

AFRICA

Living with Christ

GROWING UP DAILY WITH THE GOOD NEWS

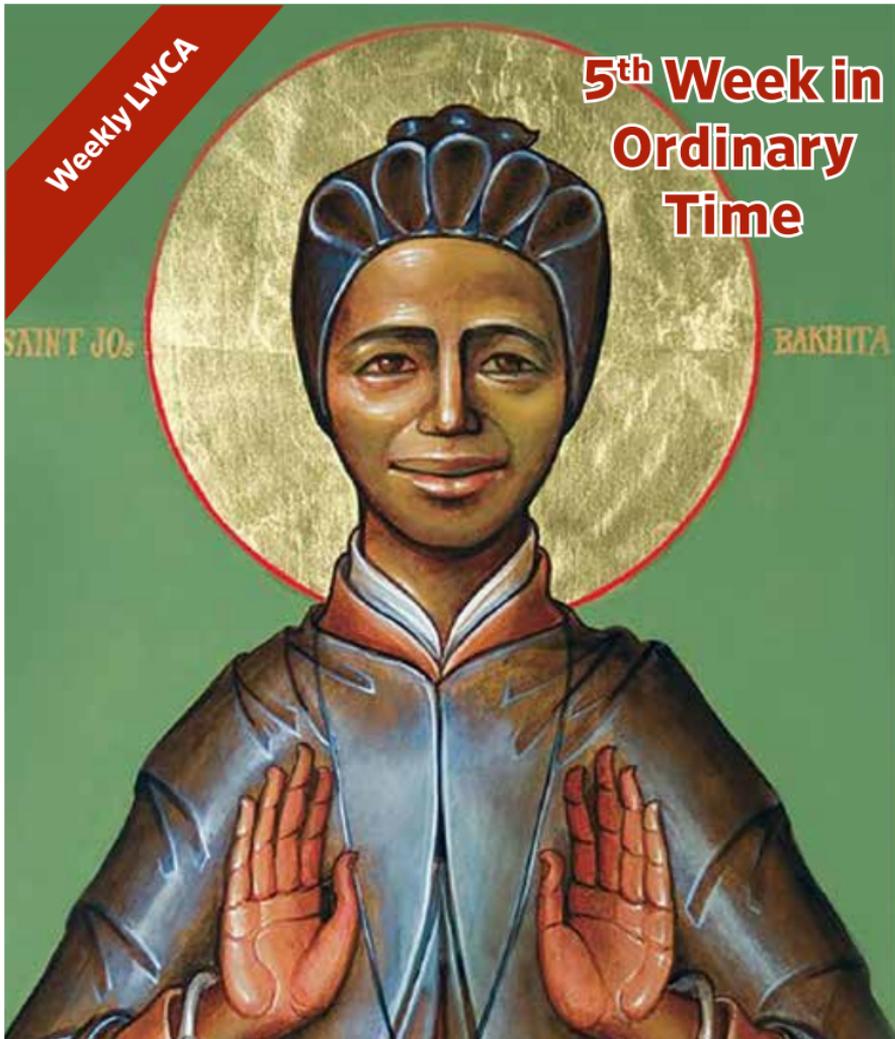
Weekly LWCA

5th Week in
Ordinary
Time

SAINT JOSEPH

BAKHITA

bayard africaine



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Liturgical texts:

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On our cover: An icon of Saint Josephine Bakhita

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Editorial

February 2023



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

From Dust to Dust...

Ash Wednesday is a Christian holy day of fasting, sacrifice, and prayer. It marks the beginning of the season of Lent. This year Ash Wednesday will be celebrated on February 22nd. The custom of Ashes on the forehead is attributed to Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604 A.D.) who accompanied the ceremonious symbolism with a verse that loosely translates to, “Remember that you come from dust and that to dust you will return.”

In the 20th century it became more common for a priest to intone, “Repent, and believe in the Gospel.” The physical expression of the day, administered by priests or lay people, is palm ashes applied in crucifix form onto the forehead. The main Lenten theme is that when the faithful set aside certain bodily comforts, they may settle into an attitude of penitence, recognizing their sins and the sacrifice that Jesus made to cleanse them of those sins.



