

# Liturgy Alive of 31 Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Greetings *(see Second Reading)*

Jesus here among us offered himself for us.  
He is living for ever  
to intercede for all of us who come to him.  
May his grace and peace be always with you.

*R/ And also with you.*

## Introduction by the Celebrant

### A. Love Summit and Summary of All Commandments

There is no greater love than that which disposes someone to give up one's life for others. Jesus, the person who tells us this, proved by his own life and death that he meant what he said. He insists that love of God and love of people are one and inseparable. It is perhaps easy to love an unseen God but it is often very difficult for us to love people whose weakness we see, people who are cranky and rough and unreliable. But if we cannot love these people, we really do not love God. Jesus, who is God's love alive, can give us his own endless, reliable love.

### B. Share God's Love

People who love one another deeply are disposed to sacrifice themselves for one another. Yet, what counts more than the sacrifice itself, is their mutual love; that is the root. Love is so great because, more than anything else, it is a gift from God who loved us first. If we become fully aware of this it will be easy to love people and to be at peace and in love with ourselves, for God loves us in all our frailty and fickleness and he keeps accepting us. Why, then, should we not accept also those around us? We ask the Lord in this eucharist to let us feel his love and to enable us share it.

## Penitential Act

Whose love has not failed at times?  
Let us ask the Lord and those we have hurt  
to forgive us in the generosity of their heart.  
*(PAUSE)*

Lord Jesus, let us share in your love  
that was attentive to all people  
and cured their ills:  
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*

Jesus Christ, let us share in your love  
that embraced even sinners and outcasts:  
Christ, have mercy. *R/ Christ, have mercy.*

Lord Jesus, let us share in your love  
that went all the way, even accepting death  
to save the unjust, the ungrateful, the hard-hearted:  
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*

Have mercy on us, Lord,  
and forgive us all our sins.  
Make us capable of a love that excludes no one  
and lead us to everlasting life. *R/ Amen.*

## Opening Prayer

Let us pray to God, the source of all love  
to refresh our love  
*(PAUSE)*  
Lord our God, loving Father,  
all true love comes from you and leads to you.  
You have committed yourself to us  
in a covenant of lasting love  
in the person of Jesus Christ.  
Help us to respond to your love  
with the whole of our being  
and to live your commandments  
not as laws forced on us from outside  
but as opportunities to love you  
for yourself and in people, our brothers and sisters.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

## Liturgy of the Word

### First Reading Introduction: Love the Lord with All Your Heart

God said as early as in the Old Testament: Listen, people of the covenant: The one Lord God loves you. Love God with all your heart.

### Second Reading Introduction: Christ, the Definitive High Priest

Christ is the definitive mediator and high priest, for he is the eternal Son of God and he sacrificed himself totally for us. He alone can bring real communion with God.

# Gospel Introduction: No Greater Than These Two

Listen, people of the new covenant: Love the Lord God with all that is in you; remember, that love includes everyone.

## General Intercessions

Love can hardly be commanded, yet it ought to be the heart of all we do. Let us pray to the Father of all love for the capacity to love him and our neighbor far and near. Let us say: *R/ Lord, make us instruments of your love.*

- That the Church for which Christ died may grow into a universal community of love which makes God's unconditional love visible to all people, let us pray: *R/ Lord, make us instruments of your love.*
- That Christians everywhere may not be people of legalisms and outward observances but people with a heart, who do what they have to do and more because they are God's children, let us pray: *R/ Lord, make us instruments of your love.*
- That the nations of the world may learn to respect and help one another, and to build peace and progress not at the expense of one another but on the basis of justice and equitable sharing, let us pray: *R/ Lord, make us instruments of your love.*
- That we may be reliable friends to those suffering in any form; that we may lighten their burdens and help them to keep trusting in God and people, let us pray: *R/ Lord, make us instruments of your love.*
- That our anemic and dried-up love may become rich and spontaneous, like a fresh breath of life and joy brightening the lives of those around us and a wordless song of praise to God, let us pray: *R/ Lord, make us instruments of your love.*

Loving God, we claim to belong to you and to your Son. Help us through your Spirit of love to give to your love a human shape, that we may make people happy and be your happy people in Christ Jesus our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

## Prayer over the Gifts

God our Father,  
in these offerings of bread and wine  
allow us to join your Son Jesus  
in his perfect sacrifice of love.  
Accept our heart, our life,  
our thoughts and words and intentions,  
our burdens and our joys  
as a grateful way to respond to your love  
and to bring life to our brothers and sisters.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

## Introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer

One of heart and voice, let us give thanks to God for the love shown us in Christ, a love that makes us capable of love. Jesus' obedience too has made us capable of giving to God a response of love.

## Invitation to the Lord's Prayer

By the power of the Holy Spirit

who dwells in our hearts,

we pray to our Father in heaven: *R/ Our Father...*

#### **Deliver Us**

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil  
of selfishness and calculation  
and open us to your love.  
Keep us free from the fear  
of committing ourselves in love  
to anyone who needs us,  
and let our love for those around us  
be the test of the quality  
of our love for you.  
Help us to be one in heart and soul  
and to be a community of service,  
as we wait in joyful hope

for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ... *R/ For the kingdom...*

#### **Invitation to Communion**

This is the Lamb of God  
who gave up his life for us  
and who said:  
Everyone will know  
that you are my disciples  
if you love one another  
as I have loved you.  
Happy are we to be invited

to share Jesus' meal of love. *R/ Lord, I am not worthy...*

#### **Prayer after Communion**

Our God and Father,  
we have learned from your Son  
not merely to love others  
as we love ourselves  
but if necessary more than ourselves.  
By the strength of this eucharist,  
dispose us to rejoice with the happy  
and to mourn with the sad,  
to cultivate the best in ourselves  
and to offer it to others as a free gift.  
Help us never to take Christ without people,  
never people without Christ,

who is our Lord for ever. *R/ Amen.*

#### **Blessing**

Did we really need the reminder  
that love is the heart of our faith,  
as it is the heart of all human life?  
Yes, if we are aware  
that often we forget that love.  
Perhaps the love of God is easier to keep in a way,  
because God seems often far away.  
But our neighbor is there,  
with all his irritating blemishes and habits.  
Let us not forget that he or she  
is Christ meeting us on the road of life.  
May God fill us with his love and bless us:  
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *R/ Amen.*

Let us go with one another

the way of love of the Lord. *R/ Thanks be to God.*