

AFRICA

Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

4th Week in Ordinary Time

bayard africain



AFRICA ● 29-31 January - 1-4 February 2023 ● Digital n°18

Contents

Living with Christ Jan-Feb 2023

I Editorial

Praying with the Church

2 Pope's Prayer Intention

3-5 Focus on the Sacraments
The Sacrament Of Holy Orders

Daily Readings and commentaries

6-15 January 29
4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

16-48 January 30-31
4th Week in Ordinary Time

6-29 February 1-4
4th Week in Ordinary Time

Liturgical texts:

Texts contained in this work derived whole or in part from Daily Missal copyrighted by St Paul Communication/ Daughters of St Paul.

On our cover: The presentation of the Lord.

© Yves Boro

Editorial

January 2023



Rev. Fr. François Nzanzu, a.a. Nairobi-Kenya

God's Presence in our Ordinary Time

Each part of the liturgical year has either a special season or is in 'ordinary time'. Special seasons are: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter. Whenever the Church isn't celebrating one of these special seasons, we speak of 'Ordinary Time'. But, this does not mean that Ordinary Time has nothing special, because Jesus performed miracles all throughout the year. Thus, he is always with us in our daily and ordinary life.

Ordinary time does not need to be "ordinary". It does not mean that we get a break from the Liturgical Year. The opposite is true: Ordinary Time celebrates "the mystery of Christ in all its aspects". The Church continues to celebrate Saints days and other events such as the week of Christian Unity that we celebrate from January 18th to 25th. We also remember and celebrate the parts of Jesus' life that were ordinary, much like our own lives. The color of green is appropriate because it is the most ordinary color in our natural environment and it tells us that there is always hope because God is present in our ordinary life.



The Pope's Prayer Intention

For educators: We pray that educators may be credible witnesses, teaching fraternity rather than competition and helping the youngest and most vulnerable above all.

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

The Sacrament Of Holy Orders

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time (CCC 1536). It includes the episcopate (bishop), the presbyterate (*priest*) and the diaconate (deacon). By virtue of their ordination, bishops, priests and deacons are called to the service of all. They are called to be ministers like Jesus Christ who humbled himself to save the humankind.

A deacon is at the service of the bishop. There is a strong relationship between the episcopate and the diaconate. It is only the bishop who lays his hands on the candidates to the diaconal ordination. The proclamation of the Word of God in the liturgy is one of his duties. The diaconate may be permanent or not. While there are deacons who aspire to become priests, some decide to remain deacons their entire life. A great number of permanent deacons are married men. Since

Vatican II, some married men can become deacons but not priests.

A priest works hand in hand with the bishop to whom he promises obedience. He presides over the Eucharistic celebration in which Jesus Christ gives himself to the faithful as Bread of Life and Spiritual Drink. He also anoints the sick. We have the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood. By virtue of Baptism, all Christians participate in the common priesthood of Jesus Christ who is the High Priest. The ministerial priesthood is at the service of the common priesthood. The sacrament of Holy Orders is administered to a baptized male who has fulfilled the requirements described in the Code of Canon Law.

Bishops are the ministers of the sacrament of Holy Orders since they are the successors of the Apostles who were successors of Jesus Christ. It is important to note that only one bishop ordains priests and deacons. But three bishops are involved in the ordination of a priest called to the episcopate. The presiding bishop is called consecrator. The other two are called co-consecrators. In some countries where the number of bishops is limited,

the Church authorities always find an alternative so that the ordination of a bishop may take place validly. During the ordination of a priest as well as the ordination of a bishop, the Holy Chrism oil is used. The hands of the priest are anointed while it is the head of the bishop that is anointed. The deacon is not anointed. It is worth saying that the same Holy Chrism oil is used during Baptism, Confirmation, the dedication of Churches and the consecration of altars.

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



Sunday January 29

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Zephania 2: 3; 3: 12-13 / Psalm 146: 7. 8-9. 9a-9bc-10 /
1 Corinthians 1: 26-31 / Matthew 5: 1-12a*



“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy”.



