy and peace of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and love,  
hear the prayers we place before you today.  
Comfort us in our sorrow, strengthen us in faith,  
and keep us united in the love that comes from you.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that these gifts, offered in gratitude for a life  
shaped by faithful love and devoted service,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these offerings  
which we bring with trust and thanksgiving.  
As your Son gave himself completely in love for his people,  
so may the faithful love remembered today  
draw us closer to Christ's sacrifice upon this altar.  
Grant peace and eternal joy to our departed brother,  
whom we now entrust to your mercy.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you created us in love  
and called us to reflect your goodness  
through lives of faithful service and generous care for one another.  
In marriage you reveal a living sign  
of Christ's enduring love for his Church,  
a love that remains steadfast in joy and sorrow,  
in strength and weakness, through all the seasons of life.

Today we thank you  
for the witness of love we remember in our brother.  
In the ordinary moments of daily life your grace was quietly at work  
— in sacrifice, patience, forgiveness, and devotion.

And even as we grieve,  
you strengthen us with the hope  
that love united with Christ is never lost,  
but transformed into the joy of eternal life.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say the prayer that unites every family of faith and love:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by your mercy,  
we may find strength in the faithful love  
that united and supported us through the journey of life.  
In our grief, comfort us with the hope  
that those who loved generously on earth  
will dwell forever in your eternal peace,  
free from sorrow, suffering, and every separation,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you taught us to love one another  
as you have loved us,  
and through your death and resurrection  
you reconciled the world to the Father.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever.  
Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who loved us completely  
and calls us to dwell forever in his peace.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Love leaves traces behind.  
A familiar chair, a remembered voice, a shared meal, a quiet gesture  
— all become sacred memories when love has filled them.  
Today Christ reminds us that no act of genuine love is ever wasted.  
What is given in patience, sacrifice, tenderness, and fidelity is  
gathered into eternity by God himself.  
And so we entrust our brother into those eternal hands where every  
faithful love finds its fulfillment and every sorrow is transformed into  
peace.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these holy mysteries  
you have strengthened us with the bread of eternal life.  
Comfort us in our grief  
and deepen within us the grace of faithful love,  
so that, following the example of your Son,  
we may serve one another generously throughout our lives  
and one day be reunited in your heavenly kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation bless you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you with the hope of eternal life. **Amen.**

May Christ,  
who revealed perfect love through faithful sacrifice,  
fill your hearts with peace and gratitude. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit  
keep alive within you the gift of love that never dies. Amen.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, carrying into the world the faithful love  
that Christ has shown us and that we remember with gratitude today.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The measure of a life is not how much one possessed,  
but how faithfully one loved.

### 13. Wife

**Prov 31:10–31** — “A perfect wife—who can find her?”

**Lk 10:38–42** — Martha and Mary.

**Theme:** “Love made holy in daily faithfulness.”

#### INTRODUCTION

There is an old story about a grandmother who, after many years of marriage, was asked what kept her family together. She smiled and said, “Every evening I tried to leave one small light on in the house, so that no one would return to darkness.” It was not only a lamp she spoke about, but the quiet light of care, patience, prayer, and presence.

Today the Scriptures place before us two beautiful portraits of womanhood. In the Book of Proverbs we hear of the faithful wife whose hands are strong, whose heart is generous, and whose life becomes a blessing to her household. In the Gospel, Jesus enters the home of Martha and Mary, reminding us that love is not only found in service, but also in remaining close to the Lord.

We gather today to thank God for N., whose life reflected this hidden holiness of ordinary love — through countless unnoticed sacrifices, through care given day after day, through faithfulness lived quietly and steadfastly.

Yet no human love is perfect. Even the most loving hearts know moments of impatience, weakness, and failure. Therefore, trusting in the mercy of Christ who welcomes His servants into eternal peace, let us acknowledge our sins and so prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

#### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You entered the homes of Your people bringing peace and consolation: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You praised those who served with generous and faithful hearts: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You call us to sit at Your feet and listen to Your word of life: **Lord, have mercy.**

#### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the God of all compassion,  
who sees every hidden act of love  
and remembers every sacrifice made in faith,  
forgive us our sins, heal our weaknesses,  
and welcome us one day into the eternal home  
prepared for His faithful servants.

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

#### COLLECT

O God, whose love is revealed in lives of humble service  
and faithful devotion, we thank You for the gift of N.,  
who reflected Your care through the daily duties of family life,  
through kindness offered without seeking reward,  
and through steadfast love shared with others.

Grant that, comforted by the example of her faith and generosity,  
we may learn to seek what is eternal while faithfully serving one  
another on earth. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A young boy once asked his mother why she always waited awake until everyone had returned home. She answered, "Because a home does not sleep peacefully until all are safe." Years later, after her death, the family realized that her quiet waiting had been one of the deepest expressions of love they had ever known.

Today's readings speak about that kind of love — love hidden in ordinary life, love woven into everyday faithfulness.

The Book of Proverbs praises the "perfect wife." But this passage is not really about perfection in the worldly sense. It is about a woman whose love became a blessing for others. Her greatness was found not in fame or recognition, but in fidelity: hands willing to serve, words that gave wisdom, and a heart rooted in reverence for God.

The Gospel offers another image. Martha busies herself serving, while Mary sits listening at the feet of Jesus. Often these sisters are contrasted, but perhaps Jesus is teaching something deeper: true holiness requires both service and prayer, both loving action and loving presence. N.'s life reflected that balance.

There is a story of a woman who kept an old kitchen table although it was scratched and worn. Her children wanted to replace it, but she refused. "This table," she said, "held our meals, our tears, our prayers, and our reconciliations." What seemed ordinary had become sacred because love had happened there.

So much of a wife's vocation happens in hidden ways. Meals prepared without thanks. Worries carried silently. Encouragement given at the right moment. Forgiveness offered again and again. These are rarely celebrated publicly, yet before God they shine with extraordinary beauty.

And love often reveals itself most clearly in sacrifice.

A nurse once spoke of visiting elderly couples. She said she could always recognize lifelong love not by grand gestures, but by small attentions: adjusting a blanket, holding a trembling hand, remembering how the other liked tea prepared. Love becomes holy when it perseveres in ordinary things.

That is why today is not only a day of mourning. It is also a day of gratitude. We thank God for every hidden act of care that helped shape lives, sustain a family, strengthen faith, and bring warmth into a home.

But the Gospel also reminds us of something essential: amid all the responsibilities of life, the most necessary thing is to remain close to Christ. Every earthly home eventually passes away, but the Lord prepares an eternal home for those who trust in Him.

There is a final story.

After his wife died, an elderly man continued setting two cups on the breakfast table each morning. When asked why, he quietly replied, "Because love taught me that even death does not end communion." In time he placed one cup away and began carrying a rosary instead. "Now," he said, "I speak to her through God."

That is our Christian hope today. The love shared in faith is not destroyed by death. Christ, who entered the house of Martha and Mary, now welcomes N. into the eternal dwelling where every tear is wiped away and every faithful act of love is remembered forever.

And so we entrust her to the Lord, confident that the quiet love she lived on earth now finds its fulfillment in the peace of God's eternal home.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Trusting in God whose love sustains every family and whose mercy endures forever, let us place before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed sister N.

1. For the Church: that she may continue to be a home of compassion, prayer, and faithful service for all God's people, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For married couples and families: that they may grow in patience, forgiveness, and enduring love through Christ's grace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For women who quietly care for others through daily sacrifice and hidden acts of love: that God may strengthen and bless them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For all who mourn today: that the Lord may comfort them with the hope of resurrection and the promise of eternal reunion, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For N., whom we commend to God today: that Christ may welcome her into the eternal home prepared for His faithful servants, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and love,  
hear the prayers we place before You in faith.  
Strengthen us in hope, deepen us in charity,  
and lead us all one day to the eternal banquet of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that our sacrifice may express the gratitude of hearts  
made holy through lives of faithful love and service,  
and may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favour, O Lord,  
upon the gifts we offer for the salvation of Your servant N.,  
who sought to serve others with generosity and care throughout her  
life.

As these offerings are placed upon Your altar,  
may they become for us a sign of that greater love  
through which Christ prepares an eternal home for His faithful  
people. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in Your wisdom You sanctify human love  
and reveal Your presence in lives of humble fidelity and service.  
In homes shaped by patience, sacrifice, and prayer,  
You allow us to glimpse the tenderness of Your own heart.

In the life of N. You gave witness to the beauty of steadfast love  
lived each day in quiet ways.  
And in Christ Your Son, You have shown us  
that no act of charity is ever forgotten,  
for He prepares eternal joy for all who remain faithful to Him.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of Your glory, as without end we acclaim:

### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say the prayer that unites every family of faith  
and leads us toward the eternal home prepared for God's children:

### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously sustain us through the trials and sorrows of this life.  
As You strengthened Your faithful servant N.  
through years of loving care and quiet sacrifice,  
teach us also to live with patient hearts, steadfast faith,  
and hope in the eternal home You prepare for Your children.  
Graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who entered the homes of Your people with words of peace  
and strengthened hearts through Your presence,  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who nourishes His people with the bread of eternal life.  
Happy are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Love is never wasted when it is given for others.  
The hidden sacrifices, quiet prayers, patient endurance, and faithful  
care that shaped N.'s life are all known to God.  
In this Eucharist, Christ assures us that those who lived in love will  
find their home in Him forever.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God, through these sacred mysteries  
You strengthen us with the hope of eternal life. May the example of  
faithful love and generous service  
we remember today inspire us  
to seek You above all things  
and to serve one another with sincere hearts  
until we are gathered into Your heavenly home.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **FINAL BLESSING**

May God,  
who is compassionate to all His children,  
grant you comfort in your sorrow,  
peace in your hearts,  
and hope in the promise of eternal life. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace,  
trusting that the faithful love we share in Christ  
is stronger than death.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Holiness is often found not in extraordinary deeds, but in ordinary  
love lived faithfully every day.”

## **14. Father**

**Josh 24:14–18** — “As for me and my household...”

**Lk 15:11–32** — The merciful father.

**Theme:** “A Father’s Greatest Legacy: Bringing His Household Home  
to God.”

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is an old story about a father who kept a light burning on the porch every night. Even when his children had grown and moved far away, the light remained. One evening a neighbour asked, “Why do you still leave it on?” The father smiled and said, “So that whenever one of them needs to come home, they will never arrive in darkness.”

Today, in the Gospel, Jesus speaks to us about such a father — patient, merciful, waiting, forgiving, and always hoping for the return of his children. In the first reading, Joshua proclaims with courage: “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Together these readings reveal the vocation of every Christian father: to guide his family not only through life, but toward God.

We gather today to commend our departed brother to the mercy of the heavenly Father. We thank God for the ways he tried to love, protect, guide, sacrifice, forgive, and keep faith alive within his home. Like all fathers, he carried strengths and weaknesses, joys and burdens, successes and regrets.

And so, trusting in the mercy of the Father who never tires of welcoming His children home, let us acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord for pardon and peace.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You reveal the mercy of the Father to every wandering child: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You teach us to forgive as we ourselves have been forgiven: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You lead Your people home to the Father's house of eternal joy: **Lord, have mercy.**

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, heal what was wounded in us through selfishness and pride, strengthen in us the grace to love our families with patience and fidelity, and bring us one day into the joy of His eternal home, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

## COLLECT

O God, Father of mercy and source of every family's love, You teach us through Your Son that true greatness is found in compassion, forgiveness, and faithful care for one another.

As we commend our departed brother to Your loving embrace, strengthen us to continue the legacy of faith he sought to hand on to his household, that together we may one day rejoice in the eternal home You prepare for Your children.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY

A father once spent weeks teaching his young son how to ride a bicycle. The boy kept falling, growing frustrated and angry. But every evening the father returned from work, went outside, and patiently tried again. One day the child finally rode on his own. Years later, when the father had already died, the son said, "What I remember most is not learning to ride the bicycle. What I remember is that my father never gave up on me."

That is the image Jesus gives us in today's Gospel: a father who never gives up on his child.

The parable of the prodigal son is often called the story of the lost son. But perhaps it is really the story of the merciful father. While the son is still far away, the father sees him, runs toward him, embraces him, and restores his dignity. The father's heart never stopped waiting.

Every Christian father is called to reflect something of that mercy.

In the first reading Joshua declares: "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." A father's vocation is not only to provide food or security. His deeper mission is to lead his family toward God. He becomes a kind of shepherd of the home.

Many of us remember small things our fathers did that became signs of love. A father waiting late at night until everyone came home safely. A father silently repairing things no one else noticed. A father working long hours so his children could study. Sometimes fathers speak little, but love deeply.

There is another story of a father who every Sunday placed his children in the car for Mass. One day one of the children complained,

“Why do we always have to go?” The father answered simply, “Because before I can teach you how to live, I must teach you where to stand when life becomes difficult.” Years later those words remained.

No father is perfect. Some carry regrets. Some wish they had spoken more kindly, listened more patiently, or spent more time with their families. The Gospel today gives hope even there. The father in the parable teaches us that love is greater than failure, mercy stronger than weakness, and reconciliation always possible in God.

And perhaps this Gospel also speaks to us who remain behind. Sometimes families carry old wounds, distances, misunderstandings, or unspoken pain. At a funeral, God gently reminds us that life is short and love must not be delayed.

One elderly man, shortly before his death, called his children together. He said, “I do not leave you much money. But if you stay united, forgive quickly, and pray together, you will always be rich.” That may be the greatest inheritance a father can leave.

Today we entrust our departed brother to the Father whose house has many rooms. We believe that the God who watched over him throughout life now welcomes him home with mercy.

And may we who remain continue the legacy of faith, forgiveness, and love within our own homes until the day when all God’s children are gathered at His eternal table.

Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Gathered as God’s family and trusting in the mercy of our heavenly Father, let us bring before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to be a welcoming home where sinners find mercy, the grieving find hope, and families find strength in faith, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For fathers everywhere, that they may guide their families with wisdom, patience, sacrifice, and love, reflecting the compassion of God the Father, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For families divided by hurt, distance, or misunderstanding, that hearts may be softened and reconciliation may bring healing and peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For all who mourn today, especially the family and friends of our departed brother, that they may find comfort in the promise of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For our departed brother, that the Lord who welcomed the prodigal son home may receive him into the joy of the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father,  
You never cease to watch over Your children with love.  
Hear the prayers we place before You today  
and keep us faithful within Your household  
until we are gathered in Your eternal kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered with gratitude for the life of our departed brother and with trust in the Father's mercy, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts which we place upon Your altar  
as signs of our faith and hope.  
May this sacrifice bring comfort to those who mourn,  
forgiveness to the departed,  
and renewed love within our families,  
that we may faithfully serve You in our homes and in our lives.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in Your wisdom  
You entrusted to parents the care of their children,  
that through love, sacrifice, forgiveness, and faith  
the home might become a reflection of Your own divine mercy.

In the Gospel of Your Son,  
You revealed Yourself as the Father  
who never ceases to wait for His children,  
who runs to meet the sinner with compassion  
and restores the broken with tenderness and peace.

Today, as we commend our departed brother to You,  
we thank You for every act of love he shared,  
for the faith he tried to hand on,  
and for the care with which he guided his household.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
we praise You, as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With trust in the mercy of our heavenly Father, who always  
welcomes His children home with love, and following the teaching of  
Jesus, let us pray together in the words our Savior gave us:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by Your mercy,  
we may remain faithful within our families,  
quick to forgive, steadfast in love,  
and hopeful in the promise of eternal life,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You taught us through the mercy of the Father  
that reconciliation is greater than resentment  
and love stronger than division.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who welcomes His children to the eternal banquet of mercy.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The deepest desire of every loving father is that his family remain united. Today Christ reminds us that God the Father desires the same for all His children. Nourished by this Eucharist, may we carry home hearts more ready to forgive, to pray together, and to love one another with patience and faithfulness. And may our departed brother now rest forever in the Father's house.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through this holy sacrament  
You have strengthened us with the Bread of Life.  
May the mercy we have celebrated today  
bring peace to our departed brother  
and deepen within us the spirit of faith, forgiveness, and family love,  
that we may walk together toward Your eternal kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
May He strengthen your families in faith and love.  
May He heal every wound, deepen every bond of peace,  
and bring your departed brother into the joy of His eternal home.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, trusting in the mercy of the Father, and continue to build your homes upon faith, forgiveness, and love.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

The greatest inheritance a father leaves behind is not what he placed into his children's hands, but what he planted in their hearts: faith, forgiveness, and the way home to God.

## 15. Mother

**Is 66:10–14** — “As a mother comforts her child...”

**Jn 19:25–27** — Mary at the Cross.

**Theme: “A Mother’s Love Never Leaves Us.”**

*In Mary standing faithfully beneath the Cross and in God’s promise, “As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you,” we celebrate the enduring love of a mother—a love that reflects God’s own tenderness, sacrifice, and faithful presence even in suffering and death.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is an old story about a soldier who returned home after many years away. His mother had become frail and forgetful, and many warned him that she might no longer recognize him. When he entered the house, she looked at him quietly for a long moment. Then she touched his face and whispered, “A mother’s heart remembers what time cannot erase.”

