

Liturgy Alive of Feria

Opening Prayer

Lord our God,
we know that Jesus came for everybody,
yet he wanted to find back
the very one given up by people:
the tax collector, the sinner, the prodigal.
Do not allow us in our zeal for what is right and good
to lose sight of this one person
who was written off by people,
yet who merited the special concern of your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Introduction

As a Jew, Paul could be proud of many things: born as a member of the chosen people and circumcised; as a Pharisee, secure in the strict observance of the Law... Yet all these had proven to be not advantages, but obstacles to encountering Christ: instead, they had made him a persecutor of Christ; the Law had made him a prisoner of the Law rather than a servant of God. And now, he is happy that by the grace of God, he has discovered the foolishness of the cross. God has found him; Christ has become his riches, and all the rest doesn't matter.

Gospel Introduction

The whole chapter 15 of Luke deals with people who have lost something and find it back: a man finds a lost sheep, a woman a coin, and a father his son. All are extremely happy at the end, except the brother of the lost son. This joy expresses Jesus' attention for all that is lost, rejected, devaluated in the eyes of people. Like Jesus, we have to keep looking for these people and to rejoice when they come back to God and to people.

Commentary

JESUS tells two stories, out of three in a row about a lost sheep, one out of a hundred and the shepherd leaving the one hundred to their own protection and going after the lost and wandering one. And another about a woman losing a coin off her dowry belt and searching high and low for it and calling a party with her neighbors to celebrate finding it (and keeping the belt from continuing to unravel). This is the way the angels rejoice and God delights in finding one who is brought home. The story is told at a party with sinners who have come back, while those who don't want to eat with 'them' overhear the story. Who are we? Self-righteous and indignant, not wanting to be reminded that we have all been lost and the invitation to eat at the table of Eucharist goes out to all, but in accepting forgiveness we must forgive one another-all of us and eat together. Jesus, forgive us our spitefulness, our arrogance and inflated images of ourselves. Draw us all into your company of sinners lost and found. Amen.

General Intercessions

- That leaders of the Church and of society may not lose themselves in chasing after power, prestige and wealth, we pray:

- That the Lord may give to his Church shepherds who care very much about people who go astray and try to bring them back to the Lord, we pray:

- That in our communities we support one another in trying to live the life of Christ, we pray:

Prayer over the Gifts

Lord our God,

let your bread and wine remind us
of our solidarity even with all those
who live on the fringes of society,
You love them and they are part of us
May we speak to them the encouraging word
for which they are waiting
May we too look for them and love them
with our Lord Jesus Christ,

your Son and our Lord for ever.

Prayer after Communion

Lord our God,

your kingdom is not the private domain
of those you have given the grace
to find you and to believe in you.
May we care with you and search with you
for the weak, the embarrassed and the timid,
without any attitude of superiority or condescension
Help us to be a community
in which there is enough space for everyone
for human growth and dignity for all.

We ask you this through Christ our Lord.

Blessing

God looked for us and found us because he loved us long before we were aware of it. We know he loves all and wants all to belong to his kingdom. May we help anyone to find the Lord, with the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.