



EUCHALETTE

A black and white illustration showing a priest in vestments performing the Eucharist. He is holding a chalice and a host. In front of him, a group of diverse people, including children and adults, are gathered, some with their hands raised in prayer.

15 September 2024

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

The Cross, An Investment Like No Other!

Today's theme reminds us of the duty to take up our cross and carry it in the footsteps of Christ. This is not something that we do with pleasure, for the cross always entails some degree of suffering and death. We instinctively choose life and tend to enjoy life. And yet, the cross looms large on the horizon of our earthly existence. It may be the cross of sickness, of natural defects, of failures, or of injustices inflicted on us. Or it may be the cross of living out the demands of our faith, as St. James reminds us in today's Second Reading. Or it is the cross of bearing with one another's shortcomings within our own family, in our place of work, in our communities . . . It is definitely and without doubt a pearl of great price, and a pearl of great reward, too!



In this Eucharist let us ask for the grace to carry our cross with patience and in a spirit of faith, always remembering that the cross is the great solid bridge to heaven – the absolute and our coveted pearl of great price!

INTRODUCTORY RITES



Entrance Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)

Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you, that your prophets be found true. Hear the prayers of your servant, and of your people Israel.

Greeting

P – In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

All–Amen!

P –Praise and glory to Jesus who saved us through the blood of his cross. May his grace and peace be with you all!

All– And with your spirit!

Penitential Act

P –As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection, let us renew our awareness of our shortcomings and humbly ask the Lord's forgiveness. *(Pause)*

P –Lord Jesus, you redeemed us at the cost of your life. Lord, have mercy!

All– Lord, have mercy!

P –Christ Jesus, you asked your disciples to take up their cross and follow in your footsteps. Christ, have mercy!

All– Christ, have mercy!

P –Lord Jesus, you expect us to help our neighbor carry the cross of their trials. Lord, have mercy!

All– Lord, have mercy!

P –May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **All**– Amen!

Gloria

All– Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you

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alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen!

Collect (Opening Prayer)

P –Look upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and, that we may feel the working of your mercy, grant that we may serve you with all our heart.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All–Amen!



1st Reading *Is 50:5-9*
The prophet Isaiah sketches for us a moving picture of the “Suffering Servant” who endures all tortures with sublime patience, trusting only in his innocence and in the Lord’s help.

R –A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The Lord God opens my ear that I may hear. And I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame. He is near who upholds my right; if anyone wishes to oppose me, let us appear together. Who disputes my right? Let that man confront me. See, the Lord God is my help; who will prove me wrong?

The Word of the Lord!
All–Thanks be to God!

Responsorial Psalm *Ps 116*
R –I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living!

R. M. Velez



* I love the Lord because he has heard my voice in supplication, because he has inclined his ear to me the day I called.

R.

* The cords of death encompassed me; the snares of the netherworld seized upon me; I fell into distress and sorrow and I called upon the name of the Lord, “O Lord, save my life!”

R.

* Gracious is the Lord and just; yes, our God is merciful. The Lord keeps the little ones; I was brought low, and he saved me.

R.

* For he has freed my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

R.

2nd Reading *Jas 2:14-18*
In this passage St. James writes the famous sentence: “Faith without works is dead.” He thereby emphasizes the necessity that our faith be complemented with corresponding acts of justice and charity.

R –A reading from the Letter of James

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you do not give them what they need for their bodies, what good is it?

So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead. Indeed someone might say, “You have faith and I have works.” Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.

The Word of the Lord!
All–Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation

All–Alleluia! Alleluia!

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel *Mk 8:27-35*

Acting as spokesman for the Twelve, Peter proclaims Jesus’ messiahship but strongly rejects the idea that the Messiah will suffer. In his response, Jesus reminds Peter and all of us of the duty to accept God’s plan even when it demands self-sacrifice.

P –The Lord be with you!

All–And with your spirit!

P –A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
All–Glory to you, O Lord!