Today, we gather with that same confidence in love that does not forget. We come to commend our sister to the Lord, giving thanks for the tenderness, sacrifices, strength, and quiet faithfulness through which she reflected something of God’s own care. The readings chosen today remind us that maternal love is among the clearest signs of God’s compassion in this world.

At the foot of the Cross, Mary remained beside her Son in His suffering. She could not remove His pain, yet she stayed. In the same way, the love of a mother often reveals itself not only in joyful

moments, but in steadfast presence during hardship, sacrifice, worry, and prayer. Such love leaves a lasting imprint upon the hearts of children and families.

As we now place our grief, gratitude, and hope before the Lord, we also recognize our need for His mercy. Trusting in the compassion of Christ, who comforts His people as a mother comforts her child, let us prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries and ask pardon for our sins.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You knew the tender love of Mary Your mother and revealed the compassion of the Father to the world:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You stood beside those who mourn and promised comfort to the sorrowful: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You opened the gates of eternal life to all who trust in You: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
whose love is more tender than that of any earthly mother,  
welcome our departed sister into the peace of His kingdom,  
comfort all who mourn with the hope of the Resurrection,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

## COLLECT

O God,  
source of all tenderness and consolation,  
who gave us in the Blessed Virgin Mary  
a faithful mother standing beside the Cross of Your Son,  
mercifully receive our prayers for Your servant N.

Grant that, having shared in the love, sacrifice, and care  
that reflect Your own compassion,  
she may now rejoice forever in the comfort of Your presence.

Strengthen all who grieve today with the assurance  
that love given in You is never lost,  
and bring us one day to the joy of Your eternal home.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## HOMILY

A teacher once asked her students to write about the strongest force in the world. Some wrote about storms, others about fire, armies, or great inventions. One child simply wrote: “My mother’s love. Because even when I fail, it never gives up on me.”

That simple answer brings us close to the heart of today’s readings. We gather today not only to mourn a death, but also to remember a love—a love that shaped lives quietly, patiently, and faithfully over many years.

In the first reading, God says through the prophet Isaiah: “As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.” Among all the images God could have chosen, He chose the love of a mother to describe His own tenderness. Why? Because a mother’s love is often our first experience of being welcomed, protected, forgiven, and encouraged.

Many of us know this from experience. A mother wakes in the night when everyone else sleeps. She worries silently. She sacrifices unnoticed things. Someone once said that mothers “carry their children twice”: first in their wombs, and then forever in their hearts.

There is a story of a little boy who broke an expensive vase at home. Frightened, he ran outside and hid. After searching everywhere, his mother finally found him sitting behind the garage in tears. Before asking about the vase, she embraced him and said, “I was worried about you.” Years later, that man said he learned more about God from that moment than from many sermons—because he discovered that love seeks the person before judging the mistake.

That is what we see in Mary at the foot of the Cross. The Gospel does not show Mary speaking many words. She simply remains there. Faithful. Present. Loving. Sometimes the greatest love says little but stays near.

Many mothers live that same quiet Gospel every day. They stand beside their families during illness, disappointment, financial struggles, misunderstandings, and sorrow. Often their sacrifices are hidden. Yet those sacrifices become part of the strength and unity of a family.

There is another story about an elderly woman in a nursing home. Her memory had faded badly, and she no longer recognized most people. But every evening she folded a small towel neatly beside her bed. A nurse finally asked why she did it. The woman replied softly, "In case my children need me." Even when memory weakens, love still remembers how to give itself away.

Today we entrust N. to the Lord with gratitude for the love she shared. No mother is perfect. Every human life has weaknesses and unfinished moments. That is why we pray for the mercy of God. But we also believe that every act of genuine love reflects something eternal, because "God is love."

And finally, we look again to Mary beneath the Cross. On that dark afternoon, it may have seemed that death had the final word. But Easter would come. Love would rise again. The bond between Christ and those He loves would not be broken.

A young woman once visited her dying mother and asked through tears, "What will I do when you are gone?" Her mother answered gently, "Whenever you choose kindness, whenever you pray, whenever you love courageously, part of me will still be with you."

That is our Christian hope today. Love rooted in God does not disappear. It is transformed, purified, and brought to fulfillment in eternal life. And so we commend our sister to the Lord who comforts His children and whose love never ends.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Gathered in faith and trusting in the Lord whose compassion is like that of a loving mother, let us bring before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed sister.

1. For the Church, that she may reveal to the world the tenderness, mercy, and faithful presence of Christ to all who suffer or mourn, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For mothers everywhere, especially those who sacrifice quietly for their families, that God may strengthen and bless them in their vocation of love, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For all who grieve the loss of loved ones, that they may find comfort in the promise of the Resurrection and in the support of family and friends, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For our departed sister N., that the Lord who sees every hidden act of love and sacrifice may welcome her into eternal peace and joy, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For all of us gathered here, that we may cherish one another more deeply, live with compassion, and remain faithful in hope until we are reunited in God's kingdom, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of tenderness and mercy,  
You know the sorrow of our hearts and the gratitude we carry today.  
Hear the prayers we place before You  
and strengthen us with the hope of eternal life.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that the love and sacrifice symbolized in these gifts,  
and the prayers we offer for our departed sister,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Look mercifully, O Lord,  
upon the gifts we place upon Your altar  
for the salvation of Your servant N.  
As You sustained her through the love of family  
and the quiet sacrifices of daily life,  
grant that these sacred mysteries  
may bring her into the fullness of eternal joy and peace.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

In the love of devoted mothers  
You reveal a reflection of Your own compassion.  
You strengthen families through sacrifice, patience, and faithful care,  
and in moments of sorrow  
You draw near to Your children with tenderness and mercy.

In the Blessed Virgin Mary standing beneath the Cross,  
You show us a love that remains faithful even in suffering,  
a love fulfilled in the victory of the Resurrection.  
For death is not the end for those who belong to Christ,  
but the doorway to eternal life.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of Your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With gratitude for the love that nurtured, protected, and guided us,  
and trusting in God whose care is more tender  
than that of any earthly mother,  
let us pray with confidence to the Father  
in the words our Savior gave us:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and gently sustain all who mourn with the comfort of Your love.  
As You welcomed Mary beside the Cross of Your Son,  
remain close to all who grieve today  
and strengthen us in faith and hope,  
that we may live in peace and charity  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You consoled the sorrowful  
and remained faithful in love even unto death;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who carries our sorrows and leads His people into eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Love leaves traces behind.

A mother's care continues in remembered words, quiet sacrifices,  
faithful prayers, and lessons of kindness that remain long after her  
voice is silent.

Today Christ reminds us that every act of love offered in faith is  
gathered into eternity. In Him, nothing beautiful is lost. And so we  
entrust our sister to the Lord who comforts His children and promises  
everlasting life.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God, through these sacred mysteries  
You have strengthened us with the Bread of Life  
and renewed our hope in the Resurrection.

Receive Your servant N. into the company of the saints,  
where every tear is wiped away  
and love finds its eternal fulfillment in You.

Comfort all who mourn today and help us to live with the same  
faithful and generous love that we remember with gratitude.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May God, whose compassion is greater than every sorrow,  
comfort you in your grief

and strengthen you with the hope of eternal life. **Amen.**

May Christ, who entrusted His beloved disciple to the care of His  
mother, keep you united in love and peace. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit help you carry forward the gifts of faith, kindness,  
and devotion that you have received through the life of N. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,

the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**DISMISSAL** Go in peace, comforted by the love of God,  
strengthened by the hope of the Resurrection,  
and inspired to share with others the faithful love we remember  
today.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“A mother's love teaches us something about God: true love stays,  
sacrifices, forgives, and never lets go.”

## 16. Grandparent

**Sir 44:1,10–15** — “Let us praise illustrious men.”

**Mt 5:1–12** — The Beatitudes.

**Theme:** “Blessed Are Those Who Leave a Legacy of Faith, Kindness, and Wisdom.”

### INTRODUCTION

Many of us can remember a grandparent’s hands: hands worn by years of work, sacrifice, prayer, and care. A grandfather teaching patience while fixing something broken, or a grandmother quietly praying the rosary in the corner of the house. Often, grandparents pass on more than stories or traditions—they pass on faith, values, and the quiet wisdom that steadies a family through life’s storms.

The Book of Sirach tells us to praise those whose goodness continues even after death. Their memory remains alive because their lives became a blessing to others. Grandparents often shape generations not through great speeches, but through daily fidelity: meals prepared, tears comforted, lessons repeated, prayers whispered, and love given freely.

In the Gospel, Jesus proclaims the Beatitudes: blessed are the poor in spirit, the merciful, the peacemakers, the pure of heart. These blessings are not only ideals; they are often the hidden story of faithful grandparents whose lives reflected humility, gentleness, endurance, and trust in God.

As we gather to commend our beloved departed to the mercy of God, we also recognize our own need for that same mercy. Let us now call to mind our sins and ask the Lord to make us worthy of the promises spoken in the Beatitudes.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you blessed the humble and promised them the Kingdom of heaven: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you taught us to be merciful as the Father is merciful: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you comfort those who mourn and lead the faithful into eternal life: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and welcome our departed loved one into the eternal joy prepared for the blessed, where every tear is wiped away and the faithful rejoice forever in his kingdom. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God,  
source of every blessing and giver of enduring love,  
you graced your servant with the wisdom, patience, and faithfulness  
that strengthened family and friends throughout the years.  
As we honour a life that reflected the Beatitudes of your Son,  
grant that we may continue the legacy of kindness, mercy, and trust  
in you that was planted in our hearts.

Receive your servant into the company of the saints  
and comfort all who mourn with the hope of the Resurrection.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## HOMILY

A young boy once asked his grandfather, “Grandpa, how do you become wise?”

The grandfather smiled and answered, “By listening more than speaking, by loving more than judging, and by praying even when life becomes difficult.”

Years later, after the grandfather had died, the grandson realized that the greatest lessons had not come from words alone, but from the way his grandfather lived: patient with weakness, generous with time, faithful in prayer, and steady through hardship. Wisdom had been taught not from a classroom, but from a life.

That is the kind of wisdom we hear about today in the Book of Sirach:

“Let us now praise illustrious men.” Not because they were famous, powerful, or wealthy, but because goodness lived through them and continued after them. Their righteousness has not been forgotten.

Grandparents often become the quiet pillars of a family. They preserve stories, traditions, and faith. They teach us how to endure sorrow without bitterness and how to rejoice in simple blessings. Sometimes their greatest sermons were never preached aloud.

A grandmother may have taught prayer simply by kneeling beside the bed each evening. A grandfather may have taught integrity simply by working honestly every day without complaint. These ordinary acts become extraordinary because they shape hearts across generations.

There is a story of a grandmother who kept a small candle burning near a statue of the Blessed Mother every night. Her grandchildren once asked why she did this. She answered, “So that even while the

house sleeps, someone is still praying.” After she died, one of the grandchildren began doing the same thing in his own home. Faith had quietly passed from one generation to another.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus gives us the Beatitudes. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are those who hunger for righteousness. When we hear these words at a funeral, we realize they are not merely ideals for saints in stained-glass windows. They describe the hidden holiness found in ordinary lives faithfully lived.

Many grandparents know what it means to mourn, to sacrifice, to persevere, and to remain gentle despite hardship. They have carried burdens quietly for the sake of their families. In doing so, they often lived the Beatitudes more deeply than they themselves realized.

There is another story of an elderly grandfather who had grown weak and forgetful. One evening his grandson noticed him struggling to finish a simple prayer before dinner. The words came slowly. Afterward the boy asked, “Grandpa, why do you still pray if it’s so hard to remember?” The old man replied, “Because even when my memory weakens, God remembers me.” That is faith refined by time.

Today we mourn because love always grieves when separated from someone dear. Yet our sorrow is joined to hope. Jesus promises that those who mourn shall be comforted, and those who are faithful shall see God.

The Beatitudes are not only words for the living; they are promises fulfilled in eternity. We entrust our beloved departed into the hands of the God who sees every hidden act of kindness, every sacrifice unnoticed by the world, every prayer whispered in silence.

A teacher once asked a class to write what they wanted written on their gravestone. Most children wrote about achievements or success. One child simply wrote: "He made people feel loved." Perhaps that is the truest measure of a life. And perhaps that is why grandparents are remembered so deeply—not because they were perfect, but because through them, people felt safe, welcomed, forgiven, and loved.

As we commend our beloved departed to God today, may we also carry forward the inheritance left behind: faith that prays, love that serves, mercy that forgives, and hope that trusts in God even at life's final moment.

And may the Lord who called the blessed home now say to our departed loved one:  
"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

### **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

Gathered in faith and trusting in the promises of Christ, who blesses those who live with mercy and humility, let us bring our prayers before the Lord.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to proclaim the Beatitudes and guide families in faith, hope, and charity, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all grandparents and elderly people, that their wisdom, sacrifices, and quiet witness may always be cherished and respected, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families who mourn today, that Christ may comfort them with the hope of the Resurrection and strengthen them in their grief, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For our departed loved one, that every act of kindness, faith, and love may now be rewarded in the eternal peace of God's kingdom, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that we may continue the legacy of faith and mercy handed down to us and one day rejoice with all the saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and God of all consolation, hear the prayers we offer with confidence and hope. Grant eternal rest to your servant and strengthen us to walk faithfully in the path of your Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered in gratitude for a life marked by faith, kindness, and loving service, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these offerings we place upon your altar  
as we remember your servant whose life reflected the quiet  
blessings of the Gospel.  
May this sacrifice bring comfort to those who mourn  
and lead our departed loved one into the eternal joy promised to the  
faithful.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the lives of those who trust in you,  
you reveal the beauty of humble and faithful love.  
Through years of sacrifice, patience, mercy, and prayer,  
you allow the light of Christ to shine quietly within families and homes.

In the Beatitudes proclaimed by your Son,  
we recognize the hidden holiness of lives lived in compassion and fidelity.

You promise comfort to those who mourn,  
mercy to the merciful,  
and eternal joy to the pure of heart.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
and with all our departed loved ones who now rest in your peace,  
we proclaim your glory, as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

With gratitude for the faith, love, and wisdom handed on to us through the life of our departed loved one, and trusting in the promises of Christ who calls the merciful and faithful blessed, let us pray together as one family in the words our Savior gave us:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by the example of faithful lives lived in mercy and love, we may remain steadfast in hope as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you called the merciful, the peacemakers, and the pure of heart blessed.

Look not on our sins, but on the faith and love of your people,  
and graciously grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom,  
where our departed loved one now hopes to dwell with you forever.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb,  
and blessed are those who trust in the promises of Christ.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The lives of grandparents often resemble gentle lamps burning quietly in a home. Their love may seem ordinary while they are with us, yet after they are gone, we realize how much light they gave. Today we thank God for that light—a light of faith, kindness, patience, and prayer. May we carry that light forward in our own lives until the day we are reunited in the kingdom of heaven.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
you have strengthened us with the Bread of Life  
and renewed us in the hope of the Resurrection.  
May the example of faithful love and enduring trust  
left to us by your servant  
continue to inspire us in lives of mercy and peace.  
Grant eternal rest to the departed  
and bring us one day together  
into the joy of your heavenly kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May he comfort you in your sorrow and strengthen you in hope.  
May he help you cherish the legacy of faith and love entrusted to you  
through the life of your departed loved one.  
And may Almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, carrying with you the wisdom, faith, and kindness  
you have received, and let your lives become a blessing to others.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“The greatest inheritance grandparents leave behind is not found in  
possessions, but in the faith, love, and mercy they plant in the hearts  
of those who follow after them.”

## 17. Son or Daughter

**Lam 3:17–26** — “My hope is in the Lord.”

**Lk 7:11–17** — Raising of the widow’s son.

**Theme:** “Held in God’s Compassion: Hope That Does Not Die”

*The readings today lead us into the mystery of grief that comes when a parent must entrust a son or daughter back to God. In the Gospel, Jesus meets a grieving mother at the gates of Nain and is moved with deep compassion. In Lamentations, amid sorrow and desolation, the believer still proclaims: “My hope is in the Lord.” Together these readings remind us that even in unbearable loss, God does not abandon his people. Christ walks toward those who mourn and speaks words of life and hope into human sorrow.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a mother who kept the bedroom light of her son on every evening after his passing. When someone asked her why, she answered quietly, “Because love does not know how to stop waiting.” Her words reveal something deeply human: when we lose a son or daughter, the heart continues to love, continues to hope, continues to long.

The Gospel today brings us to another grieving mother. At the gates of Nain, a funeral procession is interrupted by Jesus himself. Before anyone speaks, Jesus sees the sorrow of the widow and is moved with compassion. The Lord does not stand far from human pain; he walks directly into it.

The reading from Lamentations gives voice to the struggle of grief: confusion, emptiness, and sorrow. Yet from within that darkness comes a fragile but courageous prayer: “My hope is in the Lord.”

Christian hope is not denial of pain. It is trust that God's love is stronger than death.

