

Liturgy Alive of Thursday, 18th week in ordinary time.

Opening Prayer

Lord, God of the covenant,
in this eucharist you offer us again
your communion of life and love,
your permanent friendship.
God, it is good to know that we are loved,
with a gratuitous love
that never betrays or deserts us
and rejoices with our joys.
Enlighten and purify
our fragile human loves,
that we may always be your people

and you our God for ever.

Introduction to the First Reading

Today we hear one of the most encouraging passages of Jeremiah: God will make a new covenant with humanity and write his law not in regulations but in our hearts. This was the covenant that Jesus made new and definitive on the cross. This is the covenant that we celebrate in this eucharist. With Peter we recognize Jesus among us as the Savior, the Son of the living and loving God.

Introduction to the Gospel Reading

Jesus faces his apostles with the question "Who am I?" Peter, in the name of all, professes that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, even though probably there is no direct recognition here yet of his divinity, but rather of his divine origin. After this "confession," the Lord gives Peter his mission as head of the apostolic college and of the Church. Now that they know who he is, he can tell them also of his passion, death, and resurrection. Yet, this seems too much at that time: Peter protests. His faith is not strong enough. He thinks still in human terms. We profess to know who Jesus is. But do we too, not think too often in merely human ways?

General Intercessions

- That we may be very grateful to God for remaining always faithful to the covenant he made with us even if we have been unfaithful, we pray:
- That we may be very much aware that in the name of the covenant we have also to be just, merciful and good to our neighbor, we pray:
- That we may appreciate that Jesus renews the covenant of love with us in every eucharistic celebration, we pray:

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord God, our Father,
in these signs of bread and wine
we celebrate the new and everlasting covenant
which through your Son Jesus Christ
you have made with us.
May he bind us to you
with a bond that can never be undone
and write into our hearts his law of self-giving love.

that we may acclaim him

as our Lord for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Prayer after Communion

Lord, God of dependable love,
in this eucharist we have experienced
how much you are a faithful God of love.
May we respond with fruitfulness to you
and cultivate the best in us
to offer it to you and to our brothers and sisters
not by law but gratuitously,
that all that we touch may be blessed
and give praise to you, our Father,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Blessing

"I will write my law on your hearts. I will be your God and you shall be my people." If only we could be more aware of these words and this marvelous reality! May the almighty and loving God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.