Lasting Joy Comes only from God (Mt. 5:1-12)

The pursuit of happiness is one of the things common to every human being on the face of the earth. We may be different in various ways but we are united in this desire to be happy because happiness is a fundamental human need. We, however, know from our experience that sometimes, happiness eludes us. In the face of the fleeting reality of worldly happiness, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in our Gospel of today, teaches us about the beatitudes. The word 'Beatitude' means 'blessedness' or 'happiness'. Therefore, with the Beatitudes, Jesus gives us the formula for true and lasting happiness. Summarily, the beatitudes, eight of them, are those spiritual dispositions that ought to characterize the life of a disciple of Christ.

Let us look at the first one: Blessed are the poor in spirit. This refers to spiritual poverty. It is an interior disposition that enables us to adopt the tendency of a poor person in our relationship with God. The poor person is one who is helpless and who looks up to others to have his needs met. To be spiritually poor, therefore, is to depend on God regardless of whether we are materially rich or poor. This is the path to true



Sunday January 29

happiness. According to Pope Francis, Christians “do not find their joy in money, power, or other material goods,” but rather in “the gifts they receive every day from God: life, creation, brothers and sisters, and so on.”

But how do we practically express our dependence on God? First, we must pray always. It is only a person who depends on himself who never sees the need to pray. When we pray, we place our entire life into God’s hands and make him know our existence, successes, and salvation depend on him. Second, by the daily reading of the Word of God. This is a means by which we listen to God. We show we depend on Him by looking up to him for guidance as contained in his Word. Third, by living according to His Word, even when doing so is difficult. To live according to His Word is to demonstrate that we are not autonomous from Him. And fourth, by trying as much as possible not to worry. To depend on God is to trust Him in every situation. And to trust God is to avoid being worried, no matter what comes our way. Someone wrote: *In what are you trusting? Trust in yourself and you are doomed to disappointment. Trust in your friends and they will die and leave you. Trust in money and you may have it taken from you. Trust in reputation and some slanderous tongue may blast it. But trust in God and you will never be disappointed.*

Rev. Fr. Michael BANJO, Abuja-Nigeria



Entrance Antiphon (*Psalm (104) 105.47*)

Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

Collect

Grant us, Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading (*Zephaniah 2.3; 3.12-13*)

A reading from the Book of Zephaniah

Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, who do his commands; seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the wrath of the Lord. “For I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, those who are left in Israel; they shall do no wrong and utter no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall pasture and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.”

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



Sunday January 29

Responsorial Psalm _____
(Psalm (145) 146: 7.8-9a.9bc-10 (R. Mathew 5:3))

Bless-ed are the poor in spir - it;
the king - dom of heaven is theirs!

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

Or: Alleluia!

It is the Lord who preserves fidelity forever,
who does justice to those who are oppressed;
It is he who gives bread to the hungry.
The Lord who sets the prisoners free. **R.**

It is the Lord who opens the eyes of the blind
the Lord who raises up those who are bowed down;
it is the Lord loves the just
the Lord who protects the stranger. **R.**



The Lord upholds the orphan and the widow,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign forever,
the God of Sion from age to age. R.

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1.26-31) —————

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

Consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to the flesh, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no flesh might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore as it is written, “Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord.”

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

Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 5.12a)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. **Alleluia.**



Sunday January 29

Gospel (Matthew 5.1-12a)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.”

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

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only.



R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church called to serve all nations through her leaders, we pray to the Lord: R.

For open and ongoing dialogue between nations, we pray to the Lord: R.

For those who suffer persecution, sickness and loneliness, we pray to the Lord: R.

For us, called in baptism to be prophets of God's word all over the world, we pray to the Lord: R.

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the Sacrament of our redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Sunday January 29

Communion Antiphon *(Cf. Psalm (29) 30.17-18)*

Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

or

(Matthew 5.3-4)

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

Prayer after Communion

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, that through this help to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Monday January 30

4th Week in Ordinary Time

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (104) 105:47) **Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.**

Collect

Grant us; Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading --- *(Hebrews 11:32-40)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: What more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets – who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goat, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated— of whom the world was not worthy— wandering over deserts and mountains, and dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm—
(Psalm (30) 31:20:21.
22.23.24)***

**R. Be strong, let your heart
take courage, all who hope
in the Lord.**

How great is the goodness, Lord, that you keep for those who fear you, that you show to those who trust you in the sight of children of men. R.