As we gather to commend N. to the mercy of God, we also bring before the Lord our own wounds, regrets, and unanswered questions. Trusting in Christ who is compassionate toward all who mourn, let us ask for pardon and peace.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you drew near to those who wept and carried their burdens: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you are the hope that shines in the darkness of grief: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you promise eternal life to all who trust in you: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May Almighty God, who is near to the broken-hearted and gentle toward all who mourn, forgive us our sins, comfort us in our sorrow, strengthen us with the hope of eternal joy, and bring us to everlasting life.

### **COLLECT**

O God, whose Son showed compassion to the grieving and brought hope to those overwhelmed by sorrow, look with kindness upon your servants gathered here today. Comfort all who mourn the loss of N., strengthen their faith in the resurrection, and teach us to place our hope in you even in the darkest moments of life.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **HOMILY**

A father once shared that after the death of his daughter, he found himself every morning standing outside her room before going to work. The room was quiet, unchanged, untouched. One morning he realized that what he missed most was not simply her presence, but the future he had imagined with her — conversations not yet had, milestones not yet reached, years not yet lived.

That is one of the deepest pains when a son or daughter dies. Parents do not only grieve memories; they grieve hopes, dreams, and futures. It feels unnatural, deeply out of order. And that is why the Gospel today touches us so profoundly.

Jesus encounters a funeral procession leaving the town of Nain. At its center is a widow burying her only son. In the ancient world, this loss was devastating emotionally, socially, and materially. Yet before anyone asks for help, before any prayer is spoken, the Gospel says simply: "When the Lord saw her, he was moved with pity."

That line matters. Jesus sees. Christ notices grief. God is not indifferent to human sorrow.

There is another story of a young boy who once asked his grandmother after a funeral, "If God loves us, why do people die?" The grandmother answered gently, "Because this world was never meant to be our final home." Christian faith never pretends death is easy. Even Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. But faith tells us that death does not have the final word.

The reading from Lamentations speaks from the middle of suffering. "My soul is deprived of peace," the writer says. Those words are honest. Grief can unsettle everything — sleep, appetite, prayer, even faith itself. Yet somehow, from within the darkness comes another

voice: “But I will call this to mind, and therefore I will hope... The Lord is good to those who trust in him.” Hope in Scripture is not optimism that everything will quickly feel better. Hope is choosing to believe that God remains faithful even when life feels shattered.

A mother once carried in her wallet a small note written by her son before he died. On it were the words: “Don’t worry too much about me. God has me.” She said she read those words every day because they reminded her that her child belonged to God before he ever belonged to her.

That is part of the difficult surrender of today’s farewell. Love wants to hold on. Yet faith teaches us to place our loved ones into hands greater than our own — the hands of Christ.

And notice what Jesus says to the grieving mother: “Do not weep.” These are not words of dismissal. They are words of promise. Christ speaks them because he intends to bring life where death seems victorious.

Today we entrust N. to that same compassionate Lord. We pray not because we fully understand death, but because we trust the One who conquered it.

There is a final story of a little girl who, after losing her older brother, asked her father, “Will we know him again in heaven?” The father answered, “Yes — and when we do, we will understand that love was never lost, only changed.”

That is our Christian hope today. Love does not end at the grave. In Christ, love is transformed, fulfilled, and carried into eternity. And so even through tears, we dare to say with faith: “My hope is in the Lord.”

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Trusting in the compassion of Christ, who comforts all who mourn and promises eternal life to those who believe, let us place our prayers before the Father.

1. For the Church throughout the world: that she may continue to bring hope, consolation, and the promise of resurrection to all who grieve. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For parents and families mourning the loss of a son or daughter: that God may strengthen them with peace and surround them with loving support. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For those whose grief has led them to loneliness, anger, or despair: that Christ may walk beside them and renew their hope. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For N., whom we commend to God today: that the Lord who showed compassion at Nain may welcome N. into the fullness of eternal life. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here: that our faith in the resurrection may deepen and help us live each day with trust in God’s mercy. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy, you know the sorrow we carry and the hope we seek. Hear the prayers we offer with confidence and faith, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered in love and faith as we entrust N. to the compassionate mercy of God and place our hope in the resurrection of Christ, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive the gifts we place upon your altar  
as we entrust N. to your loving mercy.  
May this sacrifice strengthen our hope,  
heal hearts wounded by grief,  
and remind us that your Son has conquered death forever.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your compassion  
you sent your Son into our world of sorrow and death.  
He stood beside those who mourned,  
comforted the broken-hearted,  
and revealed the promise of life that never ends.

At Nain he restored a grieving mother's hope,  
and by his own Death and Resurrection  
he opened for us the gates of eternal life.  
Though grief weighs heavily upon us today,  
faith assures us that those who die in Christ  
are never lost to your love.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

Trusting in the compassion of God  
who hears the cries of grieving hearts  
and gives hope that does not die,  
let us pray with confidence to the Father  
in the words our Savior gave us.

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
as we carry the sorrow of loss  
and place our hope in your unfailing mercy.  
Strengthen us with the promise of resurrection  
and keep us faithful in times of grief and uncertainty,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you comforted the grieving  
and brought hope to those overcome by sorrow;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who carries our sorrows and leads us into eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Love continues even through death.  
The Lord who saw the tears of the widow at Nain  
also sees the sorrow in our hearts today.  
In this Eucharist, Christ reminds us  
that death is not the end of the story.  
Those who are united with him in faith  
are held forever in the embrace of God.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through this holy sacrament  
you have strengthened us with the Bread of Life  
and renewed our hope in the resurrection.  
Comfort all who mourn N., give peace to troubled hearts,  
and help us to trust always in your compassionate and eternal love.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you in hope. Amen.

May Christ, who wept with those who mourn  
and rose victorious over death,  
grant peace to your hearts. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit remain with you always  
and sustain you in faith, love, and hope. Amen.

And may Almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace,  
trusting that the Lord walks beside those who mourn  
and that his love is stronger than death.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Grief speaks of love that still remains.  
And where love remains, God is near.  
Even in sorrow, we can say with faith:  
‘My hope is in the Lord.’”

## 18. Only Child

**Rom 14:7–9** — “Whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.”

**Mk 5:21–24,35–43** — Jairus’ daughter.

**Theme:** “Held Forever in the Hands of the Lord”

*In life and in death, we belong to Christ, who gently calls His children to rise into eternal life.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is an old story about a widowed mother whose only child moved overseas for work. Every evening she would sit by the window waiting for his phone call. Sometimes the call lasted only a few minutes, but after hanging up she would smile and say, “As long as I hear his voice, I know I am not alone.” Love has a way of holding people together even when distance, silence, or death seem to separate them.

Today we gather with hearts touched by grief as we commend our beloved departed to the Lord. The pain of losing an only child carries a unique weight. Dreams, memories, laughter, and hopes seem gathered into one precious life. Yet the Gospel reminds us that Jesus Himself stood beside grieving parents and spoke words stronger than despair: “Do not be afraid; only have faith.”

Saint Paul tells us in the Letter to the Romans that whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Death does not erase belonging. Christ does not abandon those whom He loves. Just as Jesus took Jairus’ daughter by the hand and raised her, so we trust that He now holds our loved one in His eternal embrace.

As we begin these sacred mysteries, we also recognize the moments when fear overcame faith, when sorrow closed our hearts,

and when we failed to trust fully in God’s promises. Let us therefore ask the Lord for mercy and peace.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You stood beside grieving families and brought them hope: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You said, “Do not be afraid; only have faith”:  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You are the Resurrection and the Life for all who belong to You: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, comfort us in every sorrow, strengthen our faith in the resurrection of His Son, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God,  
whose Son took the hand of Jairus’ daughter  
and restored her to life,  
look with compassion upon Your people gathered in sorrow today.  
Strengthen us with the assurance  
that whether we live or die, we belong to You,  
and grant that our departed loved one  
may be welcomed into the joy of Your eternal kingdom.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## HOMILY

A teacher once noticed that a small boy in school always carried a faded photograph in his pocket. One day she asked him about it. The boy smiled and said, "It's my mom and dad. When I miss them, I hold the picture and remember I'm loved." The photograph did not remove his loneliness, but it reminded him that love remained real even when he could not see the people he loved.

That is what faith does for us today. We come carrying memories, tears, questions, and love. We gather around the Word of God because we need to remember that we are not abandoned. The Gospel presents us with Jairus, a father desperate to save his only daughter. He pushes through the crowd, falls at Jesus' feet, and begs for help. Every parent who has feared losing a child understands that moment.

But before Jesus reaches the house, the terrible news arrives: "Your daughter has died." Those words must have shattered Jairus' heart. Yet Jesus responds with one sentence: "Do not be afraid; only have faith." Faith does not deny grief. Even Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. Faith simply means believing that death is not the final word.

There is another story of a candlelight vigil after a tragic loss. One small child looked at all the candles and asked, "Why are they lighting them?" Her grandmother replied, "Because when it gets very dark, we remind one another that light still exists." That is what this funeral Mass is. We light the candle of faith in the darkness of loss.

Saint Paul reminds us: "Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." Notice he does not say we belong to death, or to sorrow, or to

silence. We belong to Christ. Our lives begin in Him, are sustained by Him, and are completed in Him.

Sometimes when an only child dies, parents and families feel as though a whole future has been buried. A room becomes quiet. A chair remains empty. Birthdays feel different. Yet love never truly disappears. Love changes form, but it remains alive in memory, gratitude, and hope.

A man once planted a tree in memory of his daughter. Years later he said, "When I sit beneath its shade, I realize her life still shelters me." Christian hope teaches us something similar. The lives of those we love continue to bless us because God wastes nothing that is given in love.

And finally, we return to the touching moment in the Gospel when Jesus takes the girl by the hand and says, "Little girl, arise." The hand of Jesus is stronger than death itself. Today we entrust our beloved departed into those same wounded and risen hands.

There is an old tradition in some families that when a child falls asleep during a journey, the parent gently carries the child from the car into the house without waking them. The child rests securely because someone stronger is carrying them home. Perhaps that is the closest image we have for Christian death. We do not walk into eternity alone. Christ carries His children home.

And so today, even through tears, we dare to believe the promise of the Gospel: whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

## Prayers of the Faithful

Trusting in Jesus Christ, who conquered death and calls His children to eternal life, let us bring our prayers before the Father.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to proclaim hope and comfort to all who mourn, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all parents grieving the loss of a child, that Christ may strengthen them with His compassion and surround them with loving support, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For our departed loved one, that the Lord who said, "Little girl, arise," may welcome them into the joy and peace of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all gathered here in sorrow today, that faith may overcome fear and that hope may sustain us in days ahead, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For those who feel alone, forgotten, or burdened by grief, that they may discover the healing presence of Christ walking beside them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and compassion, hear the prayers we place before You in faith. Comfort us with the promise that all who belong to Christ will share in His resurrection. Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, and the love with which we place them before the Lord, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive these offerings offered in faith and love  
as we commend our departed loved one into Your care.  
May this sacrifice strengthen our trust  
that those who belong to Christ are never lost to Your mercy  
but are raised to new life in Him. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in Your great love  
You sent Your Son into our world of sorrow and death  
to bring hope to those who mourn and life to those who believe.

In the Gospel, Your Son took the hand of a grieving child  
and called her to rise again,  
revealing that Your love is stronger than death itself.  
And so today, even in sadness,  
we trust that all who belong to Christ  
are safely held in Your eternal embrace.

Through Him the hope of resurrection shines upon us,  
and the promise of eternal life comforts our hearts.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of Your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With hearts grieving yet trusting in the love of the Father who never abandons His children, and remembering that whether we live or die we belong to the Lord, let us pray with confidence in the words Jesus Himself taught us:

### EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by the hope of the resurrection  
and trusting that those who belong to Christ are never abandoned,  
we may be kept free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

### PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You said to Your disciples:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.  
In the midst of sorrow and unanswered questions,  
look kindly upon the faith of Your Church.  
As You once brought comfort to Jairus and his family,  
bring peace now to all who mourn  
and strengthen us with the hope of the resurrection.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold Him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Love does not end at the grave.  
The Lord who once took a child by the hand  
still gathers His children into eternal life.  
May the Eucharist we have shared today  
strengthen our hearts with hope,  
until the day when every tear is wiped away  
and we are reunited in the joy of God's kingdom.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
You have strengthened us with the Bread of Life.  
In our grief, remind us again  
that whether we live or die, we belong to You.  
May the hope we have celebrated today  
bring comfort to our hearts and lead us one day  
to the fullness of eternal joy. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation comfort you in your sorrow and  
strengthen your faith. **Amen.**

May Christ, who conquered death and opened the gates of eternal  
life, bring peace to your hearts. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit remain with you always and guide you in hope  
and love. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trusting that the Lord holds His children forever in His loving hands.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Faith does not erase grief, but it reminds us that those who belong to Christ are never lost.”

## 19. Priest / Religious

**2 Tim 2:8–13** — “If we die with him, we shall live with him.”

**Jn 21:15–19** — “Feed my sheep.”

**Theme:** “Feed My Sheep: A Life Poured Out in Faithful Service.”

*Through the image of the Good Shepherd entrusted to Peter, today’s liturgy remembers a priest/religious who sought to serve Christ by caring for God’s people. The readings remind us that ministry is not merely work, but a sharing in the dying and rising of Christ: “If we die with him, we shall also live with him.” Even in weakness and suffering, the servant of God remains held by the faithfulness of the Lord.*

## INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, an elderly priest was asked what kept him faithful through decades of ministry. He smiled and said, “Every morning I remembered that the people did not belong to me—they belonged to Christ. I was only asked to love them for Him.” That simple conviction became the quiet strength of his life.

Today we gather with gratitude for the life of our departed brother/sister who answered the Lord’s call with generosity. Through years of prayer, service, sacrifice, and hidden acts of kindness, he/she tried to become a shepherd after the heart of Christ. Like Peter in today’s Gospel, he/she heard the Lord ask again and again: “Do you love me?” And in countless ways, he/she answered: “Lord, you know that I love you.”

The Christian life, especially the life of a priest or religious, is not free from trials, disappointments, and moments of weariness. Yet Saint Paul reminds us today that “if we die with Christ, we shall also live

with him.” God remains faithful even when human strength grows weak.

As we begin these sacred mysteries, let us acknowledge our sins and ask the Lord for mercy, trusting that the Good Shepherd never abandons His flock.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you called your servants to follow you in humble love:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you strengthened your servants to feed your flock with compassion and faithfulness: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you remain faithful to those who trust in you and lead them into eternal life: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, strengthen us to serve Him with faithful hearts, and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God, shepherd and guide of your people,  
you called your servant to follow Christ  
through a life of prayer, ministry, and loving service.  
Grant that, having shared in the labours of the Gospel,  
he/she may now share in the joy of your eternal kingdom.  
Strengthen us also in faithfulness,  
that we may serve one another with generous hearts  
until the day you call us home to yourself.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

A young seminarian once visited an old missionary priest who had spent nearly fifty years serving remote villages. The seminarian expected stories of miracles and achievements. Instead, the old priest showed him a worn-out pair of sandals and said, “These are the real story. They remind me where love carried me.”

That image says something beautiful about Christian ministry. The greatest servants of God are often not remembered for extraordinary moments, but for ordinary faithfulness—day after day, person after person, prayer after prayer.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus asks Peter three times: “Do you love me?” Notice that Jesus does not first ask Peter whether he is strong, intelligent, successful, or perfect. He asks only one thing: love. And each time Peter answers, Jesus gives him a mission: “Feed my sheep.”

That is the heart of every priestly and religious vocation. Ministry begins not with power, but with love for Christ. A priest or religious person spends a lifetime trying to reflect the compassion of the Good Shepherd—sometimes through preaching, sometimes through listening, sometimes simply by being present beside people in their joys and sorrows.

I remember hearing about a religious sister who worked in a hospital for decades. One evening, a dying patient held her hand and whispered, “I was never afraid when you entered the room.” That

may seem small, but in the eyes of God it is enormous. To bring peace, comfort, and hope to another soul is holy work.

Saint Paul today speaks words that carry great hope: “If we die with him, we shall live with him.” Christian ministry is not only about giving life; it is also about surrendering life. Priests and religious carry hidden sacrifices that many never see: loneliness, exhaustion, misunderstandings, and moments of deep interior struggle. Yet through all this, Christ remains faithful.

There is another story of a parish priest who was once asked what he feared most about death. He answered, “That I might arrive before God with empty hands.” But after a pause he smiled and added, “Then I remembered that the Lord never asked for full hands—only a faithful heart.”

That is the consolation we hold onto today. God does not measure life as the world does. He sees every hidden prayer, every quiet sacrifice, every journey made for the sake of another, every Mass celebrated, every word of encouragement offered to someone burdened by life.

And perhaps today’s Gospel also speaks to all of us. Jesus still asks each disciple: “Do you love me?” The answer is not proven by words alone, but by how we care for others, forgive others, and remain faithful even when life becomes difficult.

A few days before he died, a retired priest reportedly told a friend, “All these years I tried to lead people to Christ. Now Christ is leading me.” What a beautiful way to understand death—not as abandonment, but as being led home by the Shepherd whom one served throughout life.