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/>

Ash Wednesday

Ash 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

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



Sunday February 5

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 58: 7-10 / Psalm, 112: 4-5. 6-7. 8a-9 (4a) / 1 Corinthians 2: 1-5 / Matthew 5: 13-16



“Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.”
(Matthew 5:15)



Salt of the Earth and Light of the World

Jesus in today's Gospel uses salt and light as images to teach us what our lives should be like. In our daily lives, salt is a valuable commodity. It is very essential and has many uses like flavouring and preservation of food. Imagine food without salt. Definitely, it will have no taste. Think about the importance of light in darkness. You can see clearly when there is light. Jesus enjoins us to make our life useful and worthwhile. In the first reading, we are given examples of how we can make our lives worthwhile and be shining lights to the world. Isaiah tells us that we should share our bread with the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked and give a helping hand to the needy. These acts are the corporal works of mercy as specified in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that Corporal Works of Mercy and Spiritual Works of Mercy are the two divisions of Works of Mercy and they "are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our



Sunday February 5

neighbour in his spiritual and bodily necessities.” (CCC 2447) These are the same acts we hear Jesus talk about in the parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46. In the parable, He tells us how the Son of Man will, on the last day, separate to his left and to his right, all people as a shep-herd separates the sheep from the goats. Those on the right are welcomed to ever-lasting life because they fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, clothed the naked, sheltered the stranger, visited the sick and performed other good works, while those on the left are damned because they failed to do these acts of charity. This entails that we can only be saved by the charity and love we show to others not by our wealth, beauty, knowledge, education or status. The works of mercy are opportunities to bear witness to Christ, thus making our light shine and our life useful. In so doing, we become the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



Entrance Antiphon (*PS (93) 94:6-7*)

O come, let us worship God, and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.

Collect

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading (*Isaiah 58:7-10*)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Thus says the Lord: “Share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, cover him, and do not hide yourself from your own flesh. Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am. If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,



Sunday February 5

then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.”

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

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm (111) 112:4-5.6-7.8a and 9)



Light ris - es in the dark-ness — for the up-right.



**R. A light rises in the darkness for the upright.
or: Alleluia.**

A light rises in the darkness for the upright;
he is generous, merciful and just.

It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends,
who conducts his affairs with justice. R.

He will never be moved;
forever shall the just be remembered.
He has no fear of evil news;
with a firm heart, he trusts in the Lord. R.



With a steadfast heart he will not fear.
Open-handed, he gives to the poor;
his justice stands firm for ever.
His might shall be exalted in glory. R.

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 2:1-5) _____

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

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling; and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

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

Acclamation (John 8:12)

Alleluia. Alleluia. I am the light of the world, says the Lord; he who follows me will have the light of life. **Alleluia.**

Gospel (Matthew 5:13-16) _____

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew



Sunday February 5

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, “You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

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

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only.

℟. Lord, hear us!

For good and compassionate leaders in Africa and in other parts of the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. **℟.**

For good witnesses of the word of God in Africa and all over the world ; for fruitful apostolates and pastoral works, let us pray to the Lord our God. **℟.**

For the end of terrorism and for those threatened and killed for their faith, let us cry out to the Lord our God. **℟.**



For peace, mercy, security in the world, let us pray to the Lord our God. R.

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, our God, who once established these created things to sustain us in our frailty, grant, we pray, that they may become for us now the Sacrament of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon (*Ps (105) 106:8-9*)

Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men; for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.

Or: Mt 5:5-6

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.

Prayer after Communion

O God, who have willed that we be partakers in the one Bread and the one Chalice, grant us, we pray, so to live that, made one in Christ, we may joyfully bear fruit for the salvation of the world. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Monday February 6

5th Week in Ordinary Time

Memorial

Saint Paul Miki and Companions

Entrance Antiphon

The souls of the Saints are rejoicing in heaven, the Saints who followed the footsteps of Christ, and since for love of him they shed their blood, they now exult with Christ for ever.

Or:

Holy men shed their glorious blood for the Lord; they loved Christ in their life, they imitated him in their death, and therefore were crowned in triumph.

Collect

O God, strength of all the Saints, who through the Cross were pleased to call the Martyrs Saint Paul Miki and companions to life, grant, we pray, that by their intercession we may hold with courage even until death to the faith that we profess. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading —————
(Genesis 1:1-19)

A reading from the Book of Genesis

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light." And there was light. And God saw that the light was good; And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. And God said, "Let

there be a firmament in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day. And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding

seed, and fruit tree bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kind, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day. And God said, “Let there be a light in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the

day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (103) 104: 1-2a, 5-6.10 and 12.24 and 35c)***

***R.* May the Lord rejoice in his works!**

Bless the Lord, O my soul! You Lord my God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and honour,

wrapped in light as with a robe! *R.*

You set the world in its foundation, immovable from age to age. You wrapped with the depths like a cloak; the waters stood higher than the mountains. *R.*

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; the flow in between the hills. There the birds of heaven build their nests; from the branches they sing their song. *R.*

How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures. Bless the Lord, O my soul. *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 6: 53-56)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: When Jesus and his disciples had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. And when they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognised him, and ran about the whole neighbourhood and began to bring sick people on their pallets to any place where they heard he was.

