

AFRICA

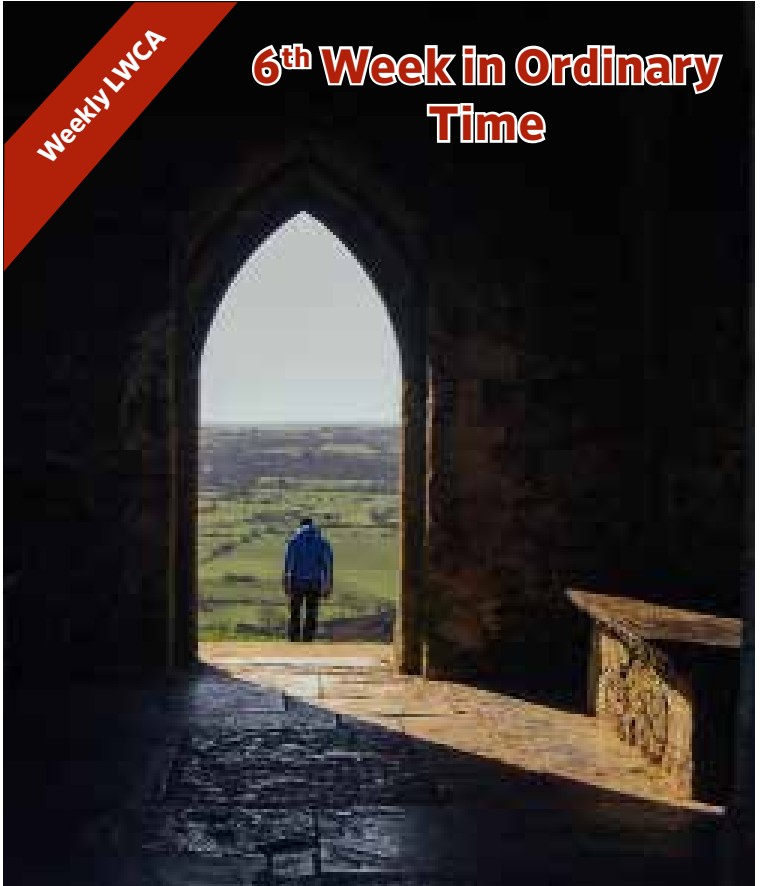
# Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

## 6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

bayard africque



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#### **Liturgical texts:**

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**On our cover:** Leave your gift before the altar. Go and reconcile with your brother.

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### Ash Wednesday

**A**sh Wednesday is a special day in the Catholic Church and in many other Christian denominations like the Anglican Church, the Lutheran Church, etc. In the Catholic Church, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season which is a forty-day period during which the faithful are invited to convert, to reconcile with God and with their brothers and sisters. From that day until Easter the *Gloria* (Glory to God) and the *Alleluia* are not sung in the liturgy. Ash Wednesday is a day of prayer and fasting. On that day, the priest or another minister who has received the mandate of the Church applies ashes on the foreheads of the faithful generally in the form of a cross. During the Eucharistic celebration, the imposition of the ashes takes place after the homily. It can also take place outside the Eucharistic celebration.

What do ashes symbolise in the Bible? In the holy Scriptures, ashes are associated with mourning, great sorrow, repentance or contrition. The penitent changes their external appearance sitting in ashes and putting

## **Focus on the Lenten Season**

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on sackclothes to symbolise their interior conversion. In other words, ashes can be considered as a visible sign of interior repentance which can be expressed through actions. Therefore, it is of no use for one to use ashes while they are still hardening their heart.

While applying ashes on those who come forward, the priest or another minister pronounces one of the following sentences: *Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel or Remember, man, you are dust and to dust you will return.* The first sentence insists on repentance and faithfulness to the Gospel. By virtue of Baptism, Christians decide to imitate Jesus Christ by living according to the Gospel. On Ash Wednesday they are reminded to have the holy Scriptures as their spiritual food that will help them overcome temptations during the Lenten season.

The second sentence reminds of man's origin. Man came from dust and to dust he will return. Man is not eternal. Despite all his achievements on earth, man will end up dying. Saint Augustine says that the only thing that man can be sure of is that he will die one day. Therefore, Christians must be aware that they are

pilgrims on earth. That awareness must guide their lives on earth. Christians are invited to be humble given that they are not eternal. They must trust in God in whom they live, move and have their being.