Today we commend our departed brother/sister into the hands of that Good Shepherd. We thank God for the ways Christ loved His people through him/her. And we pray that the Lord who once called him/her to serve His flock will now welcome him/her into the eternal joy prepared for faithful servants. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Trusting in Christ the Good Shepherd, who remains faithful to His people in life and in death, let us bring our prayers before the Father.

1. For the Church, that priests, religious, and all ministers of the Gospel may serve God’s people with faithful and compassionate hearts, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For our departed brother/sister, that the Lord whom he/she served throughout life may now welcome him/her into the joy of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For those who are weary in ministry, lonely in service, or struggling in faith, that Christ the Good Shepherd may strengthen and console them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For all gathered here in grief, that the witness of faithful service may inspire us to live lives of deeper love, generosity, and trust in God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For all the faithful departed, especially priests and religious who have dedicated their lives to the Gospel, that they may rest in the peace of Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy,  
you never abandon those who trust in you.  
Hear the prayers we place before you today  
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that these gifts, together with the life and service  
our departed brother/sister offered to Christ and His people,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts offered in faith and gratitude  
for your servant who dedicated his/her life to your people.  
As Christ the Good Shepherd gave himself for the flock,  
may these sacred mysteries strengthen our hope  
in the promise of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your wisdom and love  
you call men and women to follow your Son  
through lives of prayer, service, and sacrifice.  
You sustain them in moments of weakness,  
strengthen them in fidelity,  
and make them signs of your compassion among your people.

In Christ the Good Shepherd,  
we see the fullness of love poured out for the flock.  
And in the faithful witness of your servant,  
you have given us a reminder

that lives offered in humble service  
are never forgotten in your sight.

Even in death, your faithful ones are not abandoned,  
for your Son has conquered the grave  
and opened for us the path to eternal life.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

Gathered as one flock under Christ the Good Shepherd,  
and trusting in the Father whose love remains faithful through life  
and death, we dare to pray:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and shepherd us safely through the trials of this life.  
Strengthen us to follow your Son with faithful hearts,  
serving one another in love and perseverance,  
until the day when you lead us  
to the fullness of eternal life and peace.

As we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of your people,  
you never cease to guide and strengthen your flock.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The life of a priest or religious is often woven from quiet acts unseen  
by the world: prayers whispered in silence, burdens carried for  
others, and love given without seeking reward. Today we entrust all  
those hidden offerings to God. The Good Shepherd who called His  
servant to feed His flock now leads him/her beside still waters and  
into everlasting peace.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through these holy mysteries  
you have nourished us with the Bread of Life.  
Grant that the example of faithful service we remember today  
may deepen our love for you and for one another.  
May your servant,  
who shared in the mission of Christ on earth,  
now rejoice forever in the banquet of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May He strengthen you to walk faithfully in His ways  
and fill your hearts with the hope of eternal life.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by lives of faithful love and service.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

The measure of a faithful life is not greatness in the eyes of the  
world, but love offered day after day in the service of Christ and His  
people.

## 20. Parish Volunteer / Catechist / Parish Council Member etc.

**1 Cor 15:51–57** — “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

**Mt 5:13–16** — Salt of the earth.

**Theme:** “A Quiet Light That Still Shines.”

*In the Gospel, Jesus calls his disciples the salt of the earth and the light of the world — people whose goodness quietly preserves hope and whose faith helps others find their way. Today we remember one who served the parish community not from the spotlight, but through faithful and humble dedication. St. Paul reminds us that even death does not extinguish such a life, for in Christ, “death is swallowed up in victory.”*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a story of an old parish sacristan who arrived at church every morning long before dawn. Few noticed him. He opened the doors, prepared the altar, switched on the lights, and quietly prayed for the people who would come that day. When he died, many in the parish suddenly realized how much warmth and stability his hidden service had given to their lives. He had been like salt — unseen, yet essential — and like a lamp quietly burning in the darkness.

Today we gather to thank God for the life of N., whose service as volunteer, catechist, and faithful parish worker reflected that same spirit. Through simple acts of generosity, encouragement, teaching, listening, and care, N. became a light for many and helped keep faith alive in this community.

The readings today remind us that such goodness is never lost. Jesus tells us that light must shine before others, and St. Paul proclaims that death itself has been conquered through Christ. What was sown in love on earth is now gathered into eternal life.

Yet we also know that every human life remains incomplete before God. Therefore, trusting in the mercy of Christ who overcomes sin and death, let us now acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you called your disciples to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you strengthened your faithful servants to persevere in quiet acts of love and service: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you conquered death and opened for us the gates of eternal life: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who calls his people to shine with the light of faith and strengthens us through lives of humble service, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God, source of every good work and eternal light,  
you taught us through your Son  
that those who serve with humble and faithful hearts  
become a blessing for the world.

As we commend your servant N. to your loving mercy,  
grant that the good planted through a life of quiet service  
may continue to bear fruit in your Church, and bring us all one day  
to the victory over death promised in Christ.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A teacher once asked her students to write down the names of the people who had influenced their lives most deeply. One student surprised everyone by writing the name of the parish catechist instead of a famous person or family member. When asked why, the student answered: “Because she believed in me before I believed in myself.”

That is the kind of influence Jesus speaks about in today’s Gospel when he says: “*You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.*” Salt does not draw attention to itself, yet without it food loses flavour. Light does not speak loudly, yet it changes everything simply by shining.

Today we remember N. as someone who served in precisely that way. Perhaps not through grand achievements or public recognition, but through faithfulness — through showing up, helping quietly, teaching patiently, encouraging gently, and serving generously.

There is another story about a village during a power outage. One small candle was lit in the church sanctuary, and people gradually entered carrying their own candles to light from it. Soon the whole church was glowing. One tiny flame had become light for many. That is how Christian service works. One faithful person inspires another.

So many people in parish life become exactly that kind of light: the catechist preparing children for the sacraments, the volunteer arranging flowers, the person visiting the sick, the choir member practicing faithfully, the parish worker who notices when someone is lonely. These acts may seem small, but in God’s eyes they become radiant.

St. Paul today takes us even deeper. He speaks not only about service but about victory: “*Death is swallowed up in victory.*” Christianity does not deny grief. We grieve because we love. But grief is not the final word. Christ’s resurrection changes the meaning of death itself.

There is a moving story from the early Church about Christians gathering in the catacombs during times of persecution. On the tombs of believers they often carved not words of despair, but symbols of hope — lamps, anchors, and the rising sun. They believed that death was not extinction but passage.

That is our faith today. The light N. carried in this world is not extinguished; it is fulfilled in God. Every act of kindness, every prayer offered, every child taught, every burden shared — none of it is wasted. Love always survives because God himself is love.

And perhaps the Gospel asks something of us today as well. The best way to honour the dead is not only to remember them but to continue what they lived for. We become their living legacy when we choose kindness over indifference, service over selfishness, faith over fear.

A parish priest once said after the funeral of a devoted volunteer: “The candles on the altar will eventually burn out, but the light she placed in people’s hearts will continue shining.” That may be the most beautiful description of a Christian life.

Today we commend N. into the hands of God with gratitude and hope, trusting that the Lord who once said, “*Let your light shine before others,*” now welcomes this faithful servant into the eternal light that never fades.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Gathered in faith and hope, and trusting in Christ who has conquered death, let us bring our prayers before the Father.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to be a light in times of darkness and a source of hope for all people, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all parish volunteers, catechists, and faithful servants of the community, that their quiet acts of generosity may strengthen the faith of others, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For those who feel unnoticed, discouraged, or weary in serving others, that God may renew their strength and remind them that no act of love is ever forgotten, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For the family and friends of N., that the promise of Christ's victory over death may comfort them in their grief, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For our departed brother/sister N., that the Lord may welcome him/her into the eternal kingdom where every faithful servant rejoices in unending light and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy and God of everlasting life, hear the prayers we offer with faith and hope. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that as we place before the Lord the gifts of bread and wine in thanksgiving for a life of humble faith and loving service, my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive these gifts offered in faith as we remember your servant N.  
May this sacrifice of Christ,  
who conquered death and opened eternal life,  
bring comfort to those who mourn  
and reward the goodness sown through a life of faithful service.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For in your wisdom you call ordinary men and women  
to become signs of your presence in the world.  
Through humble acts of kindness, patient service,  
and faithful witness, your light continues to shine among your people.

Even in the face of death,  
you strengthen us with the promise of resurrection,  
for Christ has overcome the grave  
and transformed our human sorrow with the hope of eternal life.

In him the light of faith is never extinguished,  
and those who have served you faithfully on earth  
are welcomed into the joy of your heavenly kingdom.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With trust in God our Father,  
who gathers his children into the light of eternal life,  
let us pray in the words our Savior gave us.

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by the hope of Christ's victory over death,  
we may live as lights in the world  
while we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you told your disciples to let their light shine before others,  
and through your resurrection  
you brought peace to hearts troubled by fear and death. Look not on  
our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who conquered death and leads his faithful servants into eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

A life of faith rarely shines through spectacular moments alone. More often, it glows quietly through daily acts of love, patience, and service. Today we give thanks for a light that burned faithfully among us. And as we receive Christ in this Eucharist, we pray that his light may continue to shine in our hearts until the day we are gathered into the eternal kingdom where darkness is no more.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
you have strengthened us with the bread of eternal life.

May the example of faithful service we remember today  
encourage us to walk as children of the light,  
until the day when, with all your saints,  
we rejoice forever in the victory of Christ.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you with the hope of resurrection. **Amen.**

May Christ, whose light shines in the darkness,  
guide you in faith and peace. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit  
help you continue the work of love and service  
that we remember with gratitude today. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
glorifying the Lord by the light of your lives.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The brightest lights in God's kingdom are often those who served quietly, loved faithfully, and helped others find their way to Christ.

## 21. Nurse / Doctor / Caregiver

**1 John 3:14–16** — “We know that we have passed from death to life because we love.”

**Mt 25:31–46** — “I was sick and you visited me.”

**Theme:** “Hands That Healed, Love That Lives On.”

*In caring for the sick, the weak, and the suffering, the deceased reflected the compassionate face of Christ. Today's readings remind us that every act of mercy becomes a meeting with the Lord himself: “I was sick and you visited me.” Love expressed through service is never lost; it becomes a passage from death to life.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a story of an elderly patient in a hospital who could no longer remember the names of the doctors or nurses who treated him. Yet years later he said, “I may not remember what they prescribed, but I remember who held my hand when I was afraid.” Compassion leaves traces deeper than medicine.

Today we gather to commend to God the soul of our beloved departed, who served others through healing, care, patience, and kindness. Whether in hospitals, homes, clinics, or quiet daily acts of assistance, their life became a ministry of presence. Many encountered not only professional care, but human warmth and dignity through them.

In the Gospel, Jesus identifies himself with the sick and suffering: “I was sick and you visited me.” And Saint John reminds us that love is the sign that we have already passed from death to life. The care our departed offered was more than duty; it was love made visible.

As we now enter these sacred mysteries, let us acknowledge the moments when we failed to love generously, when we passed by the suffering, or withheld compassion from others. Let us ask the Lord for mercy and healing of heart.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you came to heal the broken-hearted and to comfort the suffering: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you taught us that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for you: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are the resurrection and the life, leading all who love into eternal joy: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and heal whatever in us has failed to love generously.

May he welcome our departed brother/sister N., who sought to serve Christ in the sick and suffering, into the eternal peace prepared for those who have loved in deed and in truth, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God, whose Son taught us that love shown to the suffering is love shown to him, grant that your servant N. , who cared for the sick and comforted the weary, may now receive the reward promised to faithful servants. Strengthen us also to become people of mercy and compassion, so that through lives of generous love we may pass from death to life.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

A young nurse once shared a story about her first night shift. Near midnight she entered the room of a dying man. She checked his medicines, adjusted the blanket, and turned to leave. But the man reached out weakly and asked, “Could you stay just a little longer?” She sat beside him in silence for twenty minutes. Later his family told her, “You were the last person with him before he died. Thank you for letting him leave this world not feeling alone.”

That story helps us understand today’s Gospel. Jesus does not ask first about achievements, wealth, or status. He speaks about love expressed in simple acts: feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, visiting the sick. Compassion becomes the measure of a life.

Our departed understood this truth deeply. In the world of caregiving, healing is not only about curing illness. Often the greater healing comes through listening, patience, gentleness, and presence. A caregiver learns that sometimes the most important words are not spoken at all.

There is another story of a doctor working in a crowded emergency ward. One evening an exhausted elderly woman apologized repeatedly for “being a burden.” The doctor paused, looked at her kindly, and said, “You are not a burden. You are a person worthy of care.” Years later, her daughter still remembered that sentence. Human dignity was restored in a moment of compassion.

That is exactly what Jesus did throughout the Gospel. He touched lepers others avoided. He listened to the blind beggar others silenced. He stopped for the suffering whom society ignored. Every act of care said to people: “You matter to God.”

The First Letter of John tells us: “We know that we have passed from death to life because we love.” Love is not merely emotion; it is sacrifice. Every sleepless night beside a patient, every emergency answered, every wound cleaned, every fearful person comforted—these become quiet participation in Christ’s own ministry.

There is also a hidden suffering known only to caregivers themselves. Many carry emotional fatigue, grief, and exhaustion silently. Yet even in weakness they continue to serve. Like the Good Samaritan, they stop when others pass by.

Today we do not claim that our departed was perfect. No human life is without limitation. But we thank God for the countless ways Christ’s compassion became visible through this life. Seeds of kindness planted in hospitals, homes, clinics, and hearts continue to bear fruit long after death.

And now we entrust our beloved departed to the Lord whom they served in the suffering. The hands that once cared for others are now placed into the hands of God.

A hospice chaplain once said that near death many people worry less about success and more about one question: “Did I love well?” Today’s readings answer that question with hope. Love never dies. Every act of mercy echoes into eternity. And the Lord who once said, “I was sick and you visited me,” now says to his faithful servant: “Come, share your Master’s joy.”

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Trusting in the mercy of God, who sees every act of love and compassion, let us bring before him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother/sister.

1. For the Church, that she may continue Christ’s ministry of healing and compassion to the suffering and forgotten, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For doctors, nurses, caregivers, and all who work among the sick, that God may strengthen them in patience, wisdom, and mercy, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For the sick, the dying, and those who feel abandoned or afraid, that they may experience comfort through loving presence and care, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For our departed brother/sister N., who served others with generosity and compassion, that Christ may now welcome him/her into eternal peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For all of us gathered here, that we may learn to recognize Christ in those who suffer and respond with loving hearts, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and compassion,  
receive the prayers we place before you today.  
Teach us to love as your Son loved,  
and bring our departed brother/sister into the fullness of eternal life.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, and the love with which they are offered, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God, accept these gifts we place upon your altar as we remember your servant N. who sought to serve Christ in the suffering and the sick. May this sacrifice bring forgiveness, peace, and eternal joy to our departed brother/sister, and teach us to offer our own lives in loving service to others. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. For in your Son Jesus Christ you showed the world the face of compassion. He healed the sick, comforted the sorrowful, and taught us that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do for him. In lives dedicated to care and mercy your love continues to touch the wounded of this world. And in the faithful service of your servant N., we have seen signs of your tenderness and healing presence. Even in death, your love remains victorious, for those who lived in charity are welcomed into the fullness of eternal life. And so, with Angels and Archangels, and with all the saints, we proclaim your glory, as without end we acclaim:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say the prayer that unites all God's children, especially those who seek healing, mercy, and peace:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may become instruments of your compassion, bringing comfort to the suffering and hope to those who are afraid. Keep us free from sin and faithful in works of love, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, you brought comfort to the sick and peace to troubled hearts. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, who heals the brokenhearted and gives eternal life to all who love. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Love leaves holy traces behind.  
A hand held in fear,  
a gentle word spoken in suffering,  
a quiet sacrifice unnoticed by the world—  
none of these are forgotten by God.

Today we entrust our departed loved one  
to the mercy of Christ,  
confident that the compassion shared on earth  
has become joy in heaven.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God, through these sacred mysteries  
you have nourished us with the Bread of Life.  
May your servant N., who sought to care for others with compassion,  
now rejoice forever in your kingdom.  
And may we who remain continue to serve Christ in the suffering and  
the weak until we are gathered together in eternal peace.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all compassion comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you in hope.  
May Christ, who healed the sick and welcomed the weary,  
receive our departed brother/sister into eternal peace.  
And may the Holy Spirit teach us to recognize the Lord  
in all who suffer and are in need.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
glorifying the Lord by lives of compassion and mercy.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“People may forget many things, but they rarely forget compassion.  
Every act of love offered to the suffering becomes an encounter with  
Christ — and love offered in Christ never dies.”

## 22. Soldier / Police / Firefighter

**Rom 5:5–11** — Christ died for us.

**Jn 15:12–13** — “Greater love has no one than this.”

**Theme:** “Greater Love: A Life Given in Courage and Service.”

*In today’s liturgy we remember a soldier, police officer, or firefighter whose vocation was shaped by vigilance, sacrifice, and the willingness to stand between danger and the vulnerable. The Gospel reminds us that the highest form of love is not merely spoken, but lived — a love ready to give itself for others. Christ Himself became the perfect guardian of humanity by laying down His life for us while we were still sinners. In that same spirit, we commend our brother/sister to the Lord who never abandons those who serve with love.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a firefighter who entered a burning building after everyone else had fled. When he finally emerged carrying a frightened child in his arms, reporters asked him later if he had not been afraid. He answered quietly, “Of course I was afraid. Courage is not the absence of fear; it is deciding that someone else matters more than your fear.”