And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or country, they laid the sick in the market places and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment; and as many as touched it were made well. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Prayer over the Offerings

Receive, holy Father, the offerings we bring in commemoration of the holy Martyrs Saint Paul Miki and Companions, and grant that we, your servants, may be found steadfast in confessing

your name. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Lk 22:28-30) **It is you who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer a kingdom on you, says the Lord, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.**

Or:

See how rich is the Saints' reward from God; they died for Christ and will live for ever.

Prayer after Communion

O God, who in your holy Martyrs Saint Paul Miki

and Companions have wonderfully made known the mystery of the Cross, graciously grant that, drawing strength from this sacrifice, we may cling faithfully to Christ and labour in the Church for the salvation of all. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

To Do Good

Commentary

Mark 6: 53-56

In the Gospel, we are told of how Jesus was popular for doing good. People hurried to meet Him wherever he went because he was available to attend to them and solve their problems. Jesus in His life was never tired of doing good. The scripture tells us that He went about doing good. He calls us each day of our lives to be His witnesses by following the example He left for us in doing good. It is in doing good that we know, love and serve God. Let us reach out to touch lives positively as Jesus did.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



Tuesday February 7

5th Week in Ordinary Time

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (93) 94:6-9) **O come, let us worship God, and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.**

Collect

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading

(Genesis 1: 20-2:4a)

A reading from the Book of Genesis

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let bird fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens.” So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful

and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day. And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let us made man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every

creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and he said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have

given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them. And on the seventh day, God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he has done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation. These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm 8:4-5.6-7a.7b-9)***

***R. O Lord, our Lord, how
majestic is your name
through all the earth!***

When I see the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you arranged, what is man that you should keep him in mind, the son of man that you care for him. *R.*

Yet you have made him little lower than the angels; with glory and honour you crowned him, gave him power over the works of your hands. *R.*

You put all things under his feet, all of them, sheep and oxen, yes even the cattle of the fields, birds of the air, and fish of the

sea that make their way through the waters. *R.*

Acclamation

(Psalm (118) 119)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Bend my heart, O God, to your decrees, grant me mercy by your law. **Alleluia.**

Gospel _____

(Mark 7:1-13)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: When the Pharisees gathered together to Jesus, with some of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem, they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands defiled, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash

their hands, observing the tradition of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they purify themselves; and there are many other traditions which they observe, the washing of cups and pots and vessels of bronze.) And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with hands defiled?” And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ You leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the

tradition of men.” And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God, in order to keep your tradition! For Moses said, ‘Honour your father and your mother’, and ‘He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him surely die’; but you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is Corban’ (that is given to God)-then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God through your tradition which hand on. And many such things you do.”

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, our God, who once established these created things to sustain us in our frailty, grant, we pray, that they may become for us now the Sacrament of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (105) 106:8-9) **Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men; for he satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.**

or

(Mt 5:5-6) **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.**

Prayer after Communion

O God, who have willed that we be partakers in the one bread and the one chalice, grant us, we pray,

so to live that, made one in Christ, we may joyfully bear fruit for the salvation of the world. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Living a Sincere Life

Commentary

Genesis 1: 20- 2: 4a /
Mark 7: 1-13

In different scripture passages, Jesus condemned hypocrisy and enjoined us to desist from it. Living a sincere life is what He desires of us. The commandments of God must supersede human regulations in our daily living. We should love and serve God in spirit and in truth and not by lip-service because He sees and knows us through and through. Therefore, we should live our lives in sincerity and in total obedience to God by keeping His commandments summarised into love of God and neighbour.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



Wednesday February 8

5th Week in Ordinary Time

Ferial

Or: St Jerome Emiliani, priest (optional Memorial)

Or: St Josephine Bakhita, virgin (optional Memorial but in Sudan, Solemnity)

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (93) 94:6-9) **O come, let us worship God, and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.**

Collect

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading

(Genesis 2:4b-9.15-17)

A reading from the Book of Genesis

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up – for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, there was no man to till the ground; but a mist

went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground – then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground, the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may freely eat of every tree of

the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (103) 104:1-2a.27-28.29bc-30)

R. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Bless the Lord O my soul!
 O Lord my God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and honour, wrapped in light as with a robe! R.

