



**Twenty-Third Sunday
in Ordinary Time
September 6, 2015**

Sunday Liturgy Guide for the Church of the Poor in the Spirit of the New Evangelization

The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, exercises the healing power of Jesus by her witness that faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with the exploitation, oppression and discrimination of the poor and creation.

Today we celebrate the Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time. Our theme for this Sunday is: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, exercises the healing power of Jesus by her witness that faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with the exploitation, oppression and discrimination of the poor and creation. With this theme, let us reflect on “A Renewed Integral Evangelization” with PCP-II, when it says:

“PART III. A RENEWED INTEGRAL EVANGELIZATION

A. ANNOUNCING A MESSAGE OF SALVATION

2. A Renewed Social Apostolate A Constitutive Dimension

(165) The second element of a renewed evangelization is a renewed social

apostolate. The Church clearly recognizes that Christian social action, i.e., action carried out by the Church and its members to promote human development, justice in society, and peace, is a task without which evangelization is not complete. The 1971 Synod of Bishops succinctly states, ‘Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel.’ These words are echoed strongly by the Philippine Bishops:

(166) This is EVANGELIZATION: the proclamation, above all, of SALVATION from sin; the LIBERATION from everything oppressive to man; the DEVELOPMENT of man in all his dimensions, personal and communitarian; and, ultimately, the RENEWAL OF SOCIETY in all its strata through the interplay of the GOSPEL TRUTHS and man’s concrete TOTAL LIFE (Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 9, 29). THIS IS OUR TASK. THIS IS OUR MISSION. We shall treat this renewal of the social apostolate more comprehensively in a later section.

Point for Reflection: Having received catechetical instructions in preparation for the reception of the sacraments, do you feel complete as a Christian and Catholic or do you still feel lacking and incomplete? What do you think is to be filled up in order to grow as Catholic and Christian? ■

Introductory Rites

Entrance Antiphon: (Cf. Ps 119 (118): 137, 124)

You are just, O Lord, and your judgment is right; treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

Introductory Rites

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

Introduction and Welcome

P: Dear brothers and sisters: on this Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, let us continue to ask God's grace to be aware of our Christian and Catholic heritage as the prophetic conscience of our people. Let us ask for the special grace of deep conviction that faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with corruption of public office, oppression and discrimination of the poor and greedy exploitation of creation.

Penitential Act

P: And so dear brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves to celebrate worthily these sacred mysteries, let us now acknowledge our sins, and ask God for pardon and strength:

P: Lord Jesus, you have called us to return to you as our Lord and Savior. Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: Christ Jesus, you have called us to share your option for the poor. Christ, have mercy.

C: Christ, have mercy.

P: Lord Jesus, you have called us to the conviction that faith in you is incompatible with the corruption of public office, discrimination of the poor and greedy exploitation of

creation. Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: Amen.

Gloria

Glory to God in the Highest!

And on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P: Let us pray: O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance. 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.

C: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Is 35:4-7a

L: A reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Thus says the LORD: Say to those

whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe. The burning sands will become pools, and the thirsty ground, springs of water.”

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Is 35:4-7a:

These blessings are intended for the future Jerusalem after the exile. God will vindicate and save Israel through these signs: physical wellness and integrity, natural abundance and prosperity and joy. There is hope in the midst of despair; a return to the source of life, home, after the exile and alienation. God wills it so, and will act accordingly for his people.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

R: Praise the Lord, my soul! or: R. Alleluia.

The God of Jacob keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets captives free.

R: Praise the Lord, my soul! or: R. Alleluia.

The LORD gives sight to the blind; the LORD raises up those who were bowed down. The LORD loves the just; the LORD protects strangers.

R: Praise the Lord, my soul! or: R. Alleluia.

The fatherless and the widow the LORD sustains, but the way of the wicked he thwarts. The LORD shall reign forever; your God, O Zion,

through all generations. Alleluia.

R: Praise the Lord, my soul! or: R. Alleluia.

Commentary on Psalm 146:

This is a hymn to God. God is faithful to his people forever. That is why he sides with the poor and the victims in need of justice, food and freedom. God’s love is forever: he loves the just and protects the strangers. Thus, the victims, those debilitated with sickness and those weakened by the circumstances of life are all embraced by the eternal loving fidelity of God.

Second Reading: Jas 2:1-5

L: A reading from the Letter of James

My brothers and sisters, show no partiality as you adhere to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. For if a man with gold rings and fine clothes comes into your assembly, and a poor person in shabby clothes also comes in, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Sit here, please,” while you say to the poor one, “Stand there,” or “Sit at my feet,” have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil designs? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Jas 2:1-5

James points to the temptation of riches and power which are present in the community and which some of its members desire to possess. Power and riches are the source of

discrimination. These determine the terms of justice based on their own interests and inclinations. Economic power and its consequent social and legal influences confer a status which can command either respect or fear. In fact the rich and the powerful are benefactors of social and religious groups in order to gain the regard of the poor. But faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with discrimination of the poor. The rich oppress the poor, manipulate the legal system and introduce idolatrous practices even in the name of Jesus; but God has instead chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom: Jesus' fundamental option for the poor!

