

Liturgy Alive of Thursday, 23rd week in ordinary time.

Opening Prayer

God our Father,
from whom all good things come
and for whom we live,
fill us with your own gratuitous love,
the one you have shown us in Jesus Christ.
Teach us to love and bless
even those who curse or maltreat us.
Indeed, deepen and widen our limited love,
make it without measure, like yours,
that we may be called sons and daughters
of you, the Most High, our Father,

through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Introduction

In ancient times, in the Greek world, much of the meat of the sacrifices was then sold for the food of the people. By eating this meat, did Christians share in idolatry? They do not honor false gods, since these do not exist, says Paul. But as some Christians are scrupulous, it is better not to offend them, and therefore to abstain from meat coming from sacrifices to false gods and to abstain from something they could legitimately do. That is love, and love should rule the community.

Gospel Introduction

Love does not rest on sympathies alone. A gospel-love, a love of faith, has no boundaries. One who loves gives more than asked and loves the "unlovable," including enemies. It does not judge nor condemn, is always ready to be compassionate and forgiving. When we look at all these implications, we have to confess with shame that we are far from this ideal proposed us by our Lord. How far are we in this world as the sign of God's own love?

General Intercessions

- For all Christians, that our readiness to forgive and our constant quest for tolerance and peace may point to Christ and his Gospel, we pray:
 - For all, who can hardly believe in forgiveness, for those who give others no opportunities, for those who keep holding grudges, for those blinded by hatred, that God may enrich them with his mercy, we pray:
- For our Christian communities, that we may hear the call of Jesus to do away with our division and selfishness, and that he may help us to overcome evil by goodness, we pray:

Prayer over the Gifts

God our Father,
you treat alike sinners and those who love you
with the bread and drink of joy of your Son.
All are invited, all are loved.
Help us to set the table of ourselves
to friend and foe alike,
to those we love and those we fear.
May this be our offering to you,
which you accept through your Son,

Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Compassionate Father,
through your Son, you have asked us
in this Eucharistic celebration
not to judge or condemn,
and even to grant generous pardon
to those whom we feel to have hurt us.

Let your Son, Jesus Christ give us the capacity
to give without seeking repayment,
to claim no merit or credit,
but simply to love without boundaries,

as you have loved us in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Blessing

"If you love only those who love you, what credit is that to you? Love your enemies!" It is something very difficult to do, but it is at the core of Christianity. Let us ask the Lord for strength, for a Christian love deep enough to make us capable of this. May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.