Today we remember a person who understood something of that courage. Whether in uniform, in service, or in daily duty, N. accepted responsibilities that many would rather avoid. Behind the discipline and strength was a heart willing to protect, assist, and stand watch for others.

The readings today bring us to the deepest meaning of such service. Jesus says, “Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one’s life

for one’s friends.” And Saint Paul reminds us that Christ Himself loved us first and gave His life for us while we were still weak and sinful. Every act of human courage becomes a reflection of the greater love of Christ.

Yet today we also come before God aware of our human weakness, our failures to love fully, and the moments when fear overcame generosity. Trusting in the mercy of the Lord who laid down His life for us, let us now acknowledge our sins and so prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, You stood beside the fearful and strengthened the weak: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You laid down Your life for Your friends and revealed the fullness of love: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You are the eternal guardian who leads Your faithful into everlasting peace: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May the merciful Lord,  
who sent His Son to stand beside us in our weakness  
and to save us through the sacrifice of the Cross,  
forgive our sins, heal what fear and selfishness have wounded within  
us, strengthen us in faith, hope, and love,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

**Amen.**

## COLLECT

O God, whose Son revealed the greatness of love  
by laying down His life for His friends,  
look with mercy upon Your servant N.,  
who sought to serve and protect others with courage and fidelity.  
Grant that, purified of every sin,  
he/she may enter the everlasting peace of Your kingdom,  
where fear and death are no more and love endures forever.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A police chaplain once told the story of an officer who arrived first at the scene of a terrible accident on a rainy night. Traffic was dangerous, people were panicking, and one young victim was trapped inside a damaged car. The officer stayed beside the frightened teenager for nearly an hour until rescuers arrived. Years later, that same teenager said, “I do not remember the noise, the rain, or the pain. I only remember that someone stayed.”

That may be one of the greatest human gifts: to stay.

Today’s Gospel speaks about love not as emotion alone, but as presence, sacrifice, and fidelity. Jesus says, “Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Those words are fulfilled perfectly in Christ, who gave His life on the Cross for us. But they are also reflected in every person who accepts the difficult responsibility of protecting others.

The vocation of a soldier, police officer, or firefighter is not simply a profession. It is a calling that demands vigilance, discipline, sacrifice,

and sometimes danger. Most people run away from crises; these men and women are trained to move toward them.

There is another story told after a wildfire devastated an entire neighborhood. One exhausted firefighter was asked why he kept going back into the smoke even after hours without rest. He replied, “Because somebody’s home is still in there.” That sentence reveals something profound. Love notices what others overlook. Love refuses to abandon what still matters.

And that is exactly how Christ loves us.

Saint Paul tells us in today’s reading: “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Jesus did not wait until humanity became worthy. He entered the fire of our brokenness Himself. He stood where danger, suffering, and death had taken hold, and He carried us out through the Cross and Resurrection.

Every human act of sacrifice points toward that greater sacrifice.

N.’s life was not perfect — no human life is. Behind every uniform is an ordinary person with fears, struggles, regrets, hopes, and wounds. But God does not measure a life only by its imperfections. He also sees the countless hidden moments of generosity: the long hours, the silent responsibilities, the burdens carried without complaint, the willingness to stand watch while others rested safely.

A retired soldier once said, “Most service is never seen by the public. The real battle is learning to remain faithful in ordinary days.” That is true not only for those in uniform, but for every Christian. Holiness often appears quietly — in perseverance, loyalty, duty, kindness, and steadfast love.

And perhaps that is the final lesson of today's Gospel: real greatness is found not in power, but in self-giving love.

At the end of his life, a firefighter who had served for decades was asked what he was most proud of. People expected stories of heroic rescues. Instead, he answered, "I hope people felt safer because I was there."

That is a beautiful summary of Christian discipleship too. The presence of Christ should make people feel less abandoned, less afraid, more hopeful.

Today we entrust N. into the hands of the Lord who never abandons His people. Christ, the eternal protector and shepherd of souls, now says to His faithful servant: "You have stood watch in the night; now enter into My peace."

And for us who remain, the Gospel leaves a challenge: to love more courageously, to stand beside one another more faithfully, and to remember that the greatest victories in life are won not through force, but through love willing to give itself away.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Brothers and sisters, trusting in the Lord Jesus who laid down His life for His friends and who now reigns victorious over death, let us bring before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother/sister N.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to be a sign of courage, compassion, and faithful service in a wounded world, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For soldiers, police officers, firefighters, emergency workers, and all who protect human life, that God may strengthen them in their

difficult responsibilities and keep them safe in His care, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For leaders of nations, that they may work for justice, peace, and the protection of the vulnerable rather than violence and division, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all who mourn today, especially the family and friends of N., that Christ may comfort them with the hope of the Resurrection and the assurance of His abiding presence, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For our departed brother/sister N., that the Lord who sees every hidden sacrifice and every act of faithful service may welcome him/her into eternal peace and joy, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Lord God, You sent Your Son to reveal the fullness of love through the gift of His life. Hear the prayers we place before You today and strengthen us to live with courage, faith, and generosity until we meet again in Your eternal kingdom. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, offered in memory of Christ who gave His life for His friends and in thanksgiving for the faithful service of N., may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive these gifts placed upon Your altar as signs of our faith and hope. Through this holy sacrifice, purify Your servant N. of every sin and welcome him/her into the everlasting peace won for us by Christ through His saving death and Resurrection. Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in Your great love for humanity  
You sent Your Son into our world  
not to be served but to serve,  
and to lay down His life for His friends.  
In Him we see that true greatness is found  
not in power or glory,  
but in sacrifice, mercy, and faithful love.

You strengthened Your servant N.  
in a life of responsibility and service,  
and through the Gospel You now call us  
to trust that death does not have the final word.  
For Christ has conquered sin and the grave,  
and opened for Your faithful people  
the gates of everlasting life.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
we proclaim Your glory, as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command  
and formed by the divine teaching of the One  
who laid down His life for His friends,  
we dare to say:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and strengthen us whenever fear, suffering,  
or uncertainty burden our hearts.  
Help us to live with the courage of Christ,  
who remained faithful even unto death,  
and bring us safely into the peace of Your kingdom,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
in moments of danger and fear  
You remained steadfast in love  
and brought peace through the sacrifice of the Cross.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with Your  
will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who gave His life for the salvation of the world  
and calls us to live in love and faithful service.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Love that protects, sacrifices, and remains faithful never disappears in the eyes of God. Today we entrust N. to the Lord who sees every hidden act of courage and every quiet moment of service. Christ, who laid down His life for His friends, now welcomes His servant into the peace that never ends. And He reminds us who remain that the strongest life is not the one that seeks greatness for itself, but the one willing to stand beside others in love.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by the Body and Blood of Your Son,  
we commend to You, Lord, Your servant N.  
Whom You called to serve others in this earthly life,  
grant now the fullness of rest, light, and peace.  
Strengthen us also to live with courage and generous love  
until the day You gather us into Your heavenly kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May God, who is our refuge and strength,  
comfort you in your sorrow and strengthen you in hope. **Amen.**

May Christ, who laid down His life for His friends  
and rose victorious over death, welcome N. into eternal peace  
and sustain you with the promise of everlasting life. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit, who gives courage to the fearful  
and peace to troubled hearts, remain with you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trusting in the Lord  
whose love is stronger than death.  
And may we honour the memory of N.  
by living lives of courage, compassion, and faithful service.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Greater love is not measured by words alone, but by the courage to remain faithful, to protect, and to stand beside others even in difficult moments. Christ has shown us that love willing to give itself away is the path that leads to eternal life.”

## 23. Victim of Violence / Murder

**Rom 12:17–21** — “Do not be conquered by evil.”

**Lk 23:33–46** — Jesus forgives from the Cross.

**Theme:** “Do Not Let Evil Have the Last Word.”

*Today’s liturgy gathers around the mystery of a life taken by violence, yet entrusted into the hands of the God whose mercy is stronger than hatred. From the Cross, Jesus forgives; Saint Paul urges us not to be conquered by evil, but to overcome evil with good. In the midst of grief, anger, unanswered questions, and pain, the Church proclaims that violence does not have the final word — God does.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a story of a village struck by tragedy after a young man was killed in an act of violence. For weeks the community lived in fear and anger. People whispered about revenge, about settling scores, about hatred that would only deepen the wound. But at the memorial service, the young man’s elderly grandmother stood up and simply said: “If we answer darkness with more darkness, we lose him twice.” Her words silenced the crowd.

Today we gather carrying similar emotions — sorrow, confusion, perhaps anger, perhaps questions that cannot easily be answered. Death caused by violence wounds not only one person, but families, friendships, communities, and even our sense of safety. We come before God not pretending that everything is understandable, but trusting that Christ himself entered such darkness.

On Calvary, Jesus too was the innocent victim of violence. Yet from the Cross he prayed: “Father, forgive them.” In that moment, hatred did not conquer him. Love remained stronger. The Cross teaches us

that evil may wound the body, but it cannot destroy the soul surrendered to God.

As we begin this Eucharist, let us place before the Lord every burden we carry — grief, anger, fear, resentment, and helplessness — and ask for the mercy that heals wounded hearts and restores peace.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you forgave those who crucified you and revealed the triumph of mercy over hatred: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you comfort those wounded by violence and gather the broken-hearted into your peace: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you call us not to be conquered by evil, but to overcome evil with good: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who heals the wounds of sin and restores peace to troubled hearts, strengthen us with the hope born from the Cross of Christ, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God, whose Son accepted suffering and violence yet answered hatred with mercy and forgiveness, look with compassion upon your people gathered in grief today. Heal hearts burdened by sorrow, strengthen us against despair and bitterness, and grant that, following the example of Christ, we may never allow evil to triumph over love. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

A teacher once told her students to bring two jars to class. Into one jar they were to place dark stones whenever they experienced anger, resentment, or hatred. Into the other they were to place white stones whenever they chose forgiveness, patience, or kindness. After several weeks, one boy's dark jar was overflowing. When the teacher asked him why, he replied quietly, "Because someone hurt my brother, and I cannot stop thinking about revenge." The teacher then said gently, "The stones you carry eventually become the weight that carries you."

Today, many hearts are heavy with such stones.

Violence leaves behind more than death. It leaves shock, fear, anger, sleepless nights, unanswered questions, and wounds hidden deep within the soul. When someone dies through violence, the pain feels unnatural and unfinished. We ask: "Why?" "How could this happen?" "Where was God?" These are not sinful questions. Even Jesus cried out on the Cross in anguish.

The Gospel today places before us Christ crucified — not distant from human suffering, but fully inside it. Jesus dies as a victim of violence, humiliation, injustice, and cruelty. And yet, from the Cross, he says words that seem impossible: "Father, forgive them."

A prison chaplain once visited a woman whose son had been murdered. Everyone expected her to speak only of rage. Instead she said, "If I spend the rest of my life hating, then the violence continues living inside me." She was not excusing evil. She was refusing to let evil own her soul.

This is exactly what Saint Paul means when he writes: "Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good."

Notice: Paul does not deny evil exists. The Gospel never pretends violence is acceptable. Jesus' wounds remained visible even after the Resurrection. But hatred is never healed by hatred. Revenge may satisfy anger for a moment, but it cannot restore peace to the heart.

There is another story about two brothers who lost their father during civil unrest. One joined a violent group seeking revenge. The other became a doctor treating victims from both sides of the conflict. Years later someone asked the doctor, "How could you help even those connected to your father's death?" He answered, "Because if pain only creates more pain, then evil multiplies forever."

That is the Christian challenge. Not weakness. Not forgetting. But refusing to allow darkness to define us.

At every funeral the Church proclaims hope, but today hope must struggle through tears. Hope today does not mean pretending everything is fine. Hope means believing that God receives the innocent, that Christ knows suffering from within, and that love is stronger than death itself.

The Cross looked like evil had won. Yet Easter revealed that God was still at work even there.

And perhaps this is the hardest grace we ask for today: not immediate answers, not instant healing, but the courage to keep our hearts from becoming prisons of bitterness.

A man once planted a tree where his daughter had died in an act of violence. People asked him why he returned there every year. He answered, "Because I want the place where death entered my life to become a place where life continues growing."

That is what Christ does. From the wood of the Cross — an instrument of violence — God brought salvation. From unbearable grief, he can still bring compassion. From wounds, wisdom. From tears, tenderness. From death, eternal life.

So today we entrust our beloved to the mercy of God. We pray for justice, but also for healing. We mourn honestly, but we do not surrender to despair. And we ask Christ crucified and risen to teach us how to let love speak louder than violence.

### **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Brothers and sisters, trusting in the mercy of God who heals the broken-hearted and overcomes evil with love, let us bring before him our prayers for the Church and for the world.

1. For the Church, that she may become a refuge for all wounded by violence, fear, and hatred, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For nations torn by war, crime, and injustice, that God may soften hearts hardened by hatred and guide leaders along paths of peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families grieving the loss of loved ones through violence, that Christ crucified may comfort them with his presence and hope, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For those trapped in anger, revenge, or bitterness, that the Holy Spirit may free them from the power of evil and lead them toward healing and reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For our departed brother/sister N., that the Lord who forgave from the Cross may receive him/her into the peace and light of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and compassion, hear the prayers we place before you today. Heal our wounded hearts, strengthen our hope, and keep us faithful to the way of peace revealed in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that these gifts, offered in the midst of our sorrow yet sustained by Christian hope, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive the gifts we place upon your altar  
as we entrust to you the pain and grief carried in our hearts.  
May this sacrifice of Christ,  
who overcame hatred through love and death through mercy,  
bring healing to the living  
and eternal peace to your departed servant.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
For in your Son Jesus Christ  
you revealed a love stronger than violence  
and a mercy deeper than human hatred.  
Though innocent, he accepted suffering and death upon the Cross,

and from his wounded heart flowed forgiveness and peace for the world.

In him we find comfort in our grief, strength in our weakness, and hope in the face of death.

For those who entrust themselves to you are not abandoned to darkness, but are called into the light of eternal life.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...**

#### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to pray for the coming of that kingdom where hatred shall cease, wounds shall be healed, and peace shall reign forever:

#### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, especially the violence, hatred, and bitterness that wound the human family, and graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, who from the Cross offered forgiveness and overcame evil through the power of love, look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God, who bore the wounds of human violence yet opened for us the path of mercy and eternal life. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

#### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Love does not erase grief overnight. The wounds left by violence remain real, and the tears we shed today are honest. Yet in this Eucharist we have received the One who transformed the Cross into the doorway of life. Christ now asks us not to carry the darkness forever, but to let his mercy slowly heal what hatred has broken. The final word belongs not to violence, but to God.

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son, we ask you, Lord, to strengthen us with the peace that flows from the Cross.  
Heal the wounds caused by violence and loss, keep us from surrendering to hatred or despair, and lead your departed servant into the fullness of everlasting joy.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation heal your sorrow and strengthen your hearts.

**Amen.**

May Christ, who forgave from the Cross and conquered death by love, fill you with his peace.

**Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit guide you always in the ways of mercy, reconciliation, and hope.

**Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by choosing mercy over hatred,  
hope over despair, and love over evil.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Violence may wound the body, but only love can heal the soul. Do not let evil have the last word.”

## 24. Addictions / Troubled Life

**Eze 34:11–16** — God searches for the lost sheep.

**Lk 15:1–7** — The lost sheep.

**Theme:** “The Shepherd Never Stops Searching.”

*Today’s liturgy proclaims the consoling truth that no life is ever abandoned by God. Even amid weakness, addiction, brokenness, confusion, or wandering paths, the Lord remains the Shepherd who seeks, carries, heals, and restores. Death does not erase human struggles, but neither do those struggles erase God’s mercy. The Good Shepherd continues searching until the lost one is found and brought home.*

## INTRODUCTION

There is an old story about a social worker who once visited a rehabilitation centre. On the wall she noticed a faded photograph of a young man smiling beside a fishing boat. “Who is that?” she asked. One of the staff replied, “That was taken before everything fell apart.” Years later, after many failures and relapses, that same man returned to the centre carrying the photograph in his pocket. He said quietly, “I kept this because I needed to remember that someone once believed I was worth saving.”

Many lives carry hidden battles. Some wounds are visible; others remain locked in silence. Addiction and troubled paths often leave behind regret, broken relationships, disappointment, and exhaustion. Yet today the Scriptures reveal a God who does not define a person by their worst moments, but by His faithful love.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of the shepherd who searches tirelessly for the lost sheep. In Ezekiel, God Himself promises: “I will search for

my sheep... I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak." The Lord does not stand far away judging the lost; He walks into the darkness to bring them home.