From the African perspective, Christians can have an easy understanding of Ash Wednesday. In traditional cultures in which soap was unknown, people used ashes or dust during the washing of dishes. This means that ashes played and continue to play a big role in removing dirt. The fact that ashes are applied on the forehead is very interesting since the head symbolises the entire human being. Therefore, we understand that on Ash Wednesday, ashes are applied on our foreheads to remove dirt from our beings in order to be clean. In this context, dirt would mean bad conduct, evil ideas and everything that can corrupt the soul.

***Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. Kombi,***  
*Kinshasa, D.R. Congo*

# Editorial

February 2023



Rev. Fr. Elvis Mensah, Accra Ghana

## The Real Church of Christ

We thank the Lord for the second month of the year 2023. We express our gratitude to the Most High. This is a month which is traditionally known as the month of love on account of Saint Valentine who lived a life of love. In this month and beyond, let your actions, thoughts, words and deeds be inspired by love. You can't be a Christian if you don't live in love. To love, you should have already been loved by a loving God. If such is the case, why can't you love? I usually ask myself where hatred, jealousy, bitterness and unnecessary anger comes from? In his monthly intention, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, speaks of three elements in the Church during this month of February: Faith, Fraternity and Love.

A Church should be an assembly of faith. Without faith, the Church could be likened to any organization. A spirit of fraternity and love is vital to the growth of a Church. Let us do away with division and embrace unity for the growth of the real Church of Christ.



# The Pope's Prayer Intention

***For parishes:*** We pray that parishes, placing communion at the centre, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most in need.

Other papal intentions and videos can be found on: <http://apostleshipofprayer.org/>



# Sunday February 12

## 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Sirach 15: 15-20/Psalm (118) 119: 1-2. 4-5. 17-18. 33-34./1 Corinthians 2: 6-10/Matthew 5: 17-37 (or: Matthew 5:20-22a. 27-28.33´ 34a. 37).*



“...but whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:19)





## *Emulating the Lamb!*

**T**he first reading of this Sunday teaches us how human beings are free and responsible for the actions they take. This point of view is attested by the book of Deuteronomy 30.15-20, when Moses already said to his people: “Life and death are before you, choose”. This explains why the people of Israel are responsible for their sins. So, are we ready to acknowledge our responsibility for the misfortunes that are befalling our world: wars, climate change, unemployment, famine, underdevelopment of Africa, the dictatorship of some of the world’s political leaders, corruption, etc? We think that it is enough to have the infused science or be in a great school of knowledge to understand. Besides, Saint Paul in the second reading speaks to us about the wisdom of the so-called perfect. Because in his time some religions called perfect those who had received a secret doctrine reserved for an elite. Despite the acquisition of this knowledge, the wise men of this world do not know how to answer for their actions. The apostle shows us that only those who have experienced the living God have the true wisdom to be responsible. This wisdom or knowledge is not primarily an intellectual ability, it is a gift of the Holy Spirit that makes the unique truth mature in us. That is why only those who have reached a certain spiritual level



**Sunday** February 12

and experience of God are called wise. So let us not tire of confessing the riches that God has given us in Christ through baptism: His Spirit brings us into the secret of divination, where no one else can enter. In the Gospel, Jesus reminds us that he has not come to abolish the law, but to fulfil it. For Christ, the law no longer only regulates good and bad deeds but helps us to attack evil at its root. Furthermore, Jesus says that whoever keeps the smallest of these laws and teaches them will be declared great in the kingdom of heaven. Now the Law of Christ is a call to purify our hearts, our intentions and our desires. It is a new rationality that is born of a look at God. For sin is not only wrong deeds but also our evil thoughts and desires which we entertain in our mind. By condemning sin everyone faces judgement whose result is admission to the fire of hell. From sin and judgment the only ones that will be saved, are those who know God, and accept the repentance and the purification here below. This is the transformation that must then take place in us (1 Corinthians 15:51). But it cannot be done unless the Holy Spirit has burned (Matthew 3:11) the roots of evil until it is destroyed. We must therefore surrender to the Spirit of the Father who will sanctify us from all our sins so that we can be saved from evil and enjoy life without end in God.