You hide them in the shelter of your presence, secure from human scheming; you keep them safe within your tent from disputing tongues. R.

Blest be the Lord for he has wondrously shown

me his merciful love in a fortified city! *R.*

“I am far removed from your sight”, I said in my alarm. Yet you heard the voice of my plea when I cry to you for help. *R.*

Love the Lord, all you his saints. The Lord guards the faithful. But the Lord will repay to the full the one who acts with pride. *R.*

Acclamation (*Luke 7:16*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. A great prophet has risen among us, and God has visited his people. **Alleluia.**

Gospel —————
(*Mark 5:1-20*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: Jesus and his disciples came to the

other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when he had come out of the boat, there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who lived among the tombs; and no one could bind him any more, even with a chain; for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains, he wrenched apart and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains, he was always crying out, and bruising himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped him; and crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me,

Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.” For he had said to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!” And Jesus asked him, “what is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion; for we are many.” And he begged him eagerly not to send them out of the country. Now a herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him, “Send us to the swine, let us enter them.” So he gave them leave. And the unclean spirit came out, entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned into the sea. The herdsmen fled, and told it in the city

and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus, and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their neighborhood. And as he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed begged him that he might be with him. But he refused, and said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” And he went away and began to proclaim in

the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marvelled.

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the sacrament of your redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (29) 30:17-18) **Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I call on you.**

or

(Mt 5:3-4) **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.**

Prayer after Communion

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O

Lord, through this help to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The perplexing power of Jesus

Commentary

Mark 5:1-20

Our Gospel of today tells us of the encounter between Jesus and the demoniac who called his name 'Legion'. Legion is the term normally used by the Roman military for a group of armed soldiers numbering up to 6000 men. This leads us to a better understanding of what the demoniac meant when he said "for there are many of us." No wonder Saint Mark emphasized that everyone remained powerless before the demoniac. No one could overpower him. But Jesus was able to subdue him with a simple command. You may be going through difficulties that no one has been able to help you surmount. The story of this demoniac should lead us to the conviction that with God all things are possible. Keep holding on to Jesus, he never fails.

Rev. Fr. Michael Banjo, Abuja-Nigeria



Tuesday January 31

Memorial

Saint John Bosco, Priest

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (104) 105:47) **Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.**

Collect

Grant us; Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading ————— *(Hebrews 12:1-4)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising

the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm—
(Psalm (21) 22): 26b-27.28
and 30.31-32.***

**R. They will praise you,
Lord, who seek you.**

My vows I will pray
before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and shall
have their fill. They shall
praise the Lord, those who

seek him. May their hearts
live on forever and ever! R.

All the earth shall
remember and return to
the Lord, all families of
the nations worship before
him. They shall worship
him, all the mighty of the
earth; before him shall
bow all who go down to
the dust. R.

And my soul shall live for
him, my descendants serve
him. They shall tell of the
Lord to generations yet to
come, declaring his saving
justice to people yet unborn:
“These are the things the
Lord has done.” R.

Acclamation *(Matthew 8:17)*

Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ took our infirmities and bore our diseases. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— *(Mark 5:21-43)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him and he was beside the sea. Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and seeing him, he fell at his feet, and begged him saying, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay

your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.” And he went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. And there was a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years, and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, “If I touch even his garment, I shall be made well.” And immediately the haemorrhage ceased; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that

power had gone forth from him, immediately turned about in the crowd, and said, “who touched my garment?” And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, ‘who touched me?’” And he looked around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had been done to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, “Daughter your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.” While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler’s house some who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” But

ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.” And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. When then came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, he saw a tumult, and people weeping and wailing loudly. And when he had entered, he said to them, “Why do you make a tumult and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside, and took the child’s father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. Taking her by the hand he said to her, “Talitha cumi”;

which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise.” And immediately the girl got up and walked; for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were overcome with amazement. And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the sacrament of your

redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Mt 24:46-47) **Blessed is the servant whom the Lord finds watching when he comes. Amen I say to you, He will put that servant in charge of all his property**

Or: Lk 12:42

This is the steward, faithful and prudent, whom the Lord put in charge of his servants to distribute their allowance of food at the proper time (E.T. alleluia).