All of these look to you to give them their food in due season. You give it, they gather it up; you open wide your hand, they are well filled. R.

You take away their breath, they die, returning to the dust from which they came. You send forth your spirit, and they are created, and you renew the face of the earth. R.

Acclamation (*John 17*)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Your word, O Lord, is truth; sanctify us in the truth.
Alleluia.

Gospel ————— (*Mark 7:14-23*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: Jesus called the people to him again, and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: there nothing

outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out a man are what defile him.” And when he had entered the house, and left the people, his disciple asked him about the parable. And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a man from outside cannot defile him, since it enters, not his heart but his stomach, and so passes on?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, “What comes out of a man is what defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery,

coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and they defile a man.”

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, our God, who once established these created things to sustain us in our frailty, grant, we pray, that they may become for us now the Sacrament of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (105) 106:8-9) **Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men; for he satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.**

or

(Mt 5:5-6) **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.**

Prayer after Communion

O God, who have willed that we be partakers in the one bread and the one chalice, grant us, we pray,

so to live that, made one in Christ, we may joyfully bear fruit for the salvation of the world. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Clean Heart

Commentary

Genesis 2: 4b-9. 15-17 /
Mark 7: 14-23

Jesus with the parable told in the Gospel, admonishes us to focus on what really matters and that is, to keep our hearts pure and clean to be free from sin. He emphasised that we can only be made unclean by what comes from within our hearts and not from outside of us. The choice and action of good and evil is a matter of what is conceived in the heart and mind. A clean heart does not conceive or harbour sins. God encourages us today to keep our hearts clean, choose good and be free from sin.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



Thursday February 9

5th Week in Ordinary Time

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (93) 94:6-7) **O come, let us worship God and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.**

Collect

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading

(Genesis 2:18-25)

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” So out of the ground, the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of

the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. The man said, "This at last is bone of my bones flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she had been taken out of man." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (127) 128:1-2.3.4-5)***

***R.* Blessed are all who fear
the Lord**

Blessed are all who fear the Lord, and walk in his way! By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be blessed and prosper. *R.*

Your wife like a fruitful vine/in the heart of your house; your children like shoots of olive around your table. *R.*

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Sion. May you see Jerusalem prosper all the days of your life! *R.*

Acclamation

(James 1:21bc)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your soul. **Alleluia.**

Gospel _____

(Mark 7:24-30)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: Jesus arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house, and would not have anyone know it; yet he could not be hidden. But immediately a woman, whose little daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician

by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And he said to her, "Let the children first be fed, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Yes Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." And he said to her, "For this saying you go your way; the demon has left your daughter." And she went home, and found the child lying in bed, and the demon gone. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord our God, who once established these created things to sustain us in our

frailty, grant, we pray, that they may become for us now the Sacrament of eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Ps (105) 106:8-9) **Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men, for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.**

Or: Mt 5:5-6

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.

Prayer after Communion

O God, who have willed that we be partakers in the one Bread and the one Chalice, grant us, we pray,

so to live that, made one in Christ, we may joyfully bear fruit for the salvation

of the world. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Faith and Humility

Commentary

Genesis 2: 18-25 /
Mark 7: 24-30

Faith and humility are key virtues in Christian life. The Syrophenician woman was humble to accept what Jesus said to her despite how critical it could sound, and also had faith to obtain her request from the Lord. Sometimes God sends difficult situations to test our humility and faith in Him. We are enjoined to be patient in such situations and persevere in prayer with faith and humility, then, wait for the answer to our prayers which will come in God's time.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



Friday February 10

5th Week in Ordinary Time

Memorial

Saint Scholastica, Virgin

Entrance Antiphon

Here is a wise virgin, from among the number of the prudent, who went forth with lighted lamp to meet Christ.

Or:

How beautiful you are, O virgin of Christ, who were worthy to receive the Lord's crown, the crown of perpetual virginity.

Collect

As we celebrate anew the Memorial of the Virgin Saint Scholastica, we pray, O Lord, that, following her example, we may serve you with pure love and happily receive what comes from loving you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading _____
(Genesis 3:1-8)

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing

good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. And they heard the sound the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (31) 32: 1-2.5.6.7)

R. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is remitted. Blessed the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, in whose spirit is no guile. R.