Jesus and his disciples set out for the villages of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” They said in reply, “John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets.” And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter said to him in reply, “You are the Christ!” Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.

He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days. He spoke this openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. At this Jesus turned around and, looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.”

He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel will save it.”

The Gospel of the Lord!
All–Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Homily

Profession of Faith

(*Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (*bow*)* **and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.*** For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen!

Prayer of the Faithful

P —Suffering is very much part of our lives. We need the help of God's grace in order to recognize its function in the process of our salvation. But especially, we need His help to carry our crosses with patience and love. Aware of our weakness, we pray:

All—**Lord, help us bear our cross!**

C—That the entire Church may always proclaim the divinity of Jesus to a world that easily stops

at his humanity, let us pray! **R.**

C—That all Catholic families may always be appreciative of the gift of life and extend their loving care to all their members, especially the children, the elderly and the sick, let us pray! **R.**

C—That all our catechists and all those involved in the catechetical ministry may see rewarded with success their efforts to form the young generation according to the teaching of Jesus, let us pray! **R.**

C—That the leaders of religious groups and basic ecclesial communities may be at all times an inspiration to the other members, let us pray! **R.**

C—That the refugees who have been forced to flee their homelands may have the possibility to return to their native places in dignity and freedom, let us pray! **R.**

C—That each one of us will hear and take to heart the cry of the Earth and of victims of natural disasters and climactic change, and that all will undertake to personally care for the world in which we live, let us pray. **R.**

P —Lord Jesus, look with compassion on all those who are suffering, especially those who are suffering for the faith. Grant them and all of us the consolation of your saving presence. You who live and care for ever and ever.

All—Amen!

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



Preparation of the Gifts

P —Pray, brethren . . .

All—**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

P —Look with favor on our supplications, O Lord, and in your kindness accept your servants' offerings, that what each has offered to the honor of your name

may serve the salvation of all.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen!

Preface IV

P —The Lord be with you!

All—**And with your spirit!**

P —Lift up your hearts!

All—**We lift them up to the Lord!**

P —Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

All—**It is right and just!**

P —It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For by his birth he brought renewal to humanity's fallen state, and by his suffering, canceled out our sins; by his rising from the dead, he has opened the way to eternal life, and by ascending to you, O Father, he has unlocked the gates of heaven.

And so, with the company of Angels and Saints, we sing the hymn of your praise, as without end we acclaim:

All—**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Memorial Acclamation

P —The mystery of faith!

All—**Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.**

COMMUNION RITE



All—**Our Father . . .**

P —Deliver us, Lord . . .

All—**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever!**

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

All—**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. (2x)**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Communion

P –This is the Lord Jesus who endured suffering and death for our salvation. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to his Supper.

All–Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.)

The chalice of blessing that we bless is a communion in the Blood of Christ; and the bread

that we break is a sharing in the Body of the Lord.

Prayer after Communion

P –May the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, we pray, take possession of our minds and bodies, so that its effects, and not our own desires, may always prevail in us.

Through Christ our Lord.

All–Amen!



P –The Lord be with you!

All–And with your spirit!

P –Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing. *(Pause)*
–May the Lord, our God give

you strength to carry the crosses of your daily life.

All–Amen!

P –May He make your faith solid and joyful that you may persevere in doing good works.

All–Amen!

P –May He direct your steps to Himself and show you how to walk in charity and peace.

All–Amen!

P –May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All–Amen!

P –Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!

All–Thanks be to God!

INVESTING ONE’S HEART

Kalakbay at Katoto

Our liturgy today opened with a perfect image to dwell on. We prayed God that “*we may serve Him with all our heart.*” True service, the prayer seems to remind us, is not only all about doing and offering great things . . . It is all about giving one’s heart.

We can spot the difference between a begrudging waiter who doles out plates of food, and a firm believer in human goodness who serves not only food, but platters of joy and fulfillment. The former invests nothing else and nothing more than time and effort. The latter invests his or her own heart as he or she serves.

