

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

### **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.**

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



### **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 chafeurs  
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 chafeurs  
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.**

