

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



It is not surprising that as human beings we find it easier to practice “justice” rather than “mercy”. If someone breaks

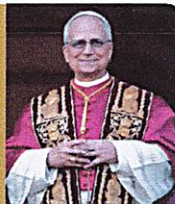
a law then it makes sense to us that they should be punished. Our reasoning is that if lawbreakers are not punished then they will continue to break the law. In this mentality the “law” takes precedence over the “person”. Instead, for Jesus it is the other way around. We can see this clearly in the way he engages with the woman caught in adultery. According to the “law” she should have been stoned. Jesus goes beyond the law and sees the person. It would be wrong to conclude that

Jesus is advocating lawlessness. Because human beings never lose the potential for greed and violence laws will always

be necessary to check the worst forms of human behaviour. What Jesus insists on is the need to “forgive your brother from your heart”. This is another way of saying: “love your enemies”. We can get some idea of what this means by looking at the way loving parents will discipline the bad behaviour of their child. Here forgiveness on the part of the parent simply means continuing to love the child even though the child has done wrong. In doing this they are mirroring God’s infinite mercy towards each one of us.



POPE LEO XIV THE HOLY SEE APOSTOLIC EXHORTATIONS



THE CRY OF THE POOR

11. A concrete commitment to the poor must also be accompanied by a change in mentality that can have an impact at the cultural level. In fact, the illusion of happiness derived from a comfortable life pushes many people towards a vision of life centered on the accumulation of wealth and social success at all costs, even at the expense of others and by taking advantage of unjust social ideals and political-economic systems that favor the strongest. Thus, in a world where the poor are increasingly numerous, we paradoxically see the growth of a wealthy elite, living in a bubble of comfort and luxury, almost in another world compared to ordinary people. This means that a culture still persists — sometimes well disguised — that discards others without even realizing it and tolerates with indifference that millions of people die of hunger or survive in conditions unfit for human beings. A few years ago, the photo of a lifeless child lying on a Mediterranean beach caused an uproar; unfortunately, apart from some momentary outcry, similar events are becoming increasingly irrelevant and seen as marginal news items.

Pope John Paul II Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*

The Eucharistic Sacrifice is intrinsically directed to the inward union of the faithful with Christ through communion; we receive the very One who offered himself for us, we receive his body which he gave up for us on the Cross and his blood which he “poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 26:28). We are reminded of his words: “As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me” (Jn 6:57). Jesus himself reassures us that this union, which he compares to that of the life of the Trinity, is truly realized. The Eucharist is a true banquet, in which Christ offers himself as our nourishment. When for the first time Jesus spoke of this food, his listeners were astonished and bewildered, which forced the Master to emphasize the objective truth of his words: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life within you” (Jn 6:53). (n.16)



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you,
that your prophets be found true.
Hear the prayers of your servant,
and of your people Israel.

Cf. Sir 36: 18

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL

Alleluia, alleluia.

John 13:34

A new commandment I give to you, says the Lord,
that you love one another, just as I have loved you.
Alleluia.

COLLECT

Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,
grant that we may serve you with all our 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.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

Sirach 27:30-28:7

Anger and wrath, these are abominations, and the sinful man
will hold them fast. The one who seeks vengeance will be paid
vengeance from the Lord, and he who keeps a record will have
his own sins recorded. Forgive your neighbour the wrong he
has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.
Does one person harbour anger against another and yet seek
for healing from the Lord? Does he have no mercy towards
someone like himself and yet pray concerning his own sins?
If he himself, being flesh, maintains wrath, who will make
atonement for his sins? Remember the end of your life and
cease from enmity, remember destruction and death and be
true to the commandments. Remember the commandments
and do not be angry with your neighbour; remember the
covenant of the Most High and overlook error.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.**PSALM**

Psalm 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 9-10. 11-12. R.8

**R. The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all within me, his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and never forget all his benefits.

R.

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with mercy and compassion.

He will not always find fault;
nor persist in his anger for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our faults.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so strong his mercy for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far from us does he remove our transgressions.

R.

SECOND READING

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Romans 14:7-9

Brothers and sisters: None of us lives to himself, and none of
us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we
die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether
we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived
again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.**GOSPEL**

Matthew 18:21-35

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Peter came up and said to Jesus, 'Lord, how often will
my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven
times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but
seventy times seven.'

'Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king
who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began
to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand
talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be
sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment
to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, "Have
patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity
for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him
the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of
his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing
him, he began to choke him, saying, "Pay what you owe." So his
fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with
me, and I will pay you." He refused and went and put him in prison
until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what
had taken place they were greatly distressed, and they went and
reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master
summoned him and said to him, "You wicked servant! I forgave
you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you
have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?"
And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should
pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of
you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**R. PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Look with favour on our supplications, O Lord,
and in your kindness accept these, your servants' offerings,
that what each has offered to the honour of your name
may serve the salvation of all.

R.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

Cf. Ps 35: 8

How precious is your mercy, O God!**The children of men seek shelter in the shadow of your wings.****PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, we pray,
take possession of our minds and bodies,
so that its effects, and not our own desires,
may always prevail in us.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.