

AFRICA

# Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

Weekly LWCA

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in  
Ordinary Time

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#### **Liturgical texts:**

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**On our cover:** Jesus, the Lamb of God

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# Editorial

January 2023



Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Salifu, Tema-Ghana

## New Wine and New wine skin

If you want to change things, you change how you do things. It is not only about the effort we put in but the attitude we must have to face situations that seem not to change. The serenity prayer proposes two ways of doing this: courage to change things.... the things only change because of the courage to try new things in new areas and channel new paths without fear of failure; the serenity to accept things that cannot be changed. Acceptance is not a state of idleness; but a state of recognizing that there is a need to change attitude to handle a situation impossible to change.

With a year as tough as the previous one, it is completely lucid to feel the reluctance in preparing for this year. However, a new phase must always be embraced with new hope. It is imperative that we walk into this year rejuvenated. And I propose two new wine skins for the new things to come: Courage and acceptance. Courage to chat new paths and acceptance to change our inner disposition to facing and receive the new experience that are to come in this year.

*Wishing you a blissful new season with renewed hope and strength.*



## 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

**A**ccording 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 15

## Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Isaiah 49: 3. 5-6 / Psalms (39) 40: 2. 4. 7-8. 8-9. 10 (8a. 9a) /  
1 Corinthians 1: 1-3 / John 1: 29-34*



“I have seen and I bear witness: He is the Son of God”.





## *Emulating the Lamb!*

**F**riends in Christ, with the Christmas season gone, we are back to the Ordinary Season of the Church. Today, we are presented with Jesus as the Lamb of God who offers unceasing atonement for our sins through the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist. The first reading projects the prophetic role that Christ, the Lamb of God, would play.

In the second reading, St. Paul calls the faithful to embrace holiness of life. He lists unity of the spirit, prayer, grace and peace as prerequisites of living according to the demands of Christ. The gospel reveals the call of the apostles. Like social networking, we are told that upon seeing Jesus, John said to two of his disciples: “Look, there is the Lamb of God.” He continues: “This is the one I spoke of when I said, a man who is superior to me would come.”

### **Practical Lessons**

1. Just as Jesus is presented in the gospel by John as the Lamb was without blight, we are called to be holy, blameless, spotless and righteous in season and out of season.
2. As the Lamb was separated, we are charged to emulate Christ who was sanctified by the Father because he was



**Sunday January 15**

separated from the fallen through singling us for honour and respect as God's sons and daughters.

3. In imitation of the Lamb who was substituted, we are encouraged to stand in the breach for others by taking away their pain and sorrow through putting a smile on their faces.

4. Parents and guardians are challenged to lay down their love for their kids by risking all for them so as to enjoy food, shelter, clothing and good education in imitation of Jesus the Lamb of God who was slain for our sake.

5. Since Christ has been sacrificed as our Passover (Cf. 1st Cor. 5:7 & Ex. 12:5) to make atonement for sins, we are reminded to be willing to offer our lives as a living sacrifice, pure and pleasing unto God (Cf. Rom. 12:1).

The Lamb of God takes away sins - he purchases pardon for hardened criminals and sinners. The Baptist calls us to repent and believe the Good News preached by Christ, the true Lamb who preached by word and example. In this week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan 15-18), may the Holy Spirit help us to emulate Christ, the spotless Lamb of God even as our sacrifice finds favour in his sight.

***Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk, Jos Plateau-Nigeria***



**Entrance Antiphon** (*Ps (65) 66:4*)

All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

*The Gloria is said*

**Collect**

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**First Reading** (*Isaiah 49:3.5-6*)

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**A reading from the Book of Isaiah**

The Lord said to me, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” And now the Lord says, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honoured in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength— he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I



Sunday January 15

will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

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

**Responsorial Psalm** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Psalm (39) 40:2.4ab.7-8a.8b-9.10)**



**R. See, I have come, Lord, to do your will.**

I waited, I waited for the Lord  
and he stooped down to me;  
he heard my cry.  
He put a new song into my mouth,  
praise of our God. R.

You delight not in sacrifice and offerings,  
but in an open ear.



You do not ask for holocaust and victim.  
Then I said, "See, I have come." R.

In the scroll of the book it stands written of me:  
"I delight to do your will, O my God;  
your instruction lies deep within me." R.

Your justice I have proclaimed  
in the great assembly.  
My lips I have not sealed;  
you know it, O Lord. R.

***Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1:1-3)***—————

**The beginning of the first Letter of Saint Paul to the  
Corinthians**

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, To the Church of God which is at Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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



Sunday January 15

**Acclamation** (*John 1:14a.12ac*)

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. To all who received him he gave power to become children of God. **Alleluia.**

**Gospel** (*John 1:29-34*)

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

At that time: John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.’ I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptising with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness, “I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven and remain on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptise with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptises with the Holy Spirit? And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.’”