***Rev. Fr. Jean- Paul Sakoto, Nairobi-Kenya***



**Entrance Antiphon** (*Ps (29) 30:34*)

**Be my protector O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.**

**Collect**

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**First Reading** (*Sirach 15:15-20*)

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**A reading from the Book of Sirach**

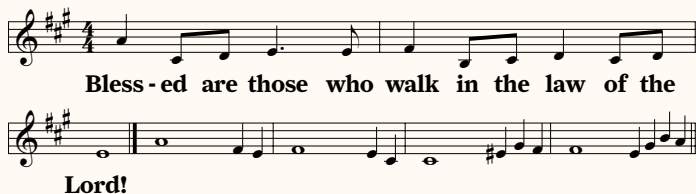
If you will, you can keep the commandments, they will save you; if you trust in God, you too shall live. He has placed before you fire and water: stretch out your hand for whichever you wish. Before a man are life and death, good and evil, and whichever he chooses will be given to him. For great is the wisdom of the Lord; he is mighty in power and sees everything. The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, and he knows every deed of man. He has not commanded any one to be ungodly, and he has not given any one permission to sin.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



Sunday February 12

**Responsorial Psalm** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Psalm (118) 119:1-2.4-5.17-18.33-34)**



**R. Blessed are those who walk in the law of the Lord!**

Blessed are those whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the law of the Lord!  
Blessed are those who keep his decrees!  
With all their hearts they seek him. R.

You have laid down your precepts  
to be carefully kept.  
May my ways be firm  
in keeping your statutes. R.

Deal bountifully with your servant,  
that I may live and keep your word.



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

Lord, teach me the way of your statutes,  
and I will keep them to the end.  
Grant me insight that I may keep your law,  
and observe it wholeheartedly. R.

***Second Reading (1 Corinthians 2:6-10)***—————

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the  
Corinthians**

Brethren: Among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him,” God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



Sunday February 12

**Acclamation** (*Matthew 11:25*)

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. **Alleluia.**

**Gospel** (*Matthew 5:17-37*)

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**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. “You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement.’ But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there



remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. “Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the



**Sunday** February 12

city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from the Evil One."

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

**OR SHORTER**

***(Matthew 5:20-22a.27-28.33-34a.37)***

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement.' But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement; "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. "Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' But I say to you, do





not swear at all. Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from the Evil One.”

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

### **Prayer of the Faithful**

*The following intentions are suggestions only.*

℟. **Lord, listen to our prayer!**

For religious, political and traditional leaders in Africa and in other parts of the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. ℟.

For a closer relationship and personal experience with Christ, let us pray to the Lord our God. ℟.

For those who still do not believe in Christ, for our salvation and the salvation of the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. ℟.

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew us



**Sunday** February 12

and may it become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Communion Antiphon** (*Ps (76) 77:29-30*)

**They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.**

*Or: Jn 3:16*

**God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

**Prayer after Communion**

Having fed upon these heavenly delights, we pray, O Lord, that we may always long for that food by which we truly live. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



# Monday February 13

6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Cf. Ps (29) 30:3-4)* **Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.**

## Collect

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading --- *(Genesis 4:1-15.25)*

**A reading from the Book of Genesis**

Adam knew Eve his wife, and he conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." Again she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time, Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought some of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel

and his offering, but for Cain and his offering, he had no regard. So Cain was very angry and his countenance fell. The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.” Cain said to Abel his brother, “Let us go out to the field.” And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” And the Lord said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. And

now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength; you shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.” Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, you have driven me this day away from the ground; and from your face I shall be hidden; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will slay me.” Then the Lord said to him, “Not so! If any one slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And The Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him. And Adam knew his



wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel, for Cain slew him.”

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
*(Psalm (49) 50:1 and 8.16bc-17.20-21)*

**R.** Give your praise as a sacrifice to God.

“The God of gods, the Lord has spoken and summoned the earth, from the rising of the sun to its setting. I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices; your offerings are always before me.” **R.**

“How can you recite my commandments, and take my covenant on your lips, you who despise correction, and cast my words behind you.” **R.**

“You who sit and malign your own brother, and slander your own mother’s son? You do this, and should I keep silence? Do you think that I am like you? I accuse you; lay the charge before you.” **R.**

### **Acclamation**

*(John 14:6)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** I am the way, and the truth, and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the father but by me. **Alleluia.**

**Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Mark 8: 11-13)**

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

At that time: The Pharisees came and began to argue with Jesus, seeking from him a sign from heaven, to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.” And he left them, and getting into the boat again he departed to the other side.

