

REFLECTION: I remember a time I was quick to judge someone and I was wrong and hurt this person... I remember... I remember...

OUR FATHER

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.
R. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

SIGN OF PEACE

Jesus, you said to your apostles: “I leave you peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
R. And with your spirit.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: **have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: **have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: **grant us peace.**

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to his supper.
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:
Lord God,
You told us that the things that come out from within are what defile us. Help us to know what true purity of heart is through our love for others.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**

“Be Doers of the Word”

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

I remember making the decision to get out of the gang life and go through this debriefing process. I struggled with the decision for months. In a lot of ways, it was the hardest decision I ever had to make. I remember the evil voices telling me not to go. That this was all I knew and was good for. “You’re turning your back on your homies,” “They will be your enemies if you do this.”

I also remember thinking that by coming this way I was admitting that I wasted over 20 years of my life. Even though deep down I knew this to be a fact; admitting it out loud was a big bitter pill to swallow.

The good voice told me that my family deserved better than what I was giving them. I deserved better. The voice told me that I had to wake up and look at my life. “Is this going to be your legacy?” “Think of your family and those that are still fighting to get you out.” “Don’t let their fight be in vain.” “You know right from wrong. Do the right thing.”

I remember it felt like a battle in my mind, in my conscience. I suffered many sleepless nights listening to both the good and evil voice until finally for the first time in a long time... the good voice won.

-Jesse, who is in a California State Prison.

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B | September 1, 2024



Photo by Robert Cornwall

PENITENTIAL RITE

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

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:
God,
The words you speak to us are spirit and life. Open our hearts to your words, that they may touch us in the deepest of ourselves.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
R. Amen.



LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-8

Moses said to the people: "Now, Israel, hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, and may enter in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. In your observance of the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I enjoin upon you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it. Observe them carefully, for thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations, who will hear of all these statutes and say, 'This great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people.' For what great nation is there that has gods so close to it as the LORD, our God, is to us whenever we call upon him? Or what great nation has statutes and decrees that are as just as this whole law which I am setting before you today?"

The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 15: 2-3, 3-4, 4-5

R. The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Whoever walks blamelessly and does justice;
who thinks the truth in his heart
and slanders not with his tongue.

R. The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who harms not his fellow man,
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;
by whom the reprobate is despised,
while he honors those who fear the LORD.

R. The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who lends not his money at usury
and accepts no bribe against the innocent.

Whoever does these things
shall never be disturbed.

R. The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Gospel: Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

When the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands. —For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds. —So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?" He responded, "Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written: This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts. You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition." He summoned the crowd again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile. "From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile."

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

Second Reading: James 1: 17-18, 21b-22, 27

Dearest brothers and sisters: All good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no alteration or shadow caused by change. He willed to give us birth by the word of truth that we may be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls. Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

MEDITATION: SO VERY JUDGMENTAL

(from the eyes of peter)	he came close to jesus saying loudly	the rituals perfectly	what he cared about was if they had washed their hands
i watched zaccheus walk in his face was stern	master i am sure your good friends here have not forgotten to wash their hands before they eat i know they would not want to break our holy law	look at my friends all morning long they comforted the widows this is what is pleasing to god do you really think god cares if they have not washed? this does not matter to god what god cares about is what is in our heart god sees what is really there in the places you can't simply wash clean	jesus said: wise leaders there will always be some like you who do not care about the suffering of the human person who do not care how broken and wounded some are
he ceremonially washed his hands before he entered he went through all the rituals he was so convinced of his purity and that he was close to god that anything he asked he would receive	at first jesus did not say anything then he slowly stood up he always did this when he was serious	all day you look to find others who are not washing utensils who have not cleaned their hands who have touched someone impure	there will always be some like you who get it backwards who do not understand what it is to be close to god so many times your heart will be filled with darkness while on the outside you will be smiling with self-righteousness
entering the dining hall he saw this one from nazareth with his disciples they had been working all morning helping a group of widows still grieving their loss i was feeling their sorrow their hearts were broken	daniel lashed out looking at me you say you did not wash your hands?	daniel's anger burst forth we have been commanded to obey these ritual laws your lack of respect for the law is blasphemous how can you think you are close to god when you do not obey these rules? at that moment the widows and their children entered the dining hall they sat down hungry and we began to help them with food	the widows and children laughed celebrating in the midst of deep sorrow there was a real joy coming from their table
we were resting from the hard work of being vulnerable to such pain these women never thought they would be alone trying to raise children	daniel what is it to be close to god? do you think you are closer to god if you obey all the laws perfectly?	jesus went over and sat down with them	
i watched as daniel and his friends walked into the dining hall he looked angry he stood above us staring at us as we pulled the bread apart	daniel there are so many like you in our religion who think that if they obey all the rituals they are close to god	daniel indignant walked over to the basin and washed his hands of all the impurity he felt in the room	how far away he said as he left how far away you all are from god
	but daniel look at your heart your anger you are like so many who spend all their time worrying if others are performing	daniel was repulsed he did not care if they were suffering	when will you ever learn?

