

Keep Your Word

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle A | February 15, 2026



Art by Jose Ramirez

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,
Help us not only observe your law, but keep it in our hearts and love it. May we follow in the footsteps of your Son Jesus to be faithful, whatever the cost, to be free to say 'Yes.'

We ask this through Jesus, our Savior. **R. Amen.**

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

I remember I was 12 years old when I took my first hit of crystal meth. I didn't have a grip on my life until after my grandfather's death. He was the only father figure I had and at the age of 16 and my life turned upside down.

I ran away from home chasing the high that brought me happiness. My mom would come looking for me and every time she found me on the streets, I would tell her off because I was under the influence. I used to get high so I wouldn't think about the horrible things I told her. Things got really bad to the point where I didn't know what to do or where to go. My girlfriend and I would get into so many arguments because we were both under the influence of the devil's drug. When I would return home with my mom after a few days or weeks, she was always waiting for me welcomed me with open arms.

When I came off the drugs, I became frustrated and filled with hate that caused me to destroy my house, making holes on the walls, and breaking down doors. I remember one time my mom called the police because she didn't know what to do with me. She broke down in tears because she thought her child was gone. For a whole year, I was in and out of placement chasing the high that made me happy. Then I realized that I was only hurting the people I loved.

A few months ago, I stopped using crystal meth and when I came back to juvenile hall. I signed the Book of Life to promise myself and my family that I will not go back to my old ways. I turned to God for help because I know only He can help me and strengthen me to keep this promise.

- José, who was in a juvenile hall facility.

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:
Heavenly Father,
In your Son Jesus you have shown us how we should seek and fulfill your loving will. May we respond to your love from the depth of our hearts and to be faithful to you in all we do.

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

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Sirach 15:15-20

If you choose you can keep the commandments, they will save you; if you trust in God, you too shall live; he has set before you fire and water to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand. Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him. Immense is the wisdom of the Lord; he is mighty in power, and all-seeing. The eyes of God are on those who fear him; he understands man's every deed. No one does he command to act unjustly, to none does he give license to sin.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Blessed are they whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.

Blessed are they who observe his decrees, who seek him with all their heart.

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

You have commanded that your precepts be diligently kept.

Oh, that I might be firm in the ways of keeping your statutes!

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Be good to your servant, that I may live and keep your words.

Open my eyes, that I may consider the wonders of your law.

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

Brothers and sisters: We speak a wisdom to those who are mature, not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory, and which none of the rulers of this age knew; for, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: *What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him,* this God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 5:20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37

Jesus said to his disciples: "I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.* But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment. "You have heard that it was said, *You shall not commit adultery.* But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. "Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.* But I say to you, do not swear at all. Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION: LET YOUR "YES" MEAN "YES" AND "NO" MEAN "NO"

it's sunday afternoon
in unit x at juvenile hall
there is space
above the unit's wall
where you can see
clouds pass
passing clouds

today at the marina
there is an assortment
of clouds
some are dark
some are light
in the distance
the jets slip through
the clouds traveling

brandon has almost
been in the compound
for three years

how many kinds
of clouds have blown
past that slit surrounding
the unit's walls during
these three long years?

the rain clouds
clouds of summer
showing the inferno heat
outside the angry clouds
that blow with
such velocity blown by
the ever present wind
that whips through sylmar
in this corridor of
where mountains
met the valley

i sat with brandon
on sunday
i just went up to the unit
to say hello
who do you become
after spending
your adolescent years
in a juvenile hall?

there comes a time
when everything
becomes so boring
so routine
when to get up
when to go to
the bathroom

his other two brothers
are also locked up
like clouds
blowing by the slits

in the unit
clouds blowing
through the lives of kids
with zip codes
that blow them into units
where all they see of nature
are clouds blowing
through slits

brandon told me
some days he just
likes to sit and watch
the clouds blow by
that is his taste of nature
never seeing
the rocky mountains
in colorado
the sandy beaches
in hawaii

the blue lake in tahoe
or what it is like
to see clouds from a jet
the storm clouds
the angry
threatening clouds
the playful clouds that
blow past your window
when you are flying
high up the earth

passing clouds

we can do better
than give a kid
so little of nature
our cement jungles
the hopelessness
that seeps through
the cracks into

the lives of youngsters
that learn to survive
in jungles of violence

clouds blowing

*let your yes mean yes
and your no mean no*

what would it be like
to invite brandon
for one day
to go to yosemite
after being locked up
for three years in such
a confined space?

to watch the waterfalls
the mountains
the trees
the long stretching

meadows
landscapes filled
with flowers
of every assortment
how many times do
we hear "no one forced
me to join a gang
i chose it and knew
the consequences"

*let your yes mean yes
and your no mean no*

this is because
you have never gotten up
early in the sierras
after a snow storm
everything is covered
with white
there is a silence so loud
that it explodes inside you

the very depth of
such newly fallen snow
the light of the sun
falling across the valley
every part of your being
feels the stillness
you know you are
inside of god
there is no past
nor tomorrow
only the present and
it feels good to be alive
tasting eternity

a choice?
only if you cannot dream
or have never been given
the chance to dream
you have only seen
parts of clouds
blowing through a slit
in a window
inside juvenile hall

if you cannot see
the future any different
than the present
than you go for
what you know
but if you give a kid
a key and open a world
of possibilities
of beauty
of travel of love
of success
of hope

then the days
of watching clouds
pass through
a small slit will be over

you might think
you chose this lifestyle
and of course
in a sense you did
and you did not
your world is too small
to make that choice

*let your yes mean yes
and your no mean no*

let the clouds blow you
first to new places with
new possibilities of a taste
of happiness that fills
your very soul and
if you still think
you would choose
posting
chilling
crystal strapped
hurt
killed
life in prison
traumatized for life
then you really do choose
this lifestyle fairly

so may brandon one day
be free to let the clouds
bring him into new places
he has never been to

of seeing passing clouds
from mountain peaks
and river valleys
of seeing passing clouds
from sunsets
from car windows
traveling over
endless territory
of vacation's roads

*let your yes mean yes
and your no mean no*

seeing passing
clouds free
seeing them outside
not inside
sitting on a metal beach
peering into a small slit
of freedom
one day