As we gather to commend our departed brother/sister to the mercy of God, we also acknowledge our own need for healing, forgiveness, and guidance. Trusting in the Shepherd who never stops searching for us, let us call to mind our sins and ask for His mercy and peace.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, You search for those who have wandered far from hope:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You bind up the wounded and strengthen the weak:  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You carry the lost home upon Your shoulders with compassion and love: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God, who never ceases to seek His wandering children, forgive us our sins, heal what is broken within us, strengthen us in every weakness, and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

Merciful Father,  
Your Son came to seek and save those who were lost.  
Look with compassion upon Your people gathered here today,  
and comfort us with the assurance that no darkness is greater than  
Your mercy and no wandering heart beyond Your reach.  
Strengthen us when we are weak, heal us when we are wounded,  
and lead us safely home to You.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

A teacher once told of a student who constantly caused trouble in school. He skipped classes, lied often, and eventually became involved with drugs. Many teachers had given up on him. But every Friday afternoon, the school janitor would quietly leave a sandwich and a note on the boy's desk saying only, "See you Monday." Years later, after recovering from addiction, the young man said: "Everybody else saw what I had become. That janitor saw someone worth waiting for." That is the heart of today's Gospel.

Jesus tells us about a shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep behind to search for one that is lost. To many people, this sounds unreasonable. Why risk everything for one sheep? Why spend so much energy on someone who wandered away? But that is exactly how God loves.

The world often labels people by their failures. Once someone struggles with addiction or falls into destructive patterns, society can reduce them to a reputation. People begin saying: "That person will never change." "That life is ruined." "Nothing good can come anymore." Yet Jesus never speaks that way.

In fact, some of the people most drawn to Jesus were precisely those whose lives had become messy and broken. Tax collectors, sinners, outcasts, and the wounded gathered around Him because they sensed something different in Him. They sensed that mercy was still possible.

There is a story about a woman whose son battled alcoholism for many years. One winter night he arrived at her door after months away. He looked terrible. Ashamed, he said, “Mom, I understand if you don’t want me here.” The mother answered: “I never stopped setting a place for you.” That is a small image of God’s heart.

The prophet Ezekiel gives us one of the most tender descriptions of God in all Scripture: “I myself will search for my sheep.” God does not delegate compassion. He personally seeks the lost, binds wounds, and strengthens the weak.

Sometimes addiction begins with bad choices. Sometimes it begins with deep loneliness, trauma, fear, grief, or emptiness. Behind many troubled lives lies a deeper hunger — a hunger to feel loved, accepted, or at peace. Human beings often search in unhealthy places for what only God can truly provide.

There is another story of a recovering addict who said during a support meeting: “The turning point was not when people yelled at me. The turning point was when someone finally listened to me.” Compassion can become the doorway through which grace enters a life. This funeral reminds us of two important truths.

First, no human life can be reduced to its struggles. Every person remains a child of God, carrying a dignity that cannot be erased by failure, weakness, or sin.

Second, God’s mercy is greater than our brokenness. We do not gather today pretending that life was perfect. We gather trusting that Christ the Good Shepherd knows every wound, every battle, every tear, and every attempt to rise again.

The Shepherd in the Gospel does not return dragging the sheep in anger. He carries it home on His shoulders rejoicing. That image matters. God saves not reluctantly, but lovingly.

A priest once visited a dying man who had spent much of his life far from God. The man whispered, “Father, do you think God could still want me?” The priest replied, “My friend, you would not be searching for Him now if He had not already been searching for you for years.”

That may be the deepest truth of today’s Gospel: long before we seek God, God seeks us.

And so today we place our brother/sister into the hands of the Shepherd who never stops searching, never stops loving, and never stops calling His children home.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Gathered in faith before the Lord who seeks the lost and heals the wounded, let us bring before Him our prayers and petitions.

1. For the Church, that she may always be a place of mercy, welcome, and healing for those who feel lost or burdened by life’s struggles, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For those suffering from addiction, depression, loneliness, or despair, that they may encounter compassionate people who help lead them toward hope and healing, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For families carrying the pain of broken relationships, disappointment, or grief, that God may strengthen them with patience, forgiveness, and peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For our departed brother/sister, that the Good Shepherd may carry him/her safely into the joy of eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that we may never lose faith in God's mercy nor stop reaching out to those who wander or suffer, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy,  
You know the wounds and hopes hidden within every heart.  
Hear the prayers we place before You today  
and lead us always in the ways of compassion and peace.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, offered to the God who seeks the lost and heals the broken-hearted, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

#### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive these gifts offered in faith and hope.  
In Your mercy, look kindly upon Your servant  
whom You never ceased to love and seek throughout life's journey.  
May this sacrifice bring comfort to the living  
and peace to the departed.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in Your mercy You never abandon those who wander far from You. Like a shepherd searching for a lost sheep,  
You seek the wounded, strengthen the weak,  
and lift up those who have fallen.

In Jesus Christ Your Son,  
You revealed a love stronger than sin,  
a compassion deeper than human failure,  
and a hope that reaches even into the darkness of death itself.  
And so, with the Angels and Saints, we proclaim Your glory,  
as with one voice we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

#### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

Trusting in the mercy of God, who never ceases to search for His children and welcome them home with compassion, let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

#### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and in Your mercy heal the wounds that burden the human heart.  
Strengthen those who struggle, comfort those who mourn,  
and keep us faithful to the hope of Your saving love,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You sought the lost and welcomed the broken with compassion.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with Your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold Him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Good Shepherd does not love only the strong or the successful. He carries the weak, waits for the wandering, and calls each person by name. Today we entrust our departed brother/sister to that faithful love — a love that does not give up, even at the darkest hour.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
You remind us that Your mercy is greater than all human weakness.  
Strengthen us with the hope of eternal life  
and bring our departed brother/sister  
into the peace of Your heavenly kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all mercy  
who searches for the lost and heals the broken  
strengthen you in every trial and fill you with peace. **Amen.**

May Christ the Good Shepherd  
carry your loved one safely into eternal life  
and guide you always in paths of hope and compassion. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, trusting that the Good Shepherd never abandons His people.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“No life is ever beyond the reach of God’s mercy, for the Shepherd never stops searching for His lost sheep.”

## 25. Non-Practicing Catholic

**Lk 23:39–43** — The good thief.

**1 Tim 2:1–6** — God desires everyone to be saved.

**Theme:** “At the Last Hour: Trusting in the Mercy That Never Gives Up.”

*Today’s liturgy gathers us around the promise that no life is beyond the reach of God’s mercy. In the Good Thief we see a man who, even at the final hour, turned toward Jesus and heard the words: “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” Saint Paul reminds us that God “desires everyone to be saved.” Together these readings proclaim that the Lord never stops seeking the human heart, even when faith has grown distant or neglected.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is an old story about a village church whose bell had not rung for many years because only a few people came anymore. One evening, after the death of a man who had long stayed away from the Church, the priest asked for the bell to be rung again. Some wondered why such honour should be given. The priest simply replied, “Because God never stopped calling him, even when he stopped answering.”

We gather today with that same hope. Human lives are often complicated. Faith may weaken, routines change, wounds accumulate, and sometimes people drift far from the practice of religion. Yet the Gospel today reminds us that even in the final moments of life, the heart can still turn toward Christ. The Good Thief had little left to offer except one honest prayer: “Jesus, remember me.”

The mercy of God is greater than our failures, greater than our distance, and greater than our unfinished journeys. We entrust our departed brother/sister to the Lord who alone sees the hidden struggles, quiet longings, and moments of grace that others may never know.

And because all of us stand in need of that same mercy, let us now acknowledge our sins and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you came to seek those who were lost and far away:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you promised Paradise to the repentant thief:  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you desire that all people be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God, who never ceases to call his children back to himself, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### COLLECT

O God, whose mercy is never exhausted  
and whose Son opened the gates of Paradise  
to the repentant thief, look kindly upon your servant N.  
whom we commend to your loving care today.  
In moments known to you alone,  
you touched the heart with grace and hope.  
Receive now every prayer whispered in weakness,  
every act of goodness, and every desire for peace.  
Comfort those who mourn, strengthen our trust in your compassion,

and teach us never to despair of your saving love. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## Homily

A man once told a priest that he had not entered a church in nearly forty years. After the death of his mother, however, he quietly slipped into the back pew during weekday Mass. He stayed only a few minutes. As he was leaving, the priest greeted him warmly and said, "I'm glad you came." The man answered, "Father, I wasn't sure God would still want me here." The priest replied, "If you still feel the desire to come, that means He never stopped waiting."

That simple exchange captures the heart of today's Gospel.

The Good Thief had wasted much of his life. As he hung dying beside Jesus, he possessed no good reputation, no opportunity to repair the past, no time left to prove himself worthy. Yet in one honest moment he turned toward Christ: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

And Jesus answered immediately: "Today you will be with me in Paradise."

What a remarkable Gospel for a funeral. It reminds us that salvation is not earned like a reward for perfect religious performance. Salvation is a gift received by those who finally place their trust in the mercy of God.

Many families carry quiet sorrow when a loved one was no longer practicing the faith. There can be unanswered questions, regrets, even guilt. "Did they still believe?" "Did they pray?" "Did they make

peace with God?" Often we simply do not know. But God knows. And that changes everything.

There is another story of a grandmother who prayed every day for her son who had left the Church. For decades he showed little interest in religion. Shortly before his death, while in hospital late one night, he asked a nurse if a priest could come. He made his confession after many years and received Holy Communion with tears in his eyes. The family discovered this only afterward. Grace had been quietly at work long before anyone else could see it.

That is why today is not a day for judging a life from the outside. Only God sees the full story of a soul — the hidden wounds, disappointments, struggles, questions, and silent prayers.

Saint Paul tells us in today's reading that God "desires everyone to be saved." Not some people. Not only the visibly holy. Everyone. God's desire for salvation is greater than our imagination.

Perhaps many of us here today know what it feels like to drift spiritually. Life becomes busy. Pain hardens the heart. Faith grows distant. We tell ourselves there will always be time later. Yet the Good Thief teaches us that one sincere turning toward Christ can open the heart to grace.

There is a touching custom in some old churches: even when the doors are locked at night, one small side candle remains burning near the sanctuary. It is a quiet sign that God's house is still waiting for those who return.

The mercy of Christ is like that light.

And so today we commend N. into those merciful hands. We do not gather because a life was perfect. We gather because God is

merciful. We gather because Christ died and rose for sinners. We gather because hope is stronger than despair.

A hospice nurse once recalled the final words of a dying man. After years away from faith, he whispered, "I think God has been kinder to me than I deserved." The nurse answered gently, "That is what mercy means."

And perhaps that is the final lesson of today's Gospel: in the end, we are all saved the same way — not by claiming our goodness, but by trusting the goodness of Christ.

### **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

God our Father desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Trusting in his mercy and compassion, we now bring before him our prayers.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may continue to welcome the searching, the wounded, and those far from faith with patience and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For all who have drifted away from the practice of faith, that they may rediscover hope in God's mercy and find their way home to Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For our departed brother/sister N., that the Lord who welcomed the Good Thief into Paradise may now receive him/her into eternal peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For grieving family and friends, that they may be comforted by the assurance that God alone sees the heart and never abandons his children, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all of us gathered here, that this funeral may renew our trust in God's mercy and inspire us to turn more fully toward Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy, you know the secrets of every heart and your compassion never fails.

Hear the prayers we place before you today through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, entrusted to the mercy of Christ who welcomes sinners and offers hope to the repentant, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts we place upon your altar  
as signs of our trust in your boundless mercy.  
Through this holy sacrifice  
may your servant N. be purified and welcomed  
into the peace of your kingdom, and may we who remain  
learn to rely not on our own strength  
but on the saving grace of Christ.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For your mercy reaches farther than our wandering  
and your compassion is greater than our sin.  
In your Son lifted high upon the Cross,  
you revealed that no heart is beyond hope,  
for to the repentant thief  
he opened the gates of Paradise.

In him we learn that you never cease calling your children home,  
patiently seeking those who are distant,  
strengthening the weak,  
and comforting all who place their trust in you.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
we praise you, as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

#### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to pray as children who trust  
in the mercy of a Father who never gives up on his children:

#### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by your mercy,  
we may never lose hope in your compassion  
nor fail to return to you with trusting hearts,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
on the Cross you spoke words of mercy  
to the repentant thief  
and opened before him the promise of Paradise.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb,  
where mercy triumphs over sin  
and Christ welcomes all who trust in him.

#### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The Good Thief had only one prayer left:  
"Jesus, remember me."  
It was enough.

God does not wait for perfect words or perfect lives.  
He listens for the smallest opening of the heart.  
Today we entrust N. to that same mercy —  
the mercy that never grows tired,  
never stops searching,  
and never refuses the sincere cry of a soul.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed by these sacred mysteries,  
we humbly ask you, Lord,  
that trusting always in your mercy,  
we may walk faithfully toward your kingdom.  
May your servant N., who has departed from this world,  
be cleansed and welcomed into the joy of everlasting peace.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May God, whose mercy is greater than every human weakness,  
receive N. into eternal peace  
and strengthen you with the hope of resurrection. **Amen.**

May Christ, who promised Paradise to the repentant thief,  
lead you always in the way of faith, hope, and love. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
trusting in the mercy of Christ,  
who never abandons those who turn to him.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“No one is beyond the reach of God’s mercy.  
The door of Christ’s heart remains open until the very end.”

## 26. Recently Reconciled to God

Is 55:6–9 — “Seek the Lord while he may be found.”

Lk 15:11–32 — The prodigal son.

**Theme:** “The Father never stops waiting for His children.”

## INTRODUCTION

There is an old story of a young man who left home after years of conflict with his family. Pride kept him away for a very long time. Eventually, tired and broken by life, he wrote a short letter to his father: “If there is still a place for me, tie a white cloth on the old mango tree near the station, and I will know I can come home.” As the train approached, the young man was too afraid to look outside. A fellow passenger looked for him and began to weep. Not one cloth—but the whole tree was covered in white.

Today’s Gospel speaks of such a Father. The parable of the prodigal son is not only about sin and failure; it is about a love that waits, hopes, forgives, and restores dignity. The father in the Gospel never stopped watching the road. The moment he saw his son returning, he ran to embrace him.

We gather today because our dear departed, after perhaps wandering through struggles, distances, or weaknesses, sought once more the face of God. The readings remind us that no life is beyond the reach of divine mercy. “Seek the Lord while he may be found,” says Isaiah. God’s ways are always greater than our own.

As we stand before the Lord, we remember that all of us are pilgrims still on the journey home. We too have moments when we have wandered far from God and from one another. Let us therefore acknowledge our sins and ask the Father whose mercy never fails to welcome us again.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you seek out the lost and carry them home upon your shoulders: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you never tire of forgiving those who return to you with humble hearts: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you prepare a place at the eternal banquet for all who trust in your mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who is rich in mercy and slow to anger,  
welcome our departed brother/sister into the embrace of His  
forgiving love. May He heal every wound of sin,  
restore what was broken by human weakness,  
and lead us from death to everlasting life.

## COLLECT

O God,  
whose love never ceases to seek your wandering children,  
you welcomed the prodigal son with compassion  
and revealed your mercy in Jesus Christ your Son.  
Look kindly upon your servant N.,  
who in faith sought reconciliation with you,  
and grant that, cleansed of every sin,  
he/she may rejoice forever in your house of peace and eternal joy.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY

A priest once told the story of visiting a prison shortly before Christmas. One inmate, hardened by years of crime and addiction, quietly asked the priest, “Father, do you think God could still want someone like me?” The priest answered, “That is exactly why Christ came.” The man broke down in tears and later sought confession after decades away from God.

That question lies at the heart of today’s Gospel: *Can God still want someone like me?*

The younger son in the parable certainly did not deserve a welcome home. He demanded his inheritance as though his father were already dead. He wasted everything. He destroyed relationships. He reached the point where he was feeding pigs and starving among them. Yet the turning point of the story is not his misery—it is his decision to return.

Isaiah says today: “Seek the Lord while he may be found.” The beautiful truth is that whenever a sinner begins searching for God, he discovers that God was already searching for him.

There is a story of a woman who had not entered a church for nearly thirty years. One evening she slipped quietly into the back pew during weekday Mass. After Communion she remained seated and cried silently. Later she told the priest, “I thought God would be angry with me.” The priest replied, “No mother is angry when a lost child finally comes home.” That is the heart of the Gospel.

Our departed brother/sister experienced something of this return to God. Perhaps life had been complicated. Perhaps there were struggles, failures, regrets, or distances from faith. Yet somewhere along the road came the grace of reconciliation—a return to prayer,

confession, trust, or surrender to God's mercy. And heaven rejoices even over one sinner who returns.

The father in today's Gospel does something astonishing: he runs toward his son. In the culture of that time, dignified older men did not run publicly. Yet love makes the father forget dignity. Before the son can even finish his confession, the father embraces him, clothes him again with dignity, and prepares a feast.

God does not merely tolerate our return. He celebrates it.

A missionary once described baptizing an elderly man who had spent most of his life far from faith. After the baptism the man smiled and whispered, "I wasted many years, but God still opened the door for me." That is the hope we hold onto today. God's mercy is always greater than the years we have lost.