To you I have acknowledged my sin; my guilt I did not hide. I said, "I will confess my transgression to the Lord." And you have forgiven the guilt of my sin. R.

So let each faithful one pray to you in the time of need. The floods of water may reach high, but such a one they shall not reach. R.

You are a hiding place for me; you keep me safe from distress; you surround me with cries of deliverance. 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 7:31-37)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

At that time: Jesus returned from the region of Tyre, and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, through the region of the Decapolis. And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay

his hands upon him. And taking him aside from the multitude privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” And his ears were opened, his tongue was released and he spoke plainly. And he charged them to tell no one; but the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well; he even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

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

Prayer over the Offerings

As we proclaim your wonders, O Lord, in the Virgin Saint Scholastica, we humbly implore your majesty that, as her merits are pleasing to you, so, too, our dutiful service may find favour in your sight. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Communion Antiphon

(Mt 25:6) **Behold, the Bridegroom is coming; Come out to meet Christ the Lord.**

Or: (Ps (26) 27:4)

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, only this do I seek: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

Prayer after Communion

Renewed by partaking of this divine gift, we pray, O Lord our God, that by the example of the blessed N.,

bearing in our body the Death of Jesus, we may strive to hold fast to you alone. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

He Has Done All Things Well

Commentary

Genesis 3: 1-8 / Mark 7: 31-37

Wherever Jesus went, the people acknowledged the fact that he did all things well. Jesus is our model. We are called to imitate Him and live as He lived. In our daily living and activities, what do people say of us? Positive or negative things? Jesus is no more physically present in the world. Therefore, it is through us that He would continue to do all things well. Let us continue in the footsteps of Jesus as His ambassadors on earth, to live in love and good deeds, thus, do all things well.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



Saturday February 11

5th Week in Ordinary Time

Ferial

Or: Our Lady of Lourdes (optional Memorial)

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps (93) 94:6-9) **O come, let us worship God, and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.**

Collect

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unflinching care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Reading

(Genesis 3:9-24)

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” and he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hide myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to

be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent beguiled me, and I ate” The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.” To the woman he said, “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband and he shall

rule over you.” And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the fruit of the tree of which I command you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat till your return to the ground, for out of which you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the

man has become like one of us knowing good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.” – therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

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

Responsorial Psalm —
(Psalm (89) 90:2.3-4.5-6.12-13)

R. O Lord, you have been our refuge, from generation to generation.

Before the mountains were born, or the earth of the world were brought forth, you are God from age to age. R.

You turn man back to dust, and say, “Return, O children of men.” To your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday, come and gone, or like a watch in the night; R.

You sweep them away like a dream, like grass which is fresh in the morning. In the morning, it sprouts and is fresh; by evening, it withers and fades. R.

Then teach us to number our days, that we may gain wisdom of heart. Turn back, O Lord! How long? Show pity to your servants. R.

Acclamation *(Matthew 4:4b)*

Alleluia. Alleluia. Man shall not live of bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. **Alleluia.**

Gospel ————— *(Mark 8:1-10)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered and they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples

to him and said to them, “I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I send them away to their homes hungry, they will faint on the way; and some of them had come a long way.” And his disciples answered him, “How can one feed these men with bread here in the desert?” And he asked them, “How many loaves have you?” They said, “Seven.” And he commands the crowd to sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people, and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish, and having blessed them, he

commanded that these also should be set before them. And they ate, and were satisfied; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away; and immediately he got into the boat with his disciples, and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

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

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, our God, who once established these created things to sustain us in our frailty, grant, we pray, that they may become for us now the Sacrament of

eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Ps (105) 106:8-9) **Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men; for he satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.**

or

(Mt 5:5-6) **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill.**

Prayer after Communion

O God, who have willed that we be partakers in

the one bread and the one chalice, grant us, we pray, so to live that, made one in Christ, we may joyfully bear

fruit for the salvation of the world. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Commentary

Jesus Cares

Genesis 3: 9-24 / Mark 8: 1-10

The miracle of Jesus feeding the hungry crowd shows that He cares and is concerned about our bodily and spiritual wellbeing. In the Lord's prayer, we ask for daily bread which He provides for our bodily wellbeing. In the Eucharist, He continues to feed us for our spiritual wellbeing. At the end of every Eucharistic celebration, we are sent on mission to love and serve the Lord. Just as Jesus cares for us, may we reach out to care for others and share what we have with the needy.

Rev. Sr. Clare Emeruom, Abuja, Nigeria



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