Prayer after Communion

May partaking at the heavenly table, almighty God, confirm and increase strength from on high in all

who celebrate the feast of blessed Saint John Bosco, that we may preserve in integrity the gift of faith

and walk in the path of salvation you trace for us. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Treating Jesus as God

Commentary

Mark 5:21-43

Jairus, the synagogue official, humbled himself before Jesus. He fell at Jesus' feet and pleaded with him to come and heal his daughter. How fitting it is for us to imitate this gesture of Jairus, the practice of approaching Jesus with reverence, especially when receiving Holy Communion. We must avoid giving Jesus minimal reverence. We must give him the maximum form of reverence. The Church has always taught that kneeling to receive the Eucharist is the greatest form of physical reverence we can give to Jesus. When we treat Jesus as God, Jesus will manifest himself to us as God.

Rev. Fr. Michael Banjo, Abuja-Nigeria



Wednesday February 1

4th Week in Ordinary Time

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (104) 105:47) Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

Collect

Grant us; Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading

(Hebrews 12: 4-7.11-15)

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as son? – “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he

loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see Lord. See to it that no one fail to obtain the grace of God; that “root of bitterness” spring up and

cause trouble, and by it the many become defiled.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm ⁽¹⁰²⁾ 103: 1-2.13-14.17-18a)

R. The mercy of the Lord is everlasting upon those who hold him in fear.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits. *R.*

As a father has compassion on his children, the Lord’s compassion is on those who fear him. For he knows of what we are made; he remembers that we are dust. *R.*

But the mercy of the Lord is everlasting upon those who hold him in fear, upon children's children his justice, for those who keep his covenant. R.

Acclamation (*John 10:27*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord; and I know them, and they follow me. **Alleluia.**

Gospel —————
(*Mark 6:1-6*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: Jesus came to his own country; and his disciples followed him. And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue; and many who heard him were

astonished, saying, "Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offence at him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the sacrament of your redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (29) 30:17-18) Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I call on you.

or

(Mt 5:3-4) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

Prayer after Communion

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, that through this help

to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase. Through Christ Our Lord. **Amen.**

The Efficacy of Faith in God

Commentary

Mark 6:1-6

In spite of the fact that the townspeople of Jesus had experienced his mighty works, they held him in contempt, demonstrating a lack of faith in him. And the result: “He could work no miracle there ...” How much we benefit from the blessings of God depends on our faith in Him. Hear the words of Jesus to the two blind men who asked for healing: “Do you believe I can do this? ... Let it be done to you according to your faith” (Matthew 9:28, 29). The man or woman of faith is one who, in word and deed, holds Jesus in high esteem and is filled with a positive assurance that he is able to make possible that which seems impossible. Every day, therefore, let our prayer be: “Lord, In-crease our faith.” (Luke 17:5).

Rev. Fr. Michael Banjo, Abuja-Nigeria



Thursday February 2

4th Week in Ordinary Time

Feast

**The Presentation of the Lord,
World Day of Consecrated Life**

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (47) 48:10-11) **Your merciful love, O God, we ponder in the midst of your temple. Your praise, O God, like your name, reaches the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with saving justice.**

The Gloria in excelsis
(Glory to God in the highest) **is said.**

Collect

Almighty ever-living God, we humbly implore your

majesty that, just as your Only Begotten Son was presented on this day in the Temple in the substance of our flesh, so, by your grace, we may be presented to you with minds made pure. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading —————
(Malachi 3:1-4)

**A reading from the Book
of the Prophet Malachi**

Thus says the Lord God:
“Behold, I send my

messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

“For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, till they present right offerings to the Lord. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (23) 24:7.8.9.10)**

**R. The Lord of hosts, he is
the King of glory!**

O gates, lift high your heads; grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory! R.

Who is this king of glory? The Lord, the mighty, the valiant; the Lord, the valiant in war. R.

O gates, lift high your heads; grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory! R.

Who is this king of glory? He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory. R.

Second Reading —————
(Hebrews 2:14-18)

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Since the children share in flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins

of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Acclamation (*Luke 2:32*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.
Alleluia.