But this Gospel is also for us who remain behind. Every family has wounds. Every heart carries regrets. Some are estranged from God, from family, from themselves. The Gospel invites us never to despair of anyone. As long as there is breath, there is a road home.

In the end, salvation is not about having a perfect past. It is about trusting the mercy of the Father.

There is a final story told of a hospice nurse caring for a dying man. Moments before his death, he suddenly opened his eyes and whispered, "Father... I'm coming home." Then peacefully he died.

Perhaps that is the deepest meaning of Christian death. We are not going into darkness. We are going home—to the Father who has been waiting all along. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

God our Father is always ready to hear the prayers of His children who turn to Him in trust. Let us now place before Him our needs and the needs of the whole world.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to proclaim God's mercy and welcome all who seek reconciliation and healing, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For those who feel far from God because of guilt, failure, addiction, or suffering, that they may discover the open arms of the Father waiting for them, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families divided by hurt, anger, or misunderstanding, that forgiveness and reconciliation may bring them peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For our departed brother/sister N., who sought the mercy of God, that he/she may now rejoice at the heavenly banquet prepared for God's faithful children, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that this Eucharist may renew our trust in God's compassion and strengthen us on our journey home to Him, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy,  
you know the needs of your children even before we ask.  
Hear these prayers we place before you with confidence,  
and bring us one day to the joy of your heavenly home.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that this sacrifice, offered in hope and trust in the Father's mercy,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive these gifts which we offer  
for the salvation of your servant N.

As the father welcomed his returning son with joy,  
so may your mercy now receive N. into the banquet of eternal life.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
For in your infinite mercy  
you never abandon those who wander far from you.  
Again and again you call your children home,  
healing the broken-hearted  
and restoring sinners through the saving death and resurrection of  
your Son.

In Christ you revealed yourself  
as the Father who waits with patient love,  
who runs to meet His children,  
and who prepares an eternal banquet  
for all who return to Him in faith.  
And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,

we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to pray to the Father  
who always welcomes His children home:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by your mercy,  
we may never lose confidence in your forgiving love.  
As you welcomed the prodigal son with compassion  
and restored him to the joy of his father's house,  
so bring our departed brother/sister N.  
and all of us safely to the eternal home you have prepared for your  
children, where every tear is wiped away  
and reconciliation is made complete,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you reconciled sinners to the Father  
and brought peace to those who were far off.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who welcomes sinners and feeds His people at the banquet of  
mercy.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

The father in the Gospel said,  
“My son was lost and is found again.”

Today we entrust our departed brother/sister  
to that same merciful Father.  
Human life is often marked by weakness, wandering, and unfinished  
struggles, yet God’s love remains greater than every failure.

May this Eucharist strengthen our hope  
that those who seek the Lord will never be turned away,  
and may we one day hear the Father’s voice calling each of us  
home.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God,  
through this holy sacrament  
you have nourished us with the Bread of eternal life.  
In your mercy grant that your servant N.,  
who trusted in your compassion,  
may dwell forever in your heavenly kingdom,  
where all your children rejoice in your presence.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all mercy,  
who welcomes His children with unfailing love,  
strengthen you in faith,  
comfort you in sorrow,  
and fill you with hope in the resurrection.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace,  
trusting in the mercy of the Father  
and carrying His compassion into the world.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

No matter how far we wander, God never stops waiting for our  
return.

## 27. Person Who Suffered Greatly

**Rom 8:18–25** — Present sufferings and future glory.

**Mt 5:1–12** — Blessed are those who mourn.

**Theme:** “No suffering is wasted in the hands of God.”

*The trials and pains borne in this life are not the final word. In Christ, every tear is gathered, every burden is remembered, and every suffering is transformed into the promise of future glory.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is an old story about a woman who spent years caring for her bedridden husband. Day after day she fed him, cleaned him, comforted him, and sat awake through sleepless nights. Someone once asked her, “How do you keep going?” She quietly answered, “Love teaches the heart to carry what the body cannot.”

Many people carry hidden crosses. Some suffer physically, others emotionally, others silently within their hearts. Yet suffering often reveals the deepest strength of the human spirit. It teaches patience, compassion, endurance, and hope.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus calls blessed those who mourn, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and those who suffer for what is good. Saint Paul reminds us that “the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed.” Our departed brother/sister walked this human path of pain and endurance, and today we entrust him/her into the merciful hands of God who sees every hidden struggle.

As we gather around this altar, we also acknowledge the moments when suffering made us impatient, fearful, or distant from God and from one another. Let us therefore ask the Lord for mercy and peace.

## PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you came to comfort those who mourn:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you carried the cross and shared in our human suffering: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you lead your faithful from suffering into eternal glory:

**Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who looks with compassion upon the suffering of His children,  
forgive every sin and heal every wound of weakness.  
May He welcome our departed brother/sister into the peace  
promised to those who trusted in Him amid life’s trials,  
and strengthen us with the hope of the resurrection.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### COLLECT

O God, Father of all consolation,  
whose Son proclaimed blessed those who mourn  
and promised eternal joy to all who persevere in faith,  
look mercifully upon your servants gathered here today.  
As we commend our departed brother/sister to your loving mercy,  
strengthen us with the hope that present sufferings give way to  
everlasting glory.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY

A man once visited an elderly sculptor who was chiselling away at a rough block of marble. Dust filled the room, and the stone looked broken and scarred. The visitor asked, "How can you keep striking something so beautiful?" The sculptor smiled and replied, "I am not destroying it. I am revealing what is hidden within."

Life sometimes feels like that hammer and chisel. Suffering chips away at our strength, our plans, our certainty. Illness weakens the body. Loss wounds the heart. Long years of struggle can leave a person exhausted. Yet today's readings remind us that God does not abandon us in suffering; He works within it.

Jesus says in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." That sounds strange to the world. How can mourning be blessed? Yet Jesus does not glorify pain itself. He promises that pain is not meaningless when placed into the hands of God.

Saint Paul speaks with honesty when he says, "The sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed." Paul knew suffering personally—imprisonment, rejection, hardship, and weakness. Still, he believed that God was preparing something greater beyond what human eyes could see.

There is a story of a young boy watching his grandmother embroidering. From underneath the cloth, he saw only knots, tangled threads, and confusion. It looked ugly. But when his grandmother turned the embroidery around, he saw a beautiful pattern. Often we see life only from underneath. God sees the finished design. Our departed brother/sister knew suffering in ways perhaps only a few truly understood. Yet suffering can deepen the soul. Some people become bitter through pain; others become gentler, more

compassionate, more understanding. Those who suffer often learn how precious love truly is.

A nurse once spoke about patients in their final days. She said many no longer cared about success, possessions, or achievements. What mattered most was simple: "Who loved me? And whom did I love?" Suffering strips away illusions and reveals what lasts forever.

Even Jesus Himself chose the path of suffering. On the Cross He carried not only physical pain but loneliness, rejection, and fear. Because of that, there is no human suffering He does not understand. Every hospital room, every sleepless night, every silent tear has already been touched by Christ. And this gives us hope today. Death does not erase the story of a person's life. God remembers every act of courage, every burden carried patiently, every quiet sacrifice unseen by others.

There is a touching story about a woman who spent months unable to speak because of illness. Near the end of her life, she finally whispered to her daughter, "The pain was hard... but love stayed." That is the Christian hope. Suffering does not have the final word. Love does.

Today we commend our departed brother/sister to the Lord who promised comfort to those who mourn and glory to those who endure. And we who remain behind are reminded that even in our darkest valleys, God is still shaping eternity within us.

A farmer once planted seeds during a harsh winter. His neighbours laughed because the ground looked cold and lifeless. But spring came, and the hidden seeds burst into life. Saint Paul tells us that creation itself waits in hope. Today we place our loved one into God's hands like a seed planted in faith, trusting that God will raise him/her to new and everlasting life.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Trusting in God who comforts those who mourn and promises eternal glory to His faithful people, let us now place our prayers before Him.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may bring hope and consolation to all who suffer, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For those weighed down by illness, grief, loneliness, or hardship, that they may find strength in Christ who carried the Cross, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For doctors, nurses, caregivers, and all who accompany the suffering, that their compassion may reflect the tenderness of God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For our departed brother/sister N., that every burden and pain of this earthly life may now give way to eternal peace and joy, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For all of us gathered here, that our trials may deepen our faith and strengthen our hope in the resurrection, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and compassion,  
you know the burdens we carry and the hopes we hold within our hearts. Hear the prayers we place before you today,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, offered in faith and hope, for the comfort of the sorrowing, the peace of our departed brother/sister, and the strengthening of all who continue the journey of life, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive these gifts which we place upon your altar  
as signs of our faith in the victory of Christ over suffering and death.  
Through this holy sacrifice,  
grant rest to our departed brother/sister  
and renew within us the hope of eternal life.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your loving wisdom  
you do not abandon your children in times of suffering,  
but draw near to them with compassion and strength.  
In your Son, Jesus Christ,  
you have shown us that sorrow is transformed by love  
and death itself becomes the doorway to eternal life.

He proclaimed blessed those who mourn,  
for they shall be comforted,  
and by His Cross and Resurrection  
He gave us the sure hope  
that every tear shall one day be wiped away.

And so, with the Angels and Saints,  
we proclaim your glory,  
as with one voice we sing:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to pray to the Father  
who walks with His children through every sorrow  
and leads them toward eternal joy.

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that when we walk through times of mourning, suffering, and  
uncertainty,  
we may hold fast to the promise of your Son  
who called the sorrowful blessed  
and assured them of heavenly comfort.  
By the help of your mercy,  
keep us free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles:  
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.  
You comforted those who mourn,  
strengthened the weary,  
and transformed suffering through the power of your Cross.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who carried our sorrows and opened for us the way to eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Pain can make the world seem dark and uncertain. Yet Christ enters  
even the darkest places with His light. In this Eucharist we have  
received the One who suffered, died, and rose again. He reminds us  
that love is stronger than suffering and life is stronger than death.  
May this hope remain in our hearts long after this day.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God, through these sacred mysteries  
you have strengthened us with the Bread of Life and the Cup of  
Salvation. In your mercy, grant that our departed brother/sister,  
freed from every suffering and sorrow,  
may rejoice forever in the peace of your kingdom,  
and keep us steadfast in faith and hope  
until we too are gathered into your eternal embrace.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation comfort you in your sorrow  
and strengthen you with the hope of the resurrection.  
May Christ, who carried the Cross and conquered death,  
grant peace to your hearts  
and welcome our departed brother/sister into eternal life.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## DISMISSAL

Go in the peace of Christ.  
Carry one another's burdens with love,  
and hold firmly to the hope  
that God will one day turn every sorrow into everlasting joy.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

"The wounds of life are not the end of the story; in Christ, they become the doorway through which eternal glory shines."

## 28. Person Who Died Alone

**Psalm 23** or **Isaiah 43:1–3** — "I have called you by name."

**Jn 10:11–18** — The Good Shepherd.

**Theme:** "No One Dies Unseen by God."

*Even when a person leaves this world in loneliness or silence, the Good Shepherd never abandons His sheep. God calls each one by name, walks through every dark valley beside them, and gathers them into His eternal care.*

## INTRODUCTION

There are moments in life when loneliness becomes painfully visible. A hospital room with no visitors, a quiet apartment, an unanswered phone call, or a final breath taken without family nearby can deeply trouble our hearts. We wonder whether anyone was there in those last moments.

Today the Word of God speaks directly into that fear. Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord says: "*I have called you by name; you are mine.*" And in the Gospel Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd who never abandons His sheep. Human beings may sometimes fail to be present, but God never does.

An elderly lighthouse keeper once worked on a lonely coastline. Ships rarely passed, and many thought his work insignificant. Yet every night he faithfully lit the lamp because he knew that somewhere in the darkness sailors depended on that light, even if they never saw him. Much of love in this world remains hidden, but it is never unnoticed by God.

As we gather for this Eucharist, we entrust our departed brother/sister to the Shepherd who searches for every lost and lonely

soul. And acknowledging the times we ourselves have failed to notice the lonely, comfort the forgotten, or trust in God's abiding presence, let us ask for mercy and peace.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, You are the Good Shepherd who seeks every sheep that is lost: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You call each person by name and never forget those who are alone: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You walk with us through the valley of darkness into the light of eternal life: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God, whose Son is the Good Shepherd of every lonely and searching heart, forgive us for the times we failed to love, notice, and accompany one another.

May He welcome our departed brother/sister into the peace of His presence, where no tear is unseen and no soul is forgotten. Forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God, whose Son, the Good Shepherd, never abandons those entrusted to His care, look with mercy upon Your servant N, whom You have called by name from this world to Yourself. Comfort all who mourn in loneliness and sorrow, strengthen us with the assurance of Your unfailing presence, and lead us safely through the valleys of this life into the joy of Your eternal kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

A nurse once told the story of an old man who died in a hospital during a winter storm. No family members arrived. No phone calls came. As his breathing became weaker, the nurse simply held his hand so he would not leave this world alone. After he died, she said quietly, "At least someone was with him."

Many people fear dying alone. It touches something very deep within us. We long to be remembered, accompanied, and loved until the end. That is why today's Gospel is so consoling. Jesus says: "*I am the Good Shepherd.*" A shepherd does not abandon the sheep when darkness comes. He remains near.

Psalm 23 says: "*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me.*" Notice the Psalm does not say we avoid the valley. We all pass through it. But we do not walk through it abandoned.

There is a story from the mountains of Switzerland about shepherds who used bells to locate sheep during foggy weather. Sometimes a sheep separated from the flock could not see the shepherd, but as long as it heard the bell, it knew it was not alone. Faith works like that. In moments when life becomes foggy and frightening, God keeps giving signs of His presence: a prayer, a memory, a stranger's kindness, a quiet peace.

The prophet Isaiah gives us another beautiful promise: "*I have called you by name; you are mine.*" Names matter to God. To the world, people can become statistics, forgotten faces, or lonely individuals hidden behind closed doors. But to God, every person has a name, a story, and a dignity that can never disappear.

A priest once visited a prison where one inmate had received no visitors for years. Before leaving, the priest simply said, "God knows your name." The prisoner later admitted those words made him weep because he had begun to believe he no longer mattered to anyone. That is the tragedy of loneliness: it can make a person feel invisible. But before God, nobody is invisible.

Today we commend our departed brother/sister to this Shepherd who knows every wound, every silent struggle, every hidden sorrow, and every unspoken prayer. Perhaps there were moments of deep loneliness in life. Perhaps there were disappointments, distances, or absences. Yet the Gospel assures us that Christ enters precisely those places others cannot reach.

And this Mass also speaks to us who remain behind. The lonely are all around us: the widow who eats every meal alone, the neighbour nobody visits, the elderly person waiting for a phone call, the migrant far from home, the grieving person who silently carries pain. Sometimes the greatest act of love is simply presence.

There is an old Jewish saying: "A person dies twice — once when breath leaves the body, and again when their name is no longer spoken." Christianity adds something more hopeful: those whom God calls by name never disappear. They remain alive in Him.

A volunteer once spent Christmas Eve visiting people who had no family. One elderly woman told him before he left, "Tonight I remembered that God had not forgotten me." That is the message of today's Gospel. The Good Shepherd does not forget His sheep — not in life, not in suffering, not even in death.

And so we entrust our departed brother/sister into the hands of the Shepherd who walks ahead through every dark valley and leads His flock into eternal light, where no one is ever lonely again.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

God our Father calls each of us by name and never abandons His children. Trusting in His love and mercy, let us bring before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother/sister.

1. For the Church, that she may continue to seek out the lonely, forgotten, and grieving with the compassion of the Good Shepherd, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
2. For those who live in loneliness — the elderly, the sick, prisoners, migrants, and all who feel abandoned — that they may find comfort, friendship, and hope, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
3. For caregivers, nurses, chaplains, and all who accompany the dying, that their quiet acts of love may reveal God's presence, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
4. For our departed brother/sister N., that Christ the Good Shepherd may lead him/her safely into the eternal home prepared by the Father, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
5. For all of us gathered here, that we may become more attentive to those who suffer in silence and more trusting in God's unfailing care, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Father of mercy, You know each of us by name and hear the prayers hidden in our hearts. Receive these petitions we place before You in faith, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters, that this sacrifice, offered in faith and hope, may bring comfort to the sorrowing, peace to our departed brother/sister, and strength to us who continue our earthly pilgrimage; and may be acceptable to God, the Father almighty.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, receive these gifts placed upon Your altar  
for our departed brother/sister N.  
As Your Son laid down His life for His sheep,  
grant that this sacrifice may bring forgiveness, peace, and eternal  
rest to the one You have called by name.  
Strengthen also our hearts with the hope  
that Your love never abandons Your children.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For He is the Good Shepherd  
who knows each of His sheep by name  
and never abandons those entrusted to His care.  
In moments of loneliness and sorrow,  
He walks beside His people; in the darkness of death,  
He becomes their light and their peace.

