

Suggested Opening Song: Gather Us In, #141

Jesus knows that our lives are difficult. The mission he left for us is challenging. Additionally, we have dozens of day-to-day responsibilities and concerns. He's just told his disciples that they must carry their crosses. But he also promises that he will be with us to carry our crosses when we are overwhelmed. Therefore, he is able to assure everyone who labors and is burdened that he will give them rest. His yoke is easy, and his burden light. Gathered here today, let us put our concerns and anxieties in the Lord's hands and allow him to lift our burdens from our shoulders.

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, 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, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading p. 38

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.

Thanks be to GodResponsorial Psalm*Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14*

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Matthew 11:25-30***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:

- Even though the messianic oracle we hear in the first reading foreshadows Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, which we celebrate on Palm Sunday, let us not conclude that Zechariah could predict the future or received a secret message from God. No, but he could read the signs of the times. Prophesying in the postexilic period, he looked back on many of the final monarchs of Judah before it fell and saw arrogant men who lorded their power over the people, failed to honor the covenant, and sinned grievously. Zechariah wisely foresaw that a Messiah would need to be the opposite: meek, obedient to God, and respectful of the covenant. He could say that Jerusalem could rejoice, for their new king would be just, meek, and peaceful.
- Recall that in his first sermon—the Sermon on the Mount—Jesus declared that the meek were blessed and that they would inherit the land. The land was thought of as a divine gift and symbolic of God's covenant with the Chosen People, going back to Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. In other words, claim to the land was never given to conquering heroes or occupying armies; God gave it to those who are meek: people who offer peace and refuse to respond with violence, people who endure hardship with patience and acceptance if they must, people who accept whatever they have without resentment. Now Jesus tells the crowds that he himself is meek. Therefore, he is a model for those who are blessed and who will inherit the land. This symbol of the original covenant is renewed in Jesus, who is the new covenant, in which we all have a share. Let us learn from him, as Jesus says, and be meek as he was meek and inherit the promise of the new covenant, which we celebrate today and in every Eucharist.
- Note that Jesus does not say he will relieve us from a yoke entirely. But he assures us that his yoke is easy and his burden light. However, we know now what neither the crowds nor the disciples realized at the time: that Jesus' own yoke is uniquely difficult, for he would soon have to suffer and die to redeem us from our sins. We too will die one day, perhaps suffering a lot during our final weeks, months, or years. But we will not suffer and die alone. Jesus is yoked to us, easing our burden, even as we suffer and die.

Question of the Week

Do I consider myself meek? How can I be less resentful and more peaceful and patient with family, friends, and colleagues?

Prayer of the Faithful:

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest," Jesus assured his disciples, and so now we offer our labors and burdens and those of our sisters and brothers to the Lord.

- For the Church, that we may seek out those who labor and are burdened and help to ease their yoke by extending God's grace, mercy, and kindness, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For our nation on the 250th anniversary of its founding, that we the people may continue to build a more perfect union, let us pray to the Lord. That peace and tranquility may be proclaimed to all the nations and extended from sea to sea and indeed to the ends of the earth, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For refuge from the summer's heat for those without homes or adequate cooling, those who must work outside all day, and young children and the elderly, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- That as a community and individually we may share the resources we have so that we can ease the burdens of those less fortunate than us, 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 great kindness, we come to you meekly and humbly, in imitation of your Son, to ask that you look kindly on your children. Grant the prayers we make today and always according to your most merciful will, through 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:

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 lead us to everlasting life. **Amen**

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

Suggested Closing Song: Lord of All Hopefulness, #139