

Suggested Opening Song: Joyful Joyful, We Adore You, #197

Each Sunday when we come together to worship God, we are nourished first by God's word in the readings, psalm, and Gospel and then by Christ's own body in the Eucharist. We may take both for granted, because each is available to us every Sunday, but these are gifts that are meant to be treasured. In today's Gospel, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a great treasure buried in a field, bought by a person lucky enough to have found it. But we have our treasure right here and right now, given to us by a God of infinite generosity. May we be blessed with the wisdom to see the treasures we have in the Word and Eucharist.

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:

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure.

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. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading p. 52

A reading from the first Book of Kings

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you." Solomon answered: "O LORD, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David; but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?"

The LORD was pleased that Solomon made this request. So God said to him: "Because you have asked for this--not for a long life for yourself, nor for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but for understanding so that you may know what is right--I do as you requested. I give you a heart so wise and understanding that there has never been anyone like you up to now, and after you there will come no one to equal you."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to GodResponsorial Psalm*Psalm 119:57, 72, 76-77, 97a, 127-128, 129-130*

R/. Lord, I love your commands.

R/. Lord, I love your commands.

I have said, O LORD, that my part is to keep your words.

The law of your mouth is to me more precious than thousands of gold and silver pieces. **R/.**

Let your kindness comfort me according to your promise to your servants.

Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight. **R/.**

For I love your command more than gold, however fine.

For in all your precepts I go forward; every false way I hate. **R/.**

Wonderful are your decrees; therefore I observe them.

The revelation of your words sheds light, giving understanding to the simple. **R/.**Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Romans 8:28-30

Brothers and sisters: We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Matthew 13:44-52 or 13:44-46***Glory to you, Lord**

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it."

[Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

"Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."]

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection on the Word:

- Given the chance to ask one thing of God for ourselves, what would we choose? Before we answer, we would be wise to look back at other things we've wished for, even longed for, and have received. Have they brought us the joy we thought they would? Or did our satisfaction fade over time? Remember, God is infinitely good, the source of all goodness, constant goodness, whether that is love, peace, or happiness. Solomon asked for an understanding heart so that he could exercise wise judgment. With this, he could judge among many good things and discern what truly would bring him joy. But we don't need this. Jesus has revealed the greatest treasure to us—the kingdom—and it will bring us true joy. May we trust in him and pursue the kingdom over all other good things.
- It would be easy to misinterpret the first two parables we hear in today's Gospel and conclude that they were about becoming wealthy beyond our wildest dreams. Both the person who finds the buried treasure and the merchant who finds the pearl of great price sell all they have to buy their treasure. But note that they don't turn around and sell these objects for a huge windfall. Nor are they holding them as investments that can appreciate in value. No, these objects are their goal. They have found their true treasures. For us disciples, Jesus says, our treasure is the kingdom of heaven. May we appreciate the treasure of the kingdom and joyfully pay the cost of discipleship, bear our crosses, make our sacrifices, and give what we have to those in need in order to obtain it.
- Like the "false wheat" we heard about last week, which was allowed to grow alongside the wheat until it was harvested, then thrown into "the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth" (Matthew 13:42, 50), the "bad" fish meet the same end. In each case, we trust God to make the judgment between good and bad. In each case, we are given a warning about those who are wicked, who try to corrupt those who are righteous. But it is also a warning to those who do evil, that they have until the time of the harvest to change their ways. May we heed God's warning and take advantage of our opportunity to repent of our sins as soon as possible, for we know not when the net will sweep us up.

Question of the Week

What sacrifices am I willing to make and what hardships am I willing to endure in order to gain the kingdom of heaven?

Prayer of the Faithful:

Trusting in the marvelous generosity of God, who was willing to give Solomon anything he asked for, we now take this opportunity to bring our needs, our hopes, and our desires before the Lord.

- For Pope Leo, bishops, and pastors, that they may be blessed with understanding hearts so that they may exercise the wisdom of Solomon when making judgments and decisions, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.
- That leaders in government here and around the world may emulate Solomon's humility and wisdom in considering the consequences of their actions and distinguishing right from wrong, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

- For grandparents, great-grandparents, and all seniors, that they may be respected for the wisdom of their experience and loved for their understanding hearts, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those searching for something for which they would give away all that they had, that with God's grace they may find it in our Lord, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That we may grow in wisdom and understanding as we listen to God's word, prayerfully reflect on it, and apply it in our lives, 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.**

Loving God, open our hearts to receive the wisdom you bestow on us, your children. Grant this and all our prayers through the one who shared his wisdom through the richness of parables, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 consumed, O, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation.

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: Now Thank We All Our God, #182