

Liturgy Alive of 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Greeting

The Lord speaks to us, his disciples today:

"Come, follow me, renounce yourselves,
take up your cross and come after me."
May these words call us away from ourselves
and may the Lord go always with you.

R/ And also with you.

Introduction by the Celebrant

A. It is Risky to Follow the Lord

Do we have to seek suffering and death? Not at all! Jesus himself gives us the answer. He begged his Father to take suffering away from him. Yet he accepted death and the cross. Why? Because he loved the Father and he loved the people and wanted to save them. If he did that work and proclaimed his message, the religious leaders would turn against him and seek his death, to get rid of the nuisance he was. Yet he remained faithful to his mission, faithful until death. He is now asking us to remain faithful even at the cost of suffering and death.

B. Our Christian Living Is Our Main Worship

(This is the message of the short but very important second reading.)

Our Sunday Mass is the high point of our Christian living. It expresses intensely what we try to live every day. Everything we think and say and do, our everyday life, as St Paul says, must give honor and praise to God. This is what we sum up in our Sunday eucharist. In turn, the eucharist becomes the living source of a

deeper commitment to God and people. A daily life that contradicts our Sunday worship is a distortion and a parody of religion. Let us ask the Lord that our everyday life may worship God in spirit and truth.

Penitential Act

We want an easy religion, without demands,

without sacrifices, without any cost to ourselves.
Let us ask the Lord to forgive us.

(PAUSE)

Lord Jesus, you resolutely took the way
to Jerusalem, to suffer there and die for us:
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*

Jesus Christ, you wanted to remain faithful
to the Father who sent you,
and to us, whom you loved and wanted to save:
Christ, have mercy. *R/ Christ, have mercy.*

Lord Jesus, you invite us
to remain faithful with you to our mission in life:
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*

Have mercy on us, Lord,
and forgive us our cowardice and our compromises.
Give us your determination and courage

and lead us to everlasting life. *R/ Amen.*

Opening Prayer

A. It is Risky to Follow the Lord

Let us pray God for the courage
to follow his Son the whole way of faithful love
(PAUSE)

God our Father,

your Son Jesus knew that your heart was set
on offering light and life to all people,
and so he faithfully accepted his mission
even if it would bring him death on a cross.
We are afraid of the cross.

Make us follow Jesus all the way.

Let your Son pray for us
that our faith may not weaken
and that we may have the courage
to make the sacrifices that bring life to others.
May this give us the fullness of your life.

now and for ever. *R/ Amen.*

B. Our Christian Living Is Our Main Worship

Let us pray to God
that our whole life may honor him
(PAUSE)
Our God and Father,
Today we bring you the perfect worship
of your Son Jesus Christ.
With him we praise and thank you
by offering ourselves with him.
May this offering not be confined
to the fleeting moment of this eucharist
but burst forth in the life of every day
through our love of you
and our dedicated service of the people given us
to cherish and to share with what we are and have.

We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. *R/ Amen.*

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Introduction: **There Is A Fire Burning In My Heart**

The prophet Jeremiah complains against God, for his mission brings him only trouble. Yet he keeps trusting God and continues his task.

Second Reading Introduction: **Offer Your Life As A Sacrifice**

Paul stresses a basic truth: true worship consists in seeking God's will and offering our lives as a sacrifice. Only then can our eucharistic worship be genuine.

Gospel Introduction: **Take Up Your Cross And Follow Me**

Jesus predicts his passion and resurrection. Then he asks his disciples to follow him on his road of the cross to life. Peter protests, for this is hard to take. But it is God's way.

Commentary

WE must hear again Jesus trying to make clear to his disciples that he is going to Jerusalem and there he will be rejected, suffer many things, be murdered and rise again. And Peter, though they all feel the same way, reproaches Jesus and tries to take him aside and basically tell him to shut up and stop saying those things. He's frightening them and discouraging them. Jesus is clear: Peter is a stumbling block, a rock getting in the way of God's will and the way of the cross and the Resurrection. He's thinking like the world, not like God. Jesus is the Son of Man, not a worldly king and his ways are drastically different than the power bases of kings, governments and armies and nations. His power is revealed in suffering, in resistance to evil that does no harm to others and in forgiveness and mercy even for enemies as well as for friends who betray and desert him. Each will have to decide whether to stand with Jesus or against him. We must decide with every event of the world, every decision, relationship and circumstance. Are we stumbling blocks to the coming of justice and peace—God's way in the world?

General Intercessions

Our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to follow him to carry the cross after him and to entrust to him all who suffer. Let us say to him: **R/ Lord, be our strength.**

- For the Church, that Christ may become more visible in its commitment to serve God and people, in its loving concern for the poor and its continuous conversion to the gospel, let us pray: **R/ Lord, be our strength.**
- For all Christians who claim to follow Christ, that they may live up without fear to the demands of the gospel and bear witness to the crucified lord, let us pray: **R/ Lord, be our strength.**
- For those who suffer in their bodies and their hearts, for those who work for justice in the world and for peace among people, that they may realize that they are one with the Lord Jesus in his passion and death, let us pray: **R/ Lord, be our strength.**
- For those for whom it is difficult to accept God's will and their mission in life, that they may encounter friends who inspire them to regain their trust in God and people, and who encourage them when they are afraid, let us pray: **R/ Lord, be our strength.**
- For us gathered here for the eucharist, that we may honestly seek God's will in union with Jesus our Lord, let us pray: **R/ Lord, be our strength.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you invite us to follow you and to offer your sacrifice with you. We wish to work with you to bring your life and grace to all our brothers and sisters. Be with us now and for ever. *R/ Amen.*

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord our God,
we wish to offer to you
the sacrifice that pleases you,
your Son Jesus Christ.
Accept also through him
the sacrifice of our lives,
that with your Son we may die to sin
and rise to new life
in the realities of everyday living.
Let this celebration reflect and express
our pains and hopes, our trials and joys,
in union with the paschal mystery

of Jesus Christ our Lord. R/ Amen.

Introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer

By his cross and resurrection Jesus brought us forgiveness and life. Let us join him in his sacrifice here, that we may follow him also in the sacrifices demanded by everyday life.

Invitation to the Lord's Prayer

With Jesus our Lord
we pray to our Father in heaven
that we may always seek his will,
so that God's ways may be our ways.

: R/ Our Father...

Deliver Us

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil
and grant us the inner peace
which comes from doing your will
even when it is hard to do so.
Keep us free from discouragement
and help us to spare no effort
in bringing your love and healing to all.
Lead us forward in joyful hope
toward the full coming
of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

R/ For the kingdom...

Invitation to Communion

This is the body of Christ,
our Lamb of God who suffered,
died for us on the cross
and is risen from the dead.
Happy are we, for we are invited
to share his meal and to follow him.

R/ Lord, I am not worthy...

Prayer after Communion

Lord our God,
we have eaten with your Son

the stale bread of our poverty
and the refreshing bread of his strength.
We have drunk with him
the sour wine of suffering
and the tasty wine of joy and hope.
May Jesus give us the courage
to turn the sorrows that are part of life
into gifts of self to others
and to make us reliable sources
of strength and comfort and hope
to all those we encounter

in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

Blessing

Sometimes, like the prophet Jeremiah,
we struggle and contest with God
in moments of trial and discouragement.
Keep in mind that God loves us
and wants our happiness.
Yet at times we must take up
the crosses demanded
by faithfulness to our family, our task in life,
to the ways of the gospel.
May the Lord be then with you and bless you:
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *R/ Amen.*

May the Lord Jesus go with you on all your ways. *R/ Thanks be to God.*