

Even as we come here to celebrate the Eucharist, the burdens of life may weigh heavy on our minds, our hearts, and our bodies. We may be tired from working six days a week. We may be anxious about the health of a family member. We may be mourning the loss of a loved one. We may be just plain weary, physically or emotionally. In today's Gospel, Jesus encourages the crowds, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." He says the same words to us today. Let us turn to the Lord for comfort, for his yoke is easy and his burden light.

As we gather let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

*Profession of Faith p. 106*

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 as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he 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.

*Introductory Rite:*

*Greeting:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God forever. **Blessed be God forever.**

*Penitential Rite:* p. 6

My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

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

*Opening Prayer:*

O God, who in the abasement of your Son have raised up a fallen world, fill your faithful with holy joy, for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin you bestow eternal gladness.

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

*Liturgy of the Word:*

*First Reading p. 82*

A reading from the Book of Zechariah

*Zechariah 9:9-10*

Thus says the LORD: Rejoice heartily, O daughter Zion, shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king shall come to you; a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass, on a colt, the foal of an ass.

He shall banish the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; the warrior's bow shall be banished, and he shall proclaim peace to the nations. His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Song

R/. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

**R/. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.**

I will extol you, O my God and King, and I will bless your name forever and ever.

Every day will I bless you, and I will praise your name forever and ever. **R/.**

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness.

The LORD is good to all and compassionate toward all his works. **R/.**

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD, and let your faithful ones bless you.

Let them discourse of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might. **R/.**

The LORD is faithful in all his words and holy in all his works.

The LORD lifts up all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. **R/.**

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

*Romans 8:9, 11-13*

Brothers and sisters: You are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you. Consequently, brothers and sisters, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Gospel

*Matthew 11:25-30*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

**Glory to you, Lord**

At that time Jesus exclaimed: "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to little ones. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him."

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Reflection on the Word:

- In our society, we tend to regard meekness as weakness. Those who are meek never assert themselves, never get their way, and seem to always end up in last place. But clearly this is not what Zechariah means when he writes that our king would be meek, yet would rule to the ends of the earth. Nor is it what Jesus means when he says, "I am meek and humble of heart" (Matthew 11:29). Webster's defines *meek* as enduring difficulties with patience and

without resentment. This describes Jesus to a T and fulfills Zechariah's prophecy. Zechariah's words remind us of Jesus when he entered Jerusalem. There he would endure crucifixion and death—with patience and without resentment. May his example lead us to face our own trials with more patience and with less resentment.

- To make our trials easier to endure, Jesus assures us that his yoke is easy and his burden light. Clearly, he is not speaking of what he would be facing himself, for his own yoke was exceedingly difficult and his own burden was uniquely heavy. But because he has endured the cross and grave, we know that he can carry our own burdens, no matter how difficult we may find them. We do not have to carry them alone. We have in Jesus someone who can and will carry any difficulty we have.
- Jesus says something else between speaking of meekness and burdens: "Learn from me" (11:29). Indeed, from him we can learn how he was able to endure every burden he faced with patience and resolve. He did so because he so loved the Father that he was willing to do God's will, no matter the consequences. He did so because he loved all us sinners so much that he was willing to pay the ultimate cost to save us. May our love of God and love of neighbor give us the strength to assist our needy brothers and sisters in carrying their burdens. May our sharing of their burdens—maybe by offering a helping hand, maybe by lending money or something else that is lacking, maybe by just sitting down to listen—relieve them in some small way, if only to make clear that they are not alone.

### Question of the Week

Who can I reach out to this week in an effort to lighten their burden? How can we share their yoke, like oxen working in tandem?

### Prayer of the Faithful:

Jesus asked those who are burdened to come to him, and so we lift our burdens up to God, assured that we will find rest in the Lord.

- For the Church, that we may offer forgiveness and peace to all those who are burdened by sin, even as we seek forgiveness and reconciliation for our own sins, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That people around the world may collectively work for justice and righteousness, so that peace may reign from sea to sea, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those whose work is physically demanding, that they may be treated with respect and dignity, may be assured of safe working conditions, and may receive just wages for their labor, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For victims of gun violence in our homes, our cities, and across our nation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That we may extend comfort and assistance to those in need, easing their yokes and lightening their burdens, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For what else should we pray...? Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of mercy and love, you sent your Son to bring the world forgiveness and peace, not condemnation and war. May we offer that forgiveness and peace to those who have hurt us and in doing so extend that peace to the ends of the earth. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Communion Rite

*The Lord's Prayer: p. 140*

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

*Rite of Peace:*

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ's presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

*Communion:*

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

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

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

*Prayer after Communion:*

Grant us, we pray, O Lord, that, having been replenished by such great gifts, we may gain the prize of salvation and never cease to praise you.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

*Concluding Rite:**Final Blessing:*

May the Lord bless us,  protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ! **Thanks be to God.**