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

**Prayer over the Offerings**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew us and may it become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward. Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon**

*(Cf. Ps (76) 77:9-30)* **They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.**

**or**

*(Jn 3:16)* **God loved the world so much that them his Only Begotten Son, that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**



### Prayer after Communion

Having fed upon these heavenly delights, we pray, O Lord so that we may

always long for that food by which we truly live. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## A sign from God

### Commentary

Mark 8:11-13

Today's gospel follows the account of Jesus miraculously feeding four thousand people. In the eyes of the Pharisees, he would perhaps now be poised to take up a role of popular political leadership. What signs do we look for today? Peace among nations? An end to poverty, injustice, oppression? A stop to the destruction of the planet? A Church reformed and revitalised? Then surely we could practise our faith better. Lord, You have given us your unconditional love even by dying for us, that we may have eternal life. Lord, keep us strong in your faith and love.

*Rev. Fr. Francois Nzanzu, Nairobi-Kenya*



# Tuesday February 14

6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## *Memorial*

Sts Cyril (monk) and Methodius, bishop,

### **Entrance Antiphon**

These are holy men who became friends of God, glorious heralds of divine truth.

### **Collect**

O God, who enlightened the Slavic people through the brother Saints Cyril and Methodius, grant that our hearts may grasp the words of your teaching, and perfect us as a people of one accord in true faith and right confession. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### *Reading* \_\_\_\_\_

*(Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5.10)*

**A reading from the Book of Genesis**

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said; "I will blot out man whom I have created from



the face of the ground, man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I had made them.” But Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord. Then the Lord said to Noah; “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive upon the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain upon the earth forty days and forty

nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him. And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (28) 29: 1a and  
2.3ac-4.3b and 9c-10)***

***R.* The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly powers, ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; bow down before the Lord, majestic in holiness. *R.*

The voice of the Lord upon the waters, the Lord on the immensity of waters; the voice of the Lord full of power; the voice of the Lord full of splendour. R.

The God of glory thunders; in his temple they all cry, “Glory!” The Lord sat enthroned above the flood; the Lord sits as king forever. R.

**Acclamation** (*John 14:23*)

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** If a man loves me, he will keep my word, says the Lord; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him.  
**Alleluia.**

**Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Mark 8:14-21*)

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

At that time: The disciples have forgotten to bring bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. And Jesus cautioned them saying, “Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.” And they discussed it with one another, saying, “We have no bread.” And being aware of it, Jesus said to them, “Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear. And do you

not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Look, O Lord, upon the offerings which we bring before your majesty in commemoration of Saints Cyril and Methodius, and

grant that these gifts may become the sign of a new humanity, reconciled to you in loving Charity. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Cf Mk 16:20)* **The disciples went forth and preached the Gospel while the Lord worked with them, confirming the word through accompanying signs.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

O God, father of all nations, who makes us sharers in the one Bread and the one Spirit and heirs of the eternal banquet; grant in your kindness, on this feast day of Saints Cyril and Methodius, that the multitude of your

children, persevering in the same faith, may be united in building up the kingdom of

justice and peace. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Understanding Jesus' teaching

## Commentary

Mark 8: 14-21

The disciples of Jesus had been witnesses to two extraordinary events: the feeding of the five thousand people and the four thousand. The disciples knew the story of how the Lord, their God had fed their ancestors with manna in the desert. Yet they do not seem to have grasped the implication of the miracle they had just witnessed nor the divine identity of the One putting the questions to them. Finally, Jesus asked them, "Do you not understand?" Understanding is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to us to make sense of what is happening around us all the time.

**Rev. Fr. Francois Nzanu, Nairobi-Kenya**



# Wednesday February 15

6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Cf. Ps (29) 30:3-4)* **Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.**

## Collect

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading

***(Genesis 8:6-13,20-22)***

**A reading from the Book of Genesis**

At the end of forty days Noah opens the window of the ark which he had made, and sent forth a raven; and it went to and fro until the water was dried up from the earth. Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; but the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on

the face of the whole earth. So he put forth his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth, a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days, and sent forth the dove; and she did not return to him any more. In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold,

the face of the ground was dry. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing odour, the Lord said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



**Responsorial Psalm** —  
*(Psalm (115) 116:12-13.14-15.18-19)*

**R. A thanksgiving sacrifice  
 I made to you, O Lord.  
 or Alleluia! Alleluia!**

How can I repay the Lord;  
 for all his goodness to me?  
 The cup of salvation I will  
 raise; I will call on the name  
 of the Lord. **R.**

My vows to the Lord I  
 will fulfil; before all his  
 people. How precious in  
 the eyes of the Lord is the  
 death of his faithful. **R.**

My vows to the Lord I  
 will fulfil; before all his  
 people, in the court of the  
 house of the Lord, in your  
 midst, O Jerusalem. **R.**