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

***The creed is said.***



## Prayer of the Faithful

*The following intentions are suggestions only.*

**R. 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. R.

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

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. R.

## Prayer over the Offerings

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we may participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Sunday January 15

**Communion Antiphon** (*Ps (22) 23:5*)

**You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

*Or: (1 Jn 4:16)*

**We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.**

**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.**





# Monday January 16

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (65) 66:4)* All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

*The Gloria is said*

## Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading --- *(Hebrews 5:1-10)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gift and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifices for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honour upon himself, he

is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.”; as he says also in another place, “You are a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high

priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

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

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm 110: 1. 2. 3. 4)***

**R. You are a priest forever  
in the line of Melchizedek,**

The Lord’s revelation to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your foes your footstool.” R.

The Lord will send from Sion your sceptre of power: rule in the midst of your foes. R.

With you is princely rule on the day of power. In holy splendour, from the womb before the dawn, I have begotten you. R.

The lord has sworn an oath he will not change:

“You are a priest forever, in the line of Melchizedek.” R.

### **Acclamation**

*(Hebrews 4:12)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** The word of the Lord is living and active, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel**

*(Mark 2:18-22)*

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

At that time: John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came to say to him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast and your disciples do not fast”? And Jesus said to them, “Can the

wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The day will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. No one sews a piece of an unshrunk cloth on an old garment; if he does the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but new wine is for fresh skins.”

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we may participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Ps (22) 23:5)* **You have prepared a table before**

**me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

*Or: (1 Jn 4:16)*

**We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.**

### **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.**

## Commentary

### The Loving Bridegroom!

Hebrews 5: 1-10 /  
Mark 2: 18-22

Our first reading presents us with the humanity of Jesus as one who prays aloud and in silent tears. It reveals how he, a high priest, sacrifices himself through suffering and invites all those who share in his common and ministry priesthood to take lessons in humility by identifying with the lowly. In the gospel reading, Jesus describes himself as a loving bridegroom who cares for us at the Eucharistic table as priest, brother, friend and lover. He invites us to seek the new wine of the kingdom and fresh wine skins that would enable us share the resources of the earth with the poorest of the poor while staying awake to the demands of the kingdom. Now that the bridegroom is not with us physically, we are urged to pray, fast and keep vigil until he returns in glory to judge the living and the death. That is when the loving bridegroom will give each man and woman what he or she deserves.

**Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk**, *Jos Plateau-Nigeria*



# Tuesday January 17

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## **Memorial**

Saint Anthony, Abbot

### **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Cf. Ps (65) 66:4)* All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

### **Collect**

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully, hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Reading**

*(Hebrews 6:10-20)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love which you showed for his sake in serving the Saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness in realising the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators

of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made a promise to Abraham since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible

that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.

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

***Responsorial Psalm*** —  
***(Psalm 111: 1-2. 4-5. 9)***

**R.** The Lord keeps his  
covenant ever in mind.  
or Alleluia! Alleluia!

I will praise the Lord with all my heart, in the meeting of the just and the assembly. Great are the works of the Lord, to be pondered by all who delight in them. R.

He has given us a memorial of his wonders. The Lord is gracious and merciful. He gives food to those who fear him; keeps his covenant ever in mind. R.

He has sent redemption to his people, and established his covenant forever. Holy his name,

to be feared. His praise endures forever. R.

**Acclamation**  
***(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.  
**Alleluia.**

***Gospel*** —————  
***(Mark 2:23-28)***

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

It happened that one Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain-fields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees said to



him, “look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the showbread, which it was not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?” And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; so the son of man is lord even of the sabbath.”

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Cf. Ps (22) 23:5)* **You have prepared a table for me, how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

*or*

**We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.**

### **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.**

## Bringing Christ to the Poor

## Commentary

Hebrews 6: 10-20 /  
Mark 2: 23-28

Today we celebrate the memorial of Saint Anthony. He is known as the “Father of Christian Monasticism.” He gave up all his possessions for the poor as a teenager when his parents died and lived as a hermit in the Egyptian desert. On top of that, he constantly supported the local Church in time of need. We are told he helped St. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria in opposing the Arian heresy. As we reflect about his life and times, we are challenged to embrace detachment from the trappings of material possessions and use same in evangelical charity. Someone has said, “there is enough for everybody’s need but not enough for everybody’s greed.” Those who are blessed with material wealth must take helping the poor a most urgent commandment. By the same token, like St. Anthony, we must expand the kingdom of God by being generous to the Church.

**Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk**, *Jos Plateau-Nigeria*



# Wednesday January 18

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (65) 66:4)* All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

## Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully, hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading --- *(Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: Melchizedek, king of Salem, Priest of the most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth of everything. He is first, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. He is without father or mother or genealogy, and has neither beginning of days nor end of

life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest for ever. This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek." The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm*** —  
***(Psalm 110: 1. 2. 3. 4)***

**R. You are a priest forever  
in the line of Melchizedek.**

The Lord's revelation to my Lord: "Sit at my right

hand, until I make your foes your footstool." R.

The Lord will send from Sion your sceptre of power: rule in the midst of your foes. R.

With you is princely rule on the day of power. In holy splendour, from the womb before the dawn, I have begotten you. R.

The Lord has sworn an oath he will not change: "You are a priest forever, in the line of Melchizedek." R.

**Acclamation**  
***(Matthew 4:23)***

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Jesus was preaching the Gospel of the kingdom and healing every infirmity among the people.

**Alleluia.**

**Gospel** —————  
**(Mark 3:1-6)**

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

At that time: Again Jesus entered a synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. And they watched him, to see whether he would heal him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man who had the withered hand, “come here.” And he said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieve at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, “stretched out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out, and

immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon**

*(Cf. Ps (22) 23:5)* **You have prepared a table for me, how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

*or*

**We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.**

### 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.**

## Beyond Laws

## Commentary

Hebrews 7: 1-3. 15-17 /  
Mark 3: 1-6

Friends in Christ, the first reading from the letter to the Hebrews reveals how Abraham, Our Father in the Faith, reveres Melchizedek - the mysterious high priest. The author compares the High Priest of old with Jesus, the eternal High Priest. This text takes us into the depths of our worship as Catholics where Christ, the high priest feeds us at the table of the Holy Eucharist. In the gospel, the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus because he healed on a sabbath. While grieving at their obstinacy, the Lord suggests that there is something beyond the law. His speech and body language indicates that the law is made for man and not man for the law. He challenges us not to always insist on the letter of the law forgetting the spirit of the law.

**Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk, Jos Plateau-Nigeria**



# Thursday January 19

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (65) 66:4)* All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

## Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully, hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading ---

*(Hebrews 7:25-8:6)*

### A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: Jesus is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when

he offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever. Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gift according to the law. They serve a copy

and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary; for when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain." But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (39) 40: 7-8a. 8b-9.  
10. 17)***

***See, I have come, Lord, to  
do your will.***

You delight not in sacrifice and offerings, but in an open ear. You do



not ask for holocaust and victim. Then I said, "See, I have come." *R.*

In the scroll of the book it stands written of me: "I delight to do your will, O my God; your instruction lies deep within me." *R.*

Your justice I have proclaimed in the great assembly. My lips I have not sealed; you know it, O Lord. *R.*

O Let there be rejoicing and gladness for all who seek you. Let them ever say, "The Lord is great," who long for your salvation. *R.*

### **Acclamation**

*(2 Timothy 1:10)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Our Saviour Christ Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to

light through the Gospel. **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel** \_\_\_\_\_ *(Mark 3:7-12)*

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

At time: Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed; also from Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from about Tyre and Sidon a great multitude, hearing all that he did, came to him. And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they should crush him; for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him. And whenever the unclean

spirits saw him, they fell down and cried out, "You are the Son of God." And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

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

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Antiphon**

*(Cf. Ps (22) 23:5)* **You have prepared a table for me, how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

*or*

**We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.**

### **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.**

## Commentary

### A Man like Us

Hebrews 7: 25 8: 6 /  
Mark 3: 7-12

Today, the writer of the letter to the Hebrews reminds us about the intercessory role Christ plays by pleading our cause before the father. By being holy, innocent, uncontaminated and above the influence of sin, he sets the bar high for priests and members of the laity alike. The remarkable difference between his priesthood and that of priests of old is that they were constantly offering an external sacrifice. In his case, he offered himself, once and for all for our expiation. In the gospel, Jesus withdraws with his disciples to the lakeside; but we are told the crowd followed him. In his usual sympathetic and empathetic way, he healed the sick and silenced the demons that wanted to stand in the way of his mission. Amid the hustle and bustle of life, we must have time to withdraw and be with the Lord before the Blessed Sacrament or praying the rosary meditatively. Divine silence can suppress any demonic manifestation around us.

**Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk, Jos Plateau-Nigeria**



# Friday January 20

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## **Ferial**

Or **Blessed Cyprian Michael Tansi**, *optional memorial*

Or **Sts. Fabian and Sebastian**, *(optional memorial)*

## **Entrance Antiphon**

*(Ps (65) 66:4)* **All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!**

## **Collect**

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Reading** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Hebrews 8:6-13)**

**A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews**

Brethren: As it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for a second. For he finds

fault with them when he says: “The days will come, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in my covenant, and so I paid no heed to them, says the Lord. This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach every one his fellow or every one

his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord.’ for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful towards their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.” In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

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

***Responsorial Psalm —  
(Psalm (84) 85:8 and 10.11-12.13-14)***

***R. Merciful love and  
faithfulness have met.***

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and grant us your

salvation. His salvation is near for those who fear him, and his glory will dwell in our land. *R.*

Merciful love and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have kissed. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth, and justice look down from heaven. *R.*

Also the Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase. Justice will march before him, and guide his steps on the way. *R.*

### **Acclamation**

*(2 Corinthians 5:19)*

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and entrusting us the message of reconciliation. **Alleluia.**

### **Gospel** ————— *(Mark 3:13-19)*

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

At that time: Jesus went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons: Simon whom he surnamed Peter; James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder; Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the Son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

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

**Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated

the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon**

*(Ps (22) 23:5)* **You have prepared a table before me, how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

### 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.**

## A Covenanted People

### Commentary

Hebrews 8: 6-13 /  
Mark 3: 13-19

Our liturgy today reminds us that we are a covenanted people. The letter to the Hebrews demonstrates that Christ fulfils the prophesy of Jeremiah through establishing a new covenant. Unlike the covenants of old which were predicated on impersonal rites, norms, laws and rituals, the new covenant that Jesus establishes is a solemn heart-to-heart relationship which he initiates with the believer. This calls us to learn from Jesus' school of love exemplified by his death on the cross (Jn. 3:16). This means that our love for God and neighbour ought to be real and concrete. This is the surest way of living our Christian lives as a covenantal people. The choosing of the twelve in the gospel and sending them out on mission is also our call. On the day of baptism, we shared the priestly, kingly and prophetic mission of Christ."

**Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk, Jos Plateau-Nigeria**





# Saturday January 21

2<sup>nd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

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## Memorial

Saint Agnes, Virgin and Martyr

### Entrance Antiphon

*(Ps (65) 66:4)* All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

### Collect

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Reading

*(Hebrews 9:2-3.11-14)*

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brethren: A tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of offering; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and

more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

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

**Responsorial Psalm —**  
**(Psalm (46) 47: 2-3. 6-7. 8-9)**

**R. God goes up with shouts of joy. The Lord goes up with trumpet blast.**

All peoples, clap your hands. Cry to God with shouts of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, the great king over all the earth. R

God goes up with shouts of joy. The Lord goes up with trumpet blast. Sing praise for God; sing praise! Sing praise to our king; sing praise! R

God is king of all the earth. Sing praise with all your skill. God reigns over the nations. God sits upon his holy throne. R

**Acclamation** (*Acts 16:14b*)

**Alleluia. Alleluia.** Open our hearts, O Lord, that we may give heed to the words of your Son. **Alleluia.**

**Gospel** —————  
(*Mark 3:20-21*)

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

In that time: Jesus went home with his disciples; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. And when his friends heard it, they went out to seize him, for they said, “He is beside himself.” The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Prayer over the Offerings**

Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that we participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Communion Antiphon**

(*Ps (22) 23:5*) **You have prepared a table before me, how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.**

**Prayer after Communion**

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

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

## Commentary

### Being Mad for Christ

Hebrews 9: 2-3. 11-14 /  
Mark 3: 20-21

Today, we celebrate St. Agnes. It was said of her that she refused several advances from men and saw God as her bridegroom. It was one of the men she rejected that eventually denounced her to the authorities as a Christian. At age 13, she suffered a martyr's death in the year 303.

Our first reading from the letter to the Hebrews hinges on the inward purification of Christ's sacrifice. The reading invites us to seek inward renewal now. In the gospel, Jesus' family thinks he is mad. Sometimes, when we make choices for God, people think that we are also mad. As their thinking did not stop Jesus from doing the will of the father, the opinion of others should not stop us either. Little Agnes dared time and circumstances to offer her tender body as a holocaust to the author and finisher of her life. May she intercede for us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God.

***Rev. Fr. Justine Dyikuk, Jos Plateau-Nigeria***



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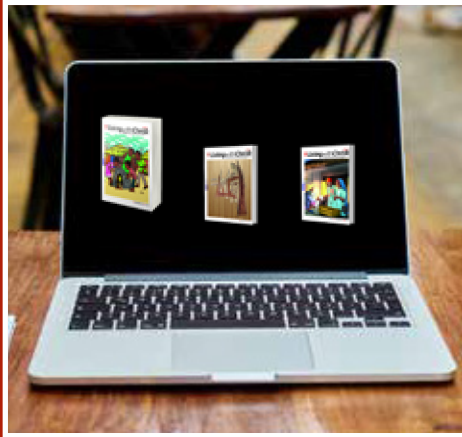
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