Investing one’s heart . . . this is what Isaiah apparently did. No one who is unwilling and unable to offer his or her heart to God can do as Isaiah did . . . “*I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.*”

Investing one’s heart . . . this is what enabled Isaiah to do the impossible, to bear the unbearable, and suffer the insufferable: “*The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced.*”

Investing one’s heart . . . this is what James counsels us. He tells us to go beyond giving out invitations to dinner parties. He reminds us to go beyond doling out pieces of advice, like “*Keep warm and eat well.*” He tells us to walk the talk: “*Faith, if it does not have works, is dead.*”

Investing one’s heart . . . this is what it means to serve and to serve faithfully. This is what the Lord in today’s gospel asks of us. He does not ask us, “what will you do for me?” No, he asks us, “*who do people say that I am?*” Nay more, he asks us, “*you . . . who do you say that I am?*”

Investing one’s heart . . . One who offers services alone does good. But one who offers his heart along with the good he does, does marvelously well. For investing one’s heart has to do with a relationship. It has to do with walking with the Lord. Like the psalmist says, he who invests his heart can utter with confidence: “*I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.*”

In our days and time, people do a lot of things for other people. Service with a smile is something we are familiar with everywhere . . . at malls, at filling stations, in



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restaurants, even in Churches, courtesy of “ministers of welcome” or ushers. Sales clerks are just willing to serve you and kowtow to your every wish just to make that sought-after deal. Car salesmen go out of their way to offer you every “add-on feature” and “extra service” imaginable on earth to make you part with your hard-earned cash. They invest time, effort, a lot of “talk” and a whole lot more just to get the best deal in town. But all that investment only lasts until you issue your check and sign that deal. After that, it’s “caveat emptor” all over again . . . buyer beware!

They invest all, but not the most important of all – the heart.

Today, I would like to suggest that the Lord aims right for the heart, and goes right for the jugular . . . right where it matters. He talks about what investing one’s heart really means. It means believing. This is really what that Latin-derived word “creed” really means . . . credo . . . “I give my heart” . . . To believe is literally to invest one’s heart (*cor dare*). But what he means is not just plainly believing cold truths. What he means is not just having faith-content. What he means is not just knowing who other people say Jesus is. It is all about defining who we say he is . . . who he really is, for me, for you, and for all of us. It is all about believing and belonging . . . as much faith-content as faith-context. It is all about connectedness and attachment to the person of the Lord. *“I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.”*

Isaiah could boast of his pain, not because his pain was something to brag about, but because his pain showed him how close God was to him. Isaiah re-

joiced, not because he suffered, but because, having suffered, God *“opened his ear that he may hear.”* God listened. But God more than just listened. He came to his rescue. *“See, the Lord God is my help; who will prove me wrong?”*

We are called to more than just believing. We are called to belonging. This is what faith coupled with works is all about. It is not just a matter of saying who other people say the Lord is. This is generic faith. It is believing by proxy. This is the type of faith we have when all we do Sunday in and Sunday out is “go to Church” without “doing Eucharist,” by coming in late, by our inattention, and by our anemic participation. This is the type of faith when all we remember is how the ministers of welcome succeeded in keeping those noisy and nosy kids at bay, or how funny or how long (and boring) the priest’s homily was, or how mediocre the singing was . . . This is the type of faith that focuses on rituals but not on life, on ceremonies, but never on testimonies of Christian lives of service.

What type of faith do we all have? Is our faith in the Lord what others say of him? Is it what each one of us says about him? Is it a mere invitation to a dinner party (Keep warm and well fed), an empty sales pitch for the Lord, or is it what the Liturgy today expects us to do – an investment . . . an investment of the heart?

What have we invested in lately for the Lord? It’s never too late to begin. Today is as good a day as any other to do just that, as we pray once more: *“Almighty God, our creator and guide, may we serve you with all our heart and know your forgiveness in our lives.”* Investing one’s heart . . . this is an investment like no other.

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