Through His Death and Resurrection,  
He has opened for us the gates of eternal life,  
so that those who trust in Him  
may dwell forever in the safety of His kingdom,  
where no one is forgotten and no one is alone.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of Your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

With confidence in the love of God,  
who knows us by name and cares for us as His children,  
let us pray in the words our Savior gave us.

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and gently sustain all who walk through loneliness, fear, and grief.  
By the help of your mercy,  
keep us faithful to the voice of the Good Shepherd,  
who never abandons those entrusted to His care,  
that we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
Good Shepherd of every searching and lonely soul,  
You remain near to Your people in every dark valley  
and gather the scattered into the peace of Your kingdom.  
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your  
will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
the Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep  
and leads them to eternal life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

The Good Shepherd has fed us with the Bread of Life.  
In this holy Communion we are reminded  
that Christ remains close to His people in every moment —  
in joy and sorrow, in companionship and loneliness,  
in life and even in death.

Today we entrust our departed brother/sister  
into those loving hands that were stretched out upon the Cross.  
The Shepherd who called him/her by name in baptism  
now calls him/her into eternal peace.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
through these sacred mysteries  
You have nourished us with the Body and Blood of Your Son,  
the Good Shepherd who never abandons His flock.  
Grant that our departed brother/sister N.  
may dwell forever in the light of Your presence,  
and strengthen us with the hope  
that Your faithful love accompanies us always.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God of all consolation  
comfort you in your sorrow and strengthen you in hope. **Amen.**

May Christ, the Good Shepherd,  
lead our departed brother/sister safely into eternal life  
and remain close to all who mourn. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit, who brings peace to troubled hearts,  
fill you with trust in God's unfailing love. **Amen.**

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, ✠ and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in the peace of Christ,  
trusting that the Good Shepherd walks beside His people  
and never forgets those He has called by name.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

“Even when human presence fails, God never abandons His  
children. The Good Shepherd knows every soul by name and leads  
them safely home.”

## 29. Migrant / Refugee

**Heb 11:13–16** — Seeking a heavenly homeland.

**Jn 14:1–6** — “I go to prepare a place for you.”

**Theme: “Our true homeland is with God.”**

*In every journey, every crossing, every leaving behind, God walks with His people. Earthly homes may be temporary, but Christ prepares for us an eternal dwelling where no one is a stranger and no one is forgotten.*

### INTRODUCTION

There is a story told of a refugee family who arrived in a foreign country after years of uncertainty. They owned almost nothing except a small metal key wrapped carefully in cloth. When someone asked why they still carried a useless key from a destroyed house, the grandfather replied, “Because every human heart needs to believe there is still a home waiting somewhere.”

Today, many people know what it means to leave behind familiar streets, language, culture, or loved ones. Our departed brother/sister also lived the experience of journeying through unfamiliar places and uncertain paths.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks tenderly to hearts that feel unsettled: *“Do not let your hearts be troubled... I go to prepare a place for you.”* Christ does not promise that life’s roads will be easy, but He promises that the journey is not meaningless. Beyond every border and beyond every earthly separation stands the Father’s house.

The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that God’s faithful people were “strangers and pilgrims on earth,” searching for a better homeland. Human life itself is a pilgrimage. Some travel farther than others, but

all of us are ultimately seeking the same destination — a home where fear, exile, and separation will end forever.

As we gather around this altar, we entrust our departed brother/sister to the mercy of God who welcomes every weary traveler. And recognizing that we too are pilgrims in need of forgiveness and grace, let us prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus,  
You accompany those who walk through uncertainty and fear:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus,  
You prepare an eternal home for all who trust in You:  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus,  
You gather every nation and people into the Father’s house:  
**Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who guides His children through every wilderness  
and every wandering,  
forgive us our sins, strengthen us in hope  
during life’s pilgrimage,  
and welcome our departed brother/sister  
into the eternal homeland prepared by Christ.  
May He bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

## COLLECT

O God,  
whose Son became a traveller among us  
and prepared an eternal dwelling for His people,  
look with mercy upon Your servant N.  
who journeyed through the uncertainties of this earthly life.  
Grant that, having sought shelter in Your love during this world's  
pilgrimage,  
he/she may now find lasting peace and welcome  
in the homeland of heaven.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## HOMILY

A journalist once interviewed an elderly migrant who had crossed oceans decades earlier with nothing but one suitcase. When asked what he missed most about his homeland, he answered quietly, "It was not the buildings or the streets. It was the feeling that somewhere I belonged."

That longing to belong is one of the deepest desires of the human heart. Every migrant, every refugee, every traveller knows it. But in truth, every human being knows it. We all spend our lives searching for a place where we are safe, known, loved, and welcomed.

That is why the words of Jesus today are so powerful: "*Do not let your hearts be troubled... In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.*" Jesus speaks not only to refugees of nations, but to refugees of the human condition — people carrying fears, losses,

disappointments, loneliness, and uncertainty. He promises that beyond all temporary shelters there is a permanent home prepared by God Himself.

The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that the faithful were "strangers and foreigners on earth." Abraham left his homeland without knowing exactly where God was leading him. The Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years. Even the Holy Family became refugees when they fled into Egypt to escape violence. Again and again, Scripture reminds us that faith often means trusting God while walking roads we do not fully understand.

There is another story of a woman who spent years in refugee camps after war separated her from her family. Every evening, she lit a small candle near her bed. Someone once asked why she continued that practice even when there was little hope. She replied, "Because if my children ever find me, I want them to see a light waiting."

That image speaks beautifully of God. Throughout our lives, even in our darkest moments, God keeps a light burning for His children. Heaven is not an empty concept; it is the Father waiting at the door for His sons and daughters.

Our departed brother/sister knew the burdens of journeying through life's uncertainties. Perhaps there were moments of homesickness, sacrifice, loneliness, misunderstanding, or struggle. Yet today we believe that Christ, who once said "*I am the way,*" has now led him/her safely home.

And what about us who remain behind? We continue the pilgrimage. We carry our own burdens and uncertainties. Some here may feel displaced emotionally, spiritually, or even within their own families. Some may feel that life itself has become unfamiliar territory. The

Gospel speaks to us too: *“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”* Christ walks with us.

A priest once visited a dying sailor who had spent most of his life at sea. Near the end, the sailor whispered, “I think I’m finally reaching the harbor.” That is the Christian vision of death — not destruction, but arrival. Not abandonment, but homecoming.

Today we commend our departed brother/sister to the God who never abandons His travelers. And we pray that when our own earthly journeys are complete, Christ may also lead us into that eternal homeland where every tear is wiped away, every separation ends, and every heart finally comes home.

#### **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Brothers and sisters, trusting in God who guides His people through every journey of life, let us bring before Him our prayers for the Church, the world, and our departed brother/sister.

1. For the Church throughout the world, that she may be a welcoming home for all who feel lost, displaced, or forgotten, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

2. For migrants, refugees, and all who are forced to leave their homes, that they may find safety, dignity, compassionate hearts, and renewed hope, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

3. For families separated by distance, conflict, or hardship, that God may protect them and bring healing and reunion, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

4. For our departed brother/sister N., that Christ who prepared a place in the Father’s house may now welcome him/her into eternal peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

5. For all of us gathered here, that during our earthly pilgrimage we may walk faithfully in the way of Christ until we reach our heavenly homeland, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of every nation and every people,  
You guide Your children through the journeys of life.  
Hear the prayers we place before You today  
and lead us safely to the eternal home prepared by Your Son,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that this sacrifice, offered by pilgrims on life’s journey,  
may be acceptable to God, the Father almighty.

#### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God, receive these gifts offered in faith and hope  
for our departed brother/sister N.

As Your Son nourished weary hearts during their earthly pilgrimage,  
may this sacrifice bring comfort to those who mourn  
and eternal peace to the one who has gone before us.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For through the mystery of Your Son,  
You have made this earthly life a pilgrimage toward heaven.  
When hearts grow weary and uncertain,

Christ speaks words of peace:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

He Himself became the way for all who seek the Father, guiding His people beyond every sorrow and separation toward the eternal dwelling You have prepared.

In Him, death is not the end of the journey but the doorway to the true homeland where no one is a stranger and where Your children find everlasting rest.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of Your glory, as without end we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...**

#### **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to pray for the coming of God’s kingdom, the eternal home prepared for His children:

#### **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and graciously grant peace in our days, that amid the uncertainties of this earthly pilgrimage we may be sustained by Your mercy and guided by Your love, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, You said to Your disciples:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

Look not on our sins, but on the faith of Your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with Your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God, who leads His people through every wilderness to the eternal banquet of heaven.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

#### **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Every journey changes us. Roads leave marks on the feet and memories in the heart. Today, through this Eucharist, Christ reminds us that no faithful step is ever lost before God. The One who walked the roads of Galilee now walks beside His people through every uncertainty of life.

For our departed brother/sister, the pilgrimage of this world is complete. May the Father now open the door of His eternal house and say, “Welcome home.”

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by the Sacrament of eternal life, we humbly ask You, Lord, that our departed brother/sister N., who trusted in Your guidance through the journey of this world, may dwell forever in the peace of Your heavenly kingdom. Strengthen us also in hope until our own pilgrimage is ended. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May the God who guided Abraham on his journey and protected His people through the wilderness watch over you always.

May Christ,  
who prepares an eternal dwelling for His faithful,  
comfort your hearts and strengthen your hope.

And may the Holy Spirit,  
who gathers every nation into the family of God,  
grant you peace now and forever.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, ✠ and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
trusting that Christ walks beside His people  
and leads His faithful servants to the eternal home of the Father.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Every human heart is searching for home.  
Christ assures us that beyond all earthly journeys and separations,  
a place has already been prepared for us in the Father's house.

## 30. Funeral with Many Non-Catholics Present

**Wis 3:1–6,9** — “The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.”

**Jn 11:21–27** — Martha's profession of faith.

**Theme:** “Held Safely in God's Hands.”

*In a gathering where people come from different faith traditions and experiences, today's liturgy proclaims a hope deeper than division: every human life is precious, and those who belong to God are never abandoned. Like Martha standing before Jesus in grief and confusion, we come with questions, sorrow, memories, and hope — trusting that the God who holds the righteous in His hands also holds us in our mourning.*

## INTRODUCTION

A traveller once arrived at a small village after sunset. He spoke a different language and carried only a worn bag. Seeing him uncertain and alone, an elderly woman opened her door, placed bread before him, and pointed silently toward the fire. They shared almost no words, yet by the warmth of that welcome he understood: “Here, you are safe.”

Funerals often gather people from many walks of life — family members, friends, believers, doubters, those close to the Church and those who have been away for years. Yet grief has its own language that every heart understands. We come carrying memories, questions, gratitude, regrets, and love for N. Today the Gospel presents Martha standing before Jesus after the death of her brother Lazarus. In her sorrow she dares to speak honestly, and Jesus responds not with cold explanations but with His presence and promise: “I am the resurrection and the life.”

The Book of Wisdom assures us that “the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.” Human hands eventually let go — through distance, weakness, misunderstanding, or death itself — but God’s hands never do. That is the hope to which this Eucharist points us today.

As we gather before the Lord, we recognize that all of us need His mercy and healing. Let us therefore prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries by acknowledging our sins and asking for the compassion of Christ, who walks beside every grieving heart.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, You stand beside us in our sorrow and do not turn away from our tears: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You are the resurrection and the life for all who place their trust in You: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You gather people of every nation and language into the embrace of Your peace: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God,  
whose loving hands never abandon His children,  
look with mercy upon us gathered in grief and hope.  
May He forgive our sins,  
heal what is wounded within us,  
strengthen our faith in the resurrection of His Son,  
and bring us one day to everlasting life. Amen.

### **COLLECT**

O God,  
source of compassion and eternal hope,  
who sent Your Son to stand beside the grieving  
and to lead humanity from death into life,  
look kindly upon Your servants gathered today.  
Comfort those who mourn,  
strengthen those whose faith is uncertain,  
and help us all to trust  
that those who rest in Your hands are never lost.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Homily**

A teacher once asked her students to write about the safest place they had ever known. Some described their homes, others remembered a grandparent’s kitchen or a childhood garden. One quiet student wrote only one sentence: “The safest place is wherever someone remembers your name.”

That is what Martha experiences in today’s Gospel. Her brother has died. The house is full of mourners. Expectations and grief fill the air. Yet when Jesus arrives, He does not speak to Martha as part of a crowd. He speaks to her personally. He calls forth her faith, her sorrow, her hope. In the middle of death, Martha discovers that she is known, remembered, and loved.

Many of us here today come from different religious traditions, or perhaps from no religious tradition at all. Yet every human heart understands what it means to long for life, meaning, and lasting love.

The Book of Wisdom tells us: “The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.” That image is powerful because hands can protect, carry, and heal.

There is a story of a nurse in a hospital ward during the final hours of an elderly man’s life. The man seemed restless and afraid. He repeatedly reached outward with trembling hands. Finally the nurse simply held his hand quietly. His breathing slowed, and peace returned to his face. Sometimes the greatest comfort is not explanation but presence.

That is what Jesus offers Martha. He does not immediately solve her grief. He first enters it. Then He speaks those extraordinary words: “I am the resurrection and the life.” Christianity is not only a philosophy about death; it is faith in a person who walks through death and opens a path beyond it.

Another story is told of people stranded during a storm at an airport. Flights were cancelled, tempers rose, and strangers sat anxiously beside one another. A young child suddenly began sharing crayons and paper with the others nearby. Soon people who had never met were talking, smiling, and helping one another. Fear slowly gave way to human connection. In difficult moments, what saves us is often not certainty but companionship.

That is also why funerals matter. We gather not only to mourn N., but also to remind one another that no one should grieve alone. Love creates bonds stronger than silence and deeper than death itself.

Faith does not erase sadness. Even Martha grieves. Even Jesus weeps at Lazarus’ tomb. But faith tells us that grief is not the end of the story. God’s hands are larger than death.

A man once visited an old cathedral in another country. He understood none of the language spoken there. Yet as he watched people light candles, bow their heads, and comfort one another, he later said, “I could not understand the words, but I understood the love.” That is perhaps the deepest message of today’s liturgy. Beyond every difference of culture, language, or belief, we are united by the longing to love and to be held securely in love forever. And today Christ answers that longing with His promise: those who are held in God’s hands are never lost.

## **PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Gathered in sorrow yet strengthened by hope, let us bring our prayers before God, whose hands hold every human life with tenderness and mercy.

### **1. For the Church throughout the world:**

that she may continue to be a sign of hope, compassion, and welcome to all who seek comfort in times of loss.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

### **2. For people of every faith and culture gathered here today:**

that mutual respect, understanding, and peace may grow among all peoples. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

### **3. For those who mourn the death of N.:**

that God may strengthen them with loving memories, supportive friendships, and the hope of eternal life. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

### **4. For those who feel alone, forgotten, or burdened by grief:**

that they may discover companions who walk beside them with kindness and compassion. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**5. For N. and for all the faithful departed:**

that they may rest forever in the peace and light of God's eternal kingdom. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and life, You know the prayers we speak and the burdens we carry silently within our hearts.

Receive these petitions in Your goodness and keep us always in the embrace of Your love.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that this sacrifice, offered in faith, gratitude, and hope,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Lord God,  
receive these gifts which we place upon Your altar  
as signs of our trust in Your enduring love.  
As bread and wine are transformed by Your grace,  
renew our hearts with the hope  
that life in You is stronger than death.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give You thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the face of death  
You do not abandon Your people to darkness or despair.  
In Your Son, Jesus Christ,

You entered human sorrow, shared our tears,  
and opened for us the way to eternal life.

When grief burdens our hearts,  
You remind us that the righteous are held safely in Your hands.  
When fear and uncertainty surround us,  
Christ speaks again the words spoken to Martha:  
"I am the resurrection and the life."

And so, with all the Angels and Saints,  
and with all who have gone before us marked with faith and love,  
we praise You without end as we acclaim:

**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

**INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to pray with confidence as children held in the loving hands  
of God:

**EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by the comfort of Your mercy,  
we may remain steadfast in hope  
even in moments of grief and uncertainty,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ, You stood beside Martha in her sorrow and spoke words of life and peace.

Look not on our sins, but on the faith and longing of Your people, and graciously grant us the peace and unity of Your kingdom where You live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
the One who walks with us through sorrow  
and leads us toward eternal life.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Love does not end at the grave.

The God who remembers every name  
continues to hold His children in mercy and peace.

Today we entrust N. into those faithful hands,  
and we ask for the grace to live with greater compassion, hope, and trust. Even in loss, Christ remains among us —  
quietly speaking life to every grieving heart.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord our God, through this holy Eucharist  
You have strengthened us with the promise of eternal life.

Remain close to all who mourn,  
deepen our trust in Your compassion,  
and help us to carry into the world  
the peace and hope we have received today.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **FINAL BLESSING**

May the God of all consolation  
hold you in His loving hands  
and give you strength in every sorrow.

May Christ,  
who is the resurrection and the life,  
walk beside you in hope and peace.

And may the Holy Spirit  
fill your hearts with comfort, courage, and lasting love.

And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace,  
carrying into the world the compassion, hope, and love  
that Christ has shared with us today.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

“Human hands may one day let go, but those who rest in God’s hands are never lost.”