

REFLECTION: I remember a time when I got a second chance at life... 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,
Help us to lay down our life for you and for our brothers and sisters, so that we might take it up again when you come in glory.

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

Taking Up Your Cross

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS
I remember sitting in my cell in the SHU when I had come to some tough realizations. I was 34 years old and I was doing the same things I had done since I was 16. I was living a life that I no longer believed in, and for what?
The answer to that was I could not see myself as anything other than an ‘inmate’ or anything other than a gang member, and fear. The fact that I was admitting to myself that I was afraid was a big step for me. I always lied to myself saying I was not afraid, that I feared no one, that I did not care what people thought of me, that I was my own man. The truth of the matter is that I was afraid of being hurt and having to hurt someone else. I was afraid of what might happen if I left the life behind, and sadly, what people might think of me.
I placed a lot of value on what others thought of me. I allowed others to tell me what my values were and those values were all based on identity, specifically, the gang identity. I realized that I didn’t know who I was as a person. However, I came to realize that I was not a gang member.
The lie that was being preached to me since I entered prison was, “You’re a lifer, you’re never going home!” But it was just that, a lie. I began to see myself as a free man. The only question was: Was I going to allow my fear to control my behavior and thinking? The answer to that question was: No! So about 6 years ago, I dropped out of the gang and gave my life to God. I had to give up a lot of learned behavior and it was not always easy, but I finally reached a place in my life that I can be proud of.

- Joaquin, who is in a California State Prison.

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle A | June 28, 2026

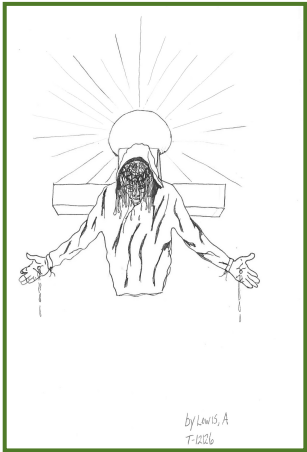


Image by Alvin Lewis

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:
Lord God,
When our ways bring only death and destruction, you show us a path that leads to goodness and life. Help us to die to sin so that we might live in your new life.

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



LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a

One day Elisha came to Shunem, where there was a woman of influence, who urged him to dine with her. Afterward, whenever he passed by, he used to stop there to dine. So she said to her husband, "I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often, let us arrange a little room on the roof and furnish it for him with a bed, table, chair, and lamp, so that when he comes to us he can stay there." Sometime later Elisha arrived and stayed in the room overnight. Later Elisha asked, "Can something be done for her?" His servant Gehazi answered, "Yes! She has no son, and her husband is getting on in years." Elisha said, "Call her." When the woman had been called and stood at the door, Elisha promised, "This time next year you will be fondling a baby son."

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

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

The promises of the LORD I will sing forever, through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness.
For you have said, "My kindness is established forever;"
in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Blessed the people who know the joyful shout; in the light of your countenance, O LORD, they walk.

At your name they rejoice all the day, and through your justice they are exalted.

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

You are the splendor of their strength, and by your favor our horn is exalted.
For to the LORD belongs our shield, and the Holy One of Israel, our king.

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading: Romans 6:3-4, 8-11

Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives for God. Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.

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

Gospel: Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus said to his apostles: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple—amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward."

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

MEDITATION: BECOMING A WARRIOR OF LIGHT

(from the eyes of a chaplain)	relating of eric's choice of not reacting like his old self a hardcore gangster is not earth-shaking	maybe these youngsters can really see they can be someone different other than what they had been on the streets	this is what it is to have your lamp lit you do not hide it but rather put it in a place where it can shine to spread brightness in the surroundings
i was walking to see a kid in one of the units on a monday afternoon	compared to the world's problems but it was something because during these months of being a warrior of light this act was an official way of publicly stating that you have made the decision to stop gang banging could have back-fired	there are families that go home happy after visiting and having experienced the change in their kids after signing the book of life something the youngsters in the units never see	watching this kid who was once a total knucklehead who once gang banged become someone who because of his light and healing brought change to the culture of a whole unit in a juvenile hall is moving
arriving to the unit luis stood outside his room he said to me you know i am proud of eric he could have easily gotten into the riot but he acted like a referee standing there	but this one action of eric as referee rather than mixer said to me that maybe something has been happening in the unit with god with some youngsters as they choose to honor their parents that little by little	some of the parents who used to have tears in their eyes as they passed through the gates are now smiling if only other youngsters could see the difference maybe their hearts and their minds can change	this is real brightness from a strong light a lamp lit in a small world but a powerful image in the big world
looking into the day room thinking how important it is to give kids images to provide more opportunities so that transformation really can happen not just a jail house but a conversion life-changing images that have a lasting effect on choices and actions			
maybe this simple		later that day luis commented that eric had power within him that showed itself during the riot	