Alleluia Verse: cf. Matt 4:23

R: Alleluia, alleluia. Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the kingdom and cured every disease among the people. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel: Mark 7:31-37

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

Again Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!"— that is, "Be opened!" — And immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered

them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise be to you, O Lord Jesus Christ.*

Commentary on Mark 7:31-37

Jesus now, and the Church, takes the Gospel into pagan territory. The pagan territory is deaf, and cannot hear the word of God; it is mute, and cannot proclaim it either. The healing of the deaf-mute shows the gradual openness of the pagans to the word of God. Now that they have heard it, they will now proclaim it. Jesus' act of healing – putting his finger into the man's ears, touching the man's tongue with his spittle, looking up to heaven groaning, and commanding the man to be opened – follows the traditional picture of wonder-workers' magical healings in his time. But that he took the deaf-mute away from the crowd is contrary to the traditional miracle-worker's public magical display of skill. Jesus is more than just a traditional miracle worker. He is the hidden – undercover – agent of the power of the Kingdom of God.

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Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, exercises the healing power of Jesus by her witness that faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with the exploitation, oppression and discrimination of the poor and creation.

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
<p>The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, exercises the healing power of Jesus by her witness that faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with the exploitation, oppression and discrimination of the poor and creation.</p>	<p>In your BEC and parish, are the rich and powerful the benefactors of your projects and activities? Do they manipulate laws and policies to their advantage? Do they take advantage of the goodness of the poor? Do they help you so that they will be free to exploit your natural resources? What idolatrous practices have the introduced?</p>	<p>Jesus is the hidden – undercover – agent of the power of the Kingdom of God. Evangelization is the proclamation, above all, of Salvation from sin; the Liberation from everything oppressive; the development of man in all dimensions; and the Renewal of Society.</p>

Profession of Faith

A: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful:

P: Dear sisters and brothers, let us humbly and confidently raise our voices in prayer to our heavenly Father. For every prayer let our response be: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

L: Let us pray for the Church: that, being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may continue to share the mission of Jesus by giving witness to the deep conviction that faith in Jesus is fundamentally incompatible with corruption of public office, oppression and discrimination

of the poor and greedy exploitation of creation. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for the bishops, priests, deacons, for those in consecrated life and for all those who are entrusted with the care and administration of the church as People of God: that they may continue to evangelize by proclaiming salvation from sin; the liberation from everything oppressive; the development of human person in all dimensions; and, ultimately, the renewal of society in all its strata through the interplay of the Gospel Truths and humanity's concrete total life. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they make laws, policies and structures that respond to the needs of minorities, the different abled and persons with disabilities, and the victims of a "throw-away" culture like the unborn, the babies and children, the elderly, the sick and the dying. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

L: For all of us, inhabitants of the earth and citizens of heaven: that we may live our lives according to the values of the new life lived in common by resisting the manipulative, oppressive and discriminating tendencies of the rich and powerful, their greedy exploitation of nature in the name of the capital, investments and profits and their scandalous idolatry

of money and of what money can do to move people, build structures and destroy creation. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

L: For our beloved dead: that in the forgiveness of their sins, they may find eternal rest in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

L: For our special intentions, in the silence of our hearts. (*pause*)... Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to be healers in our time.

P: Lord, these are the prayers we present to you today. In this ordinary time, help us to love and know you more, by encountering you alive in our lives and in creation, yesterday, today and tomorrow. Help us to see that faith in Jesus and true religion are incompatible with injustice, exploitation, deception and oppression of the poor and creation. Mold us to become the gentle but firm hearts of your heart in the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

P: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,

C: Blessed be God forever.

P: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

C: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and

glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P: O God, who give us the gift of true prayer and of peace, graciously grant that through this offering, we may do fitting homage to your divine majesty and, by partaking of the sacred mystery, we may be faithfully united in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord.

C: *Amen.*

Prayer of the Eucharist

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: *We lift them up to the Lord.*

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: *It is right and just.*

P: 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 in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal. For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:

A: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Acclamation

P: The mystery of faith.

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

(Concluding the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest says:)

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

C: *Amen.*

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Doxology

C: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

Sign of Peace

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles; Peace ... Who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: *Amen.*

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

A: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world ... grant us peace.

Communion

P: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the

world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

A: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon: Cf. (Ps 42 (41): 2-3)

Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray: Grant that your faithful, O Lord, whom you nourish and endow with life through the food of your Word and heavenly Sacrament, may so benefit from your beloved Son's great gifts that we may merit an eternal share in his life. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Bow down for the blessing: In defense of your children, O Lord, we pray, stretch forth the right hand of your majesty, so that, obeying your parental will, they may have the unflinching protection of your parental care. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: And may the blessings of almighty God, + the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God. ■

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