*Suggested Opening Song: We Are Marching in the Light of God, #187*

Ten years ago, Pope Francis established this Sunday—the next to last Sunday in Ordinary Time—as the World Day of the Poor. Today, we recognize our obligation as Christians to offer prayers and assistance to all those living in poverty both here and around the world, no matter the reason for their condition. We also realize that Jesus made poverty holy by choosing to live in poverty, by requiring his disciples to do the same, and by teaching that those who follow him should sell all they have and give it to the poor. May we reach out with heart and hands to all those who are poor, who are so dear to our Lord.

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

*Profession of Faith* p. 142
**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. 10
Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to participate in this sacred celebration.

**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:*
Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good.

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

*Liturgy of the Word:*
*First Reading* p. 128
A reading from the Book of Proverbs *Proverbs 31: 10-13, 19-20, 30-31*

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls. Her husband, entrusting his heart to her, has an unfailing prize. She brings him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She obtains wool and flax and works with loving hands. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her fingers ply the spindle. She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy. Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Give her a reward for her labors, and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

*Responsorial Psalm* *Psalm 62: 2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8*

R/. Blessed are those who fear the Lord.
**R/. Blessed are those who fear the Lord.**

Blessed are you who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways!
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork; blessed shall you be, and favored. **R/.**

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your home;
Your children like olive plants around your table. **R/.**

Behold, thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD. The LORD bless you from Zion:
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. **R/.**

*Second Reading*

A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians *1 Thessalonians 5:1-6*

Concerning times and seasons, brothers and sisters, you have no need for anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night. When people are saying, "Peace and security, " then sudden disaster comes upon them, like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We are not of the night or of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel* *Matthew 25:14-30*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew **Glory to you, Lord**

Jesus told his disciples this parable: "A man going on a journey called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one--to each according to his ability. Then he went away. Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them, and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money.

After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. The one who had received five talents came forward bringing the additional five. He said, 'Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.' Then the one who had received two talents also came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I have made two more.' His master said to him, 'Well

done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.'

Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew you were a demanding person, harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter; so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. Here it is back.' His master said to him in reply, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter? Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return? Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten. For to everyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And throw this useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.'"

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Reflection on the Word:*

- It is likely that the poem we hear today from Proverbs was written by a male author about an ideal wife. But we can read it more properly as an essay about an ideal of the Church, for the Church is the body of Christ. We, the Church—male and female, young and old, married and not—are called to do what "a worthy wife" does: bring good things to God, do our work with love, reach out to the poor and needy, fear the Lord, and do work that is praiseworthy. We are called to put love of God and love of neighbor into action all the days of our life. In this way, we contribute to making the Church a worthy bride of Christ.

- The servant who received two talents is in an interesting position. Does he resent the first servant, who received over twice as many talents, and refuse to do anything to help his master? Is he afraid to risk his second talent for fear he may end up in the same position as the third servant? No and no. He uses his two talents, doubles their value, and—even though he still has less than the first servant had at the start—receives the same fulsome praise as the first servant. Let this be a lesson to avoid envying others for what they have or fearing using our own gifts because they seem inadequate. May we use our talents, however meager we may feel they are, and be greeted at the end of our days, "Well done, my good and faithful servant . . . Come, share your master's joy" (Matthew 25:23).

- Many of the most wonderful gifts we have been given can be traced back to God. We have been given the gift of life as a being created in God's image. We have been given the gift of salvation and eternal life through Jesus' death and resurrection. We have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit to be with us always. None of these are gifts that we should want to bury. None of these are gifts to hoard for ourselves. None of these are gifts that we risk losing by sharing. May we extend God's generosity to the world and so make God's gifts of life, love, and salvation multiply and appreciate in value.

**Question of the Week**
How will I share my God-given gifts this week to enhance the body of Christ?

*Prayer of the Faithful:*
As children of the light, radiant in the mantle of salvation, let us extend our arms and our prayers to the needy.

- For the Church, that we may be a Church of the poor, a refuge for those in need, a beacon illuminating the message that one's true riches lie in heaven, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For those living in poverty, that they may be lifted up spiritually and materially by those who are free from want, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For those in leadership roles, that they may use their talents, gifts, and treasures productively for the good of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For those who find it difficult to find or share their talents, for the grace to discover how to use their gifts for the benefit of others, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- That we may all one day hear our Lord tell us, "Well done, my good and faithful servant. Come, share your master's joy," 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.**

Generous God, grant us the grace to overcome our selfishness and self-centeredness and share our God-given talents with those in need. May we see the prosperity of your kingdom all the days of our lives. Grant this and all our prayers through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Communion Rite*

*The Lord's Prayer:* p. 176
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.

*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:*
We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbly imploring, O Lord, that what your Son Commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in charity.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

*Concluding Rite:*
*Final Blessing:*
May the Lord bless us, ✠ protect us from all evil and lead us to everlasting life. **Amen**

Go in peace! **Thanks be to God.**

*Suggested Closing Song: We Are Many Parts, #165*