

***“Rejoice and be Glad, for your
Reward will be Great in Heaven.”***

**4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle A | February 1, 2026**

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

Give light to our eyes, O Lord,
that we may be able to see your image
in each other, even amid the darkness of
our sins.

Grant that we see your face even in the
people who have harmed us. Grant that
those who have been hurt by our
crimes have compassion on us, as you
did towards those who drove the nails
into your hands and feet and pierced
your side.

We beseech you, merciful Savior. Give us
your very own loving heart. That we may
be able to say, "Father, forgive them, for
they do not know what they do," and
pierce our conscience with the thorn of
repentance, so that our eyes may be
opened, and with our eyes opened, may
we see you when we look at each
other.

We ask this in the holy name of our
Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer by Nick, who is in a California
State Prison.**



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,

In every moment of life,
you are with us. Help us
rejoice and be glad in every
moment of our lives.

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



LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the earth, who have observed his law; seek justice, seek humility; perhaps you may be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger. But I will leave as a remnant in your midst a people humble and lowly, who shall take refuge in the name of the LORD: the remnant of Israel. They shall do no wrong and speak no lies; nor shall there be found in their mouths a deceitful tongue; they shall pasture and couch their flocks with none to disturb them.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord."

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10

R. Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

The LORD keeps faith forever,
secures justice for the oppressed,
gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets captives free.

R. Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

The LORD gives sight to the blind;
the LORD raises up those who were bowed down.

The LORD loves the just;
the LORD protects strangers.

R. Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

The fatherless and the widow the LORD sustains,
but the way of the wicked he thwarts.
The LORD shall reign forever;
your God, O Zion, through all generations.
Alleluia.

R. Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



MEDITATION: SEE DIFFERENTLY

(from the eyes of jesus today)

jesus saying to
jaime, juan, and santiago
when will you ever
understand that to be
my follower you need
to think and see differently?
that you need to
live the beatitudes?

the black limousine
pulled up to the curb
the celebrities exited
to the cheers of the mob
her long gown and
his black suit were
immaculate

someone came over
to get an autograph
her expression
shows her disgust
she could not be bothered
the police were keeping
the crowds in check

they were ushered
into the air-conditioned
banquet hall
someone caught up
to them trying to
make small talk
he increases his pace
why won't people
leave him alone?

they finally make it
to their table
with linens and the flowers
then someone who was
recently released
from prison with tattoos
all over his arms
pours the water but slips
and some of the water
spills on her glittered gown
she is incensed and
yells at him

in his ex-gangster english
he says again and again
i am so sorry
please forgive him

he hands her
some napkins
but he is thinking
to himself
he cannot get fired
because he has
a baby girl
what is going to happen
if he loses his job?
but she couldn't take it

any longer
she sits down again
another recently
released prisoner
pours a fine wine
worth more than
what this ex-gangster
earns in one month

both of them
look around them to see
who is staring at them
they seem so filled up
with themselves
the light reflected off
her diamonds

another waiter brings out
the first course
he takes a bite
and almost spits it out
his palate is only used to
the best and this food
does not measure up

the huge screen lights up
showing both of them
in africa holding
malnourished orphans
the dinner crowd begins
to murmur
what a charitable couple
announcing in the video
how much money
they are donating
to orphans

she excuses herself
wanders to the restroom
she glances at herself
in the mirror
the gown mostly dry
the attendant hands her
a towel
she dries away her sweat
realizing how important
it is to be her best
reflecting how difficult
her life is
she throws her towel down
time to get back
after arranging herself
wondering if it was worth
all the time
she spent preparing herself

the food was brought out
one after the other
glass after glass of wine
small talk
servant after servant
with sweat pouring
down their faces
the men who were
serving the food

had only eaten prison food
for over 10 years

she needed coffee
and spoke disdainfully
at another waiter
demanding more coffee

it was now time
for the awards
the crowd was silent
this couple was receiving
the highest award possible
of their church for charity
the engraved marble figure
was impressive

the announcer standing
climbing the stairs
to the podium
but suddenly
three chaffeurs
with their names pinned
to their jackets
jaime, juan, and santiago
stood before
the microphone

they begin to say
you do not know us
do not be alarmed
we are not terrorists
it is just we want to give
our own special award
we represent
all the workers
who make possible
this banquet
we invite juan
from guatemala
to please come forward

all night
he had been so worried
if he was going to be fired
so his first reaction
was fear when he heard
his name

the announcer climbed
to the stage and says

friends
this waiter receives
our workers' award
all night long he has
taken the abuse
of privileged diners
in the eyes of god
he wins

there is nothing phony
or prestigious about him
we present him
with this key

which fits the door
to enter the reign of god

no one applauded
everyone was in shock
at first
but suddenly all
the servants
the waiters
the dishwashers
the chauffeurs
begin to applaud
louder and louder
the three chaffeurs
handing juan his award

something happened
in that banquet hall
somehow those seated
stood up and also applauded

they looked back
at the couple
the hypocrisy contained
in their bearing
darkened the surroundings
in contrast to the light
flowing out of juan
flowing out of all those
who daily do such
lowly jobs
who have no fine jewelry
no fancy clothes
blessed are the poor
they will receive
the kingdom

the music began
the workers
danced joyfully
celebrating how there is
a dignity in what they do
they could feel the life
of god also celebrating
with them
that they were really
his favorite ones
so different from how
the world judges

juan left the banquet hall
happy he was not going
to lose his job
and feeling grateful
that he had received
a generous award
the beatitudes were alive
this very night



REFLECTION: I remember a time when a certain experience I went through helped me see things differently... 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:

God,
Give us your comfort when we stress out. Give us
your mercy when we find it hard to forgive
ourselves and others. Give us your peace when we
have the urge to act out. Give us your kingdom,
where we belong to you and each other.

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