Gospel —————
(Luke 2:22-40)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to

present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to

the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.” And there was a prophetess, Anna, the

daughter of Phanel, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, and as a widow till she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

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

OR SHORTER:
(Luke 2:22-32)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem,

whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the

Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

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

Prayer over the Offerings

May the offering made with exultation by your Church be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray, for you willed that your Only Begotten Son be offered to you for the life of the world as the Lamb without blemish. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Preface: The mystery of the Presentation of the Lord.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

V. Lift up your hearts.

R. We lift them up to the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For your co-eternal Son was presented on this day in the Temple and revealed by the Spirit as the glory of Israel and Light of the nations.

And so, we, too, go forth, rejoicing to encounter your Salvation, and with the Angels and Saints praise you, as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy** Lord God of hosts...

Communion Antiphon

(Lk 2:30-31) **My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.**

Prayer after Communion

By these holy gifts which we have received, O Lord, bring your grace to perfection within us, and,

as you fulfilled Simeon's expectation that he would not see death until he had been privileged to welcome the Christ, so may we, going

forth to meet the Lord, obtain the gift of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Welcoming Christ, the Light of the World

Commentary

Luke 2:22-40

We read in today's Gospel that Simeon welcomed Jesus by taking him into his arms, a gesture we symbolise by the holding of lighted candles in today's liturgy – the candle representing Jesus, the light of the world. If, truly, our task is to give Jesus to the world, we must first welcome Jesus into our lives and homes. Like Mary and Joseph, parents must introduce their children to God and to the life of the Church. Jesus must be welcomed by seeking to please the Lord in the way we carry out our work; by being close to the poor and less privileged and by ensuring that we make Jesus visible in our various concrete existential realities. This is how to make the light of Christ shine in every corner of the earth.

Rev. Fr. Michael Banjo, Abuja-Nigeria



Friday February 3

4th Week in Ordinary Time

Ferial

or Sts Blase or st Ansgar; optional memorial,

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (104) 105:47) Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

Collect

Grant us; Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading _____ *(Hebrews 13:1-8)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some are entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them; and those who are ill-treated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be

held in honour among all, and let marriage bed be undefiled; for God will judge the immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never fail you nor forsake you." Hence we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid; what can man do to me?" Remember your leaders, Those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (26) 27:1.3.5.8c-9abc)

**R. The Lord is my light
and my salvation**

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I Fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; whom should I dread? R.

Though an army encamp against me, my heart would not fear. Though war broke out against me, even then would I trust. R.

For there he keeps me safe in his shelter/ in the day of evil. He hides me under cover of his tent; he set me high upon a rock. R.

It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me. Dismiss not your servant in anger; you have been my help. *R.*

Acclamation (*Luke 8:15*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Blessed are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience. **Alleluia.**

Gospel _____
(*Mark 6:14-29*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: King Herod heard of Jesus; for his name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised

from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him." But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." But when Herod heard of it he said, "John whom I beheaded has been raised." For Herod had sent and seized John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; because he had married her. For John said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And Herodias had had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him

safe. When he heard him, he was much perplexed; and yet he heard him gladly. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and the leading men of Galilee. For when Herodias' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will grant it." And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." And she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." And she came in immediately with haste to the king, and asked, saying, "I want

you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." And the king was exceedingly sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests, he did not want to break his word to her. And immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard and give orders to bring his head in. He went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the sacrament of your redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (29) 30:17-18) **Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let**

me not be put to shame, for I call on you.

or

(Mt 5:3-4) **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.**

Prayer after Communion

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, through this help

to eternal salvation true Through Christ our Lord.
faith may ever increase. **Amen.**

We Are Called to Defend Divine Truth

Commentary

Mark 6:14-29

Saint John the Baptist was not afraid to condemn King Herod for coveting Herodias, the wife of his brother, Philip. For this reason, John the Baptist was imprisoned and eventually beheaded. From John the Baptist, we learn to be forthright in defending divine truths. Today, human society is increasingly replacing God's laws with human-made ones. How many countries have endorsed abortion when God clearly says thou shall not kill? How many countries have legalised same-sex unions when God approves only of man and woman marital unions? We need more John the Baptists in our contemporary world who can stand up to those in civil authority to defend the Word of God without compromise.