**Acclamation**

*(See Ephesians 1:17-18)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** May the  
 father of our Lord Jesus  
 Christ enlighten the eyes of  
 our hearts that we might  
 know what is the hope to  
 which he has called us. **Alle-  
 luia.**

**Gospel** —————  
*(Mark 8: 22-26)*

**A reading from the holy  
 Gospel according to Mark**

At that time: Jesus and the  
 disciples came to Bethsaida.  
 And some people brought  
 to him a blind man and  
 begged him to touch him.  
 And he took the blind man  
 by the hand, and led him  
 out of the village; and when  
 he had spit on his eyes and  
 laid his hands upon him,

he asked him, “Do you see anything?” And he looked up and said, “I see men; but they look like trees, walking.” Then again, he laid his hands upon his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and saw everything clearly. And he sent him away to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew us and may it become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Cf. Ps (76) 77:9-30)* **They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.**

*or*

*(Jn 3:16)* **God loved the world so much that them his Only Begotten Son, that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Having fed upon these heavenly delights, we pray,



O Lord so that we may always long for that food by which we truly live. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Conversion as a  
Progressive Way of Life**

**Commentary**

**Mark 8:22-26**

The miracle of Jesus today is in two parts. Indeed, before a person who is blind from birth can see again, he needs some time to understand what he sees, and to appreciate distances, colours, etc. This explains why Jesus puts his hands on the blind man's eyes again and makes it easy for him to change his life from darkness to life. It is the same thing in the spiritual field. Any change or conversion cannot be done instantly, it is done progressively, step by step. But the true conversion is the one who receives the Word of God and puts it into practice daily. May God grant each one of us the grace of true conversion.

***Rev. Fr. Jean-Paul Sakoto, Nairobi-Kenya***



# Thursday February 16

6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Cf. Ps (29) 30:3-4)* **Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.**

## Collect

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading --- **(Genesis 9: 1-13)**

### A reading from the Book of Genesis

God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Only you



shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image. And you, be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and in it." Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you that never again shall

all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth." The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm <sup>(101)</sup> 102: 16-21. 29  
and 22-23)***

**R. The Lord looked down  
from heaven to the earth.**

The nations shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the earth's kings your glory.

When the Lord shall build up Sion, he will appear in all his glory. Then he will turn to the prayers of the helpless; he will not despise their prayer. *R.*

Let this be written for ages to come, that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord; the Lord looked down from his holy place on high, looked down from heaven to the earth, to hear the groans of the prisoners, and free those condemned to die. *R.*

The children of your servants shall dwell untroubled, and their descendants established before you. May the name of the Lord be proclaimed in Sion, and his praise in Jerusalem, when peoples and kingdoms are gathered as one to offer their worship to the Lord. *R.*

### **Acclamation**

*(See John 6:63c.68c)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life; you have the words of eternal life. **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Mark 8:27-33)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

At that time: Jesus went on with his disciples, to the villages of Caesarae Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do men say that I am?” And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, “Elijah; and others one of the prophets.” And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answers him, “You are the Christ.” And charged them to tell

no one about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter, and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not on the side of God, but of men."

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew

us and may it become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward. Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

**They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.**

*or*

**God loved the world so much that them his Only Begotten Son, that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

**Prayer after Communion**

Having fed upon these heavenly delights, we pray, O Lord so that we may

always long for that food by which we truly live. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Jesus Is the Messiah****Commentary****Mark 8:27-33**

"You are the Messiah" is one of the best professions of faith in the entire Bible. Jesus is the "chosen one", the consecrated one", the expected Savior. He is the Son of Man who comes from God in glory to judge all nations (Daniel 7:13). He is the perfect Man who carries the destiny of mankind within him. But here Peter's profession seems to be unfounded because his reaction when Jesus told them that the Messiah would have to suffer and be put to death by the authorities is quite surprising. Basically, Peter did not know the fate of those who proclaim the word of truth. They must freely accept suffering, even martyrdom because the gift of self is the only way to save the world. Peter, like many of us, remains ephemeral in our faith. We need the grace of the risen Jesus to better understand and believe.