Rev. Fr. Michael Banjo, Abuja-Nigeria



Saturday February 4

4th Week in Ordinary Time

Ferial

or Saturday Mass of the B.V. Mary

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (104) 105:47) **Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.**

Collect

Grant us; Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading _____

(Hebrews 13:15-17.20-21)

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: Through Jesus let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God. That is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have

to give account. Let them do it joyfully and sadly for that of no advantage to you. Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; in whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (22) 23:1-3a.3b-4,5.6)

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me; he revives my soul. R.

He guides me along the right path, for the sake of his name. Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death, no evil would I fear, for you are with me. Your crook and your staff will give me comfort. R.

You have prepared a table before me in the sight

of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. *R.*

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the day of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for length of days unending. *R.*

Acclamation (*John 10:27*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord; and I know them, and they follow me.
Alleluia.

Gospel _____
(Mark 6:30-34)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: The apostles returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. And said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they have no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of them. As he landed, he saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the sacrament of your redemption. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (29) 30:17-18) **Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I call on you.**

or

(Mt 5:3-4) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

Prayer after Communion

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, through this help to

eternal salvation true faith may ever increase. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Be Compassionate as our Lord is Compassionate**Commentary****Mark 6:30-34**

In a world that is increasingly characterised by a lack of sensitivity to the needs of others, Christians are called to imitate the altruism of our compassionate Jesus who, without being prompted, recognised the need for his disciples to go away to a lonely place and rest upon their return from an arduous mission. There is a saying that “a person’s most useful asset is not a head full of knowledge, but a heart full of love, and an ear ready to listen and a hand willing to help others.” Our ability to spontaneously notice a brother or sister going through hardship and offer him or her a helping hand and some comforting words; the warmth that we give to those who encounter us; the conscious efforts we make to respect every human person, regardless of his or her status in life; these are deeds of kindness that must mark the life of Jesus’ disciple.

Rev. Fr. Michael Banjo, Abuja-Nigeria



Publisher: Pierre LANGLOIS

Publishing & Development Manager

Editor in Chief: Rev. Fr. François NZANZU a.a.

Assistant: Rev. Fr. Jean-Claude DIWEDIGA a.a.

Editorial Secretary: Virginia KABUGU

Graphic designer: Naomi SAWADOGO

Ghana Coordinator: Rev. Fr. Dennis OPOKU;

Associate Publishers: Fr. Walter Ihejirika, Regional Coordinator, LWC Nigeria,

Other **Contributors:** Rev. Fr. Emmanuel SALIFU

Rev. Fr. Jérôme K. M. KOMBI; Rev. Fr. Michael BANJO.

Digital : HODIEB Dominique

ISSN: 2424-7464 ; **Contact:** Living With Christ

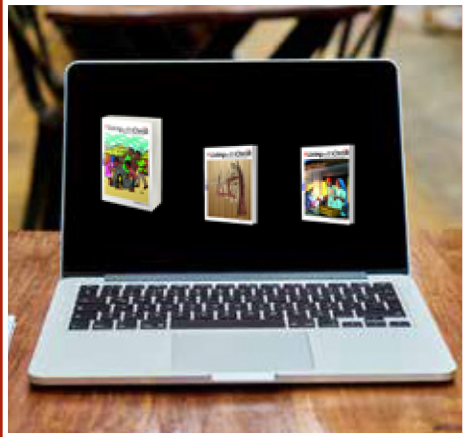
Rue E104, Lot 1076 Ilot 116 - Cocody Riviera 3 Abidjan , Côte d'Ivoire

Address: P.O. BOX 08 BP 2469 Abidjan 08 -

Phone number : (+225) 25 22 02 11 11 -

E-mail: info@livingwithchrist-africa.com





 WhatsApp : [+225 05 94 79 75 68 / +254727074304](https://wa.me/2250594797568)

 Website : [https:// www.livingwithchrist.africa](https://www.livingwithchrist.africa)

 Facebook : [Living with Christ Africa](#)

 Tiktok

 YouTube

Growing up Daily with the Good News