***Rev. Fr. Jean- Paul Sakoto, Nairobi-Kenya***



# Friday February 17

6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## **Ferial**

or **Seven Founders of the Order of the Servites**, *Memorial*

### **Entrance Antiphon**

Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

### **Collect**

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Reading**

**(Genesis 11:1-9)**

**A reading from the Book of Genesis**

The whole earth had one language and few words. And as men migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let

us build our-selves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of men had built. And the Lord said. “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.” So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and

they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm —**  
**(Psalm <sup>(32)</sup> 33:10-11.12-13.14-15)**

**R. Blessed the people the Lord has chosen as his heritage.**

The Lord frustrates the designs of the nations; he defeats the plans of the peoples. The designs of



the Lord stand forever, the plans of his heart from age to age. *R.*

Blessed the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen as his heritage. From the heavens the Lord looks forth; he sees all the children of men. *R.*

From the place where he dwells he gazes on all the dwellers on the earth, he who shapes the hearts of them all, and considers all their deeds. *R.*

### **Acclamation**

*(See John 15:15)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** I have called you friends, says the Lord, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_ *(Mark 8:34-9:1)*

#### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

At that time: Jesus called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would have his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be

ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew us and may it become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward.

Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

**They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.**

*or*

**God loved the world so much that them his Only Begotten Son, that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

**Prayer after Communion**

Having fed upon these heavenly delights, we pray, O Lord so that we may

always long for that food by which we truly live. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The cost of Discipleship****Commentary****Mark 8: 34-9, 1**

The Cross has been the great symbol of Christianity since it first carried the body of Jesus on Calvary. However, we should remember that the Cross, in the form of two pieces of wood, only came into the last three hours of the life of Christ.

Two crosses await each of us in this life: the cross of the world and the cross of Christ. We have to choose. The cross of the world has an insidious appeal but it becomes heavy as time passes. The cross of Christ appears difficult at the start but gets easier, if carried faithfully.

***Rev. Fr. Francois Nzanzu, Nairobi-Kenya***



# Saturday February 18

6<sup>th</sup> Week Sunday in Ordinary Time

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## *Ferial*

Or Saturday Mass of the B.V. Mary

### **Entrance Antiphon**

Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

### **Collect**

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Reading**

*(Hebrews 11:1-7)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it, the men of old received divine approval. By faith we understand that the world was created by the Word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear. By faith Abel offered to God

a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he received approval as righteous, God bearing witness by accepting his gifts; he died, but through his faith he is still speaking. By faith, Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was attested as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. By faith Noah, being warned by god concerning events yet unseen, took heed and constructed an ark for the saving of his household;

by this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which comes by faith.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm** —  
*(Psalm <sup>(144)</sup> 145:2-3.4-5.10-11)*

**R. I will bless your name,  
 O Lord, forever.**

I will bless you day after day, and praise your name forever and ever. The Lord is Great and highly to be praised; his greatness cannot be measured. R.

Age to age shall proclaim your works, shall declare your mighty deeds. They will tell of your great glory

and splendour and recount your wonderful works. R.

All your work shall thank you, O Lord, and all your faithful ones bless you. They shall speak of the glory of your reign, and declare your mighty deeds. R.

### **Acclamation**

*(See Mark 9:6)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** The heavens opened, and the Father's voice was heard: "This is my son; listen to him." **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel**

*(Mark 9:2-13)*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

At that time: Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them

up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them, and his garment became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus. And Peter said to Jesus; "Master, It is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid. And a cloud overshadows them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." And suddenly looking around they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. And as they were coming

down the mountain, he charged them to say to tell no one what they had seen until the Son of man should have risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant. And they asked him; “Why do the scribes say that first that Elijah must come?” And he said to them, “Elijah does come first to restore all things; and how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray, cleanse and renew us and may it become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward. Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Ps (76) 77:29-30)* **They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.**<sup>3</sup>

*Or: (Jn 3:16)*

**God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**

**Prayer after Communion**

Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, and in your kindness make those

you have nourished by this one heavenly Bread one in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Revelation of the Glory  
of God to his Chosen  
Ones****Commentary****Mark 9:2-13**

The narrative of the transfiguration of Jesus is one of the central scenes of Mark's Gospel and of the New Testament. It summarizes the whole revelation. Here we find Moses and Elijah, the spokesmen of the Law and the prophets, the bearers of the Old Testament figure. They seem to introduce the Messiah to the apostles: Peter, James and John, the "pillars of the Church", charged with announcing the Good News to every creature. Moreover, like Moses and Elijah, who were led by God to the holy mountain to witness his glory, the apostles were chosen to witness the manifestation of his glory. Furthermore, at the descent, Jesus forbade them to speak of what they had seen until his resurrection. They were brought into the intimacy of God.

***Rev. Fr. Jean- Paul Sakoto, Nairobi-Kenya***





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***Growing up Daily with the Good News***