



**Twenty-Third Sunday in
Ordinary Time
September 7, 2014**

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, does the will of the Father read in the signs of the times by reconciliation based on justice and boundless love!

With PCP-II, let us continue to meditate on the gift of Faith that God has given to us in Jesus. PCP-II says:

“2. Living the Faith

2.b) Witnessing

(78) Believing is bearing witness to the Lord through our life by obeying his commands and living the Gospel. Our Lord enjoins us: ‘... your light must shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.’ To this witness of a good life must be added the witness of proclaiming the Lord: ‘We believe and therefore we speak.’ How indeed can we be silent about the God who loves us, the Son who lays down his life for us, and the Spirit who dwells in us? ‘It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard,’ declared the Apostles to those who forbade them to speak. Having experienced the presence and love of the

Lord in prayer and worship, the Christian has to go forth and bear witness to Him.

c) Loving Service

(79) But faith is exercised not only in explicitly religious acts. It must be exercised in service, to care for the needy and to care for our earth. In one’s neighbor faith recognizes not only a person made in the image and likeness of God, but a bearer of Christ Himself, so that whatever is done to the least of His brethren is really done to Him. And faith likewise recognizes that the earth’s environment has to be nurtured and cared for. Its destruction not only spells the end of the support system of life but also betrays our stewardship of God’s creation.

(80) Expressing our faith through deeds of justice and love is particularly urgent in the Philippines where the exercise of faith often seems to be restricted to the realm of religious activities and private morality.”

In your personal life, and in your BEC, what would you consider as acts of faith that are not “explicitly religious”? What are your ministries of service to your neighbor and for the care of environment and creation? Do you have ministries for justice and peace? Why do you consider them fundamentally as exercises of faith and of Christian or Catholic morality? ■

Introductory Rites

Entrance Antiphon:

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

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: welcome once again to this celebration of God's love and life that he so graciously shares with us. In a very special way, let us pray in this Eucharist for the gift of a deeper faith, a more mature and adult faith. May all that we think, feel, speak and do arise from a faith that believes, that gives witness, that serves, that cares for creation, that does justice to build peace.

Penitential Act

P: Brothers and sisters, let us prepare ourselves now to celebrate this sacrament by asking God's mercy and forgiveness for he is our God of love and compassion.

P: Lord Jesus, you call us to believe by serving our neighbor. Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: Lord Jesus, you call us to believe by caring for all of creation. Christ, have mercy.

C: Christ, have mercy.

P: Lord Jesus, you call us to believe by doing justice and building peace. 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 live and reign with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

C: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Ezek 33:7-9

L: A reading from the Prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the LORD: You, son of man, I have appointed watchman for the house of Israel; when you hear me say anything, you shall warn them for me. If I tell the wicked, "O wicked one, you shall surely die," and you do not speak out to dissuade the wicked from his way, the wicked shall die for his guilt, but I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn the wicked, trying to

turn him from his way, and he refuses to turn from his way, he shall die for his guilt, but you shall save yourself.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Ezek 33:7-9:

The prophet is now tasked to be watchman of the community as a whole and for each individual member of the community. His mission is to prevent any harm from falling into the community and its members by reading the signs of the times and discerning from these the will of God and the response of the people. This is a delicate task of the prophet: an insistent articulation of the will of God from out of the signs of the times before the people. His failure to do so means he is responsible for whatever may befall to the community and to its individual member.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD; let us acclaim the rock of our salvation. Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the LORD who made us. For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice: “Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the desert, Where your fathers tempted me; they tested me though they had seen my works.”

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Commentary on Ps 95:

This psalm has two parts: hymn (vv. 1-7c) and a prophetic oracle (vv. 7d-11). The hymn invites people to praise God because God is the Rock of Salvation. The acts of the psalmist are of those who will sing the psalm, is to bow down in worship, to kneel before the Lord. Bowing down and kneeling are acts of submission and obedience to God. The psalm then recalls the disobedience of Israel in the desert, at Meribah, the place of temptation. This is the prophetic warning: may this generation not repeat the disobedience of its ancestors!

Second Reading: Rom 13:8-10

L: The second reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters: Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on Rom 13:8-10:

The letter to the Romans was written sometime in 57 or 58 CE, in the reign of Nero but before he launched the infamous persecution of Christians that caused the martyrdom of Peter

and Paul. In this context, Paul was able to assert that a Christian could live in any kind of State and be a good citizen by obeying the laws of the legitimate and honest government. He saw the obligations of the citizen, like payment of taxes, as an expression of the Christian's fundamental love of neighbor. Thus, it was essential to Paul that one owes nothing to anybody but to love as a Christian does; mutual love has no frontiers and no end. Such is the measure of an outstanding citizen.

Alleluia Verse:

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

Gospel: Matt 18:15-20

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

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

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

Jesus said to his disciples: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they

are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Commentary on Matt 18:15-20

Reconciliation: who wants it? Biblical scholars consider the 18th chapter of Matthew's Gospel as a little ecclesiology, a short treatise on the Church whose identity is closest to the kingdom. The object of the act of reconciliation in the Church, which restores a broken relationship, is justice, the attainment of just inter-human relationship: that the brother/sister who committed a wrong may be corrected and may not do it again to his/her neighbor. It is loving one's neighbor. The quest for reconciliation is always a prior prerogative of the offended party, of the victim. It is s/he who knows the extent of the violation and the terms of reparation because s/he is the violated victim.

When the offender does not accept the wrong committed, the offended party calls for witnesses; if the offender remains obstinate, the case is submitted to the Church, the Christian community, as the final arbiter and judge. Refusal to own up to the violation before the Church makes the offender and violator an outcast of the community: he is counted as an outsider!

The authority to forgive and seek reconciliation has been given to each member of the Church. More fundamentally, the Church

as a community, the body of Christ, is the sacramental sign of God’s loving forgiveness, historical patience, reconciliation and merciful judgment. The prayer of the community, not the individual prayer and forms of personal pietism, is most powerful because Christ is closest to them as a group, not as individuals who are islands unto themselves.

Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, does the will of the Father read in the signs of the times by reconciliation based on justice and boundless love!

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, does the will of the Father read in the signs of the times by reconciliation based on justice and boundless love!	What in your personal life, as well as in your BEC, are the acts which you consider as exercises of faith that (a) gives witness, (b) serves the neighbor, (c) cares for the environment and creation, (d) does justice and builds peace.	“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” (Justice in the World, 1971).

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, grateful to God for the gifts of life and love, let us now present our petitions to him. For every prayer let our response be: Lord, strengthen our faith.

R: Lord, strengthen our faith.

L: Let us pray for the Church: that, being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may be continue to guide us to an adult and mature faith by her witness of proclamation of Jesus and his saving deeds, and of our Church life as service of neighbor, care for creation and acts of justice that lead to peace. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen our faith.

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis I, 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 work tirelessly for reconciliation based on justice that builds peace, especially in areas of conflicts due to injustice and wars. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen our faith.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they continue to promote the rights and welfare of the various sectors of society like the indigenous tribes, children and youth, women, farmers and peasants, the urban poor, fishers and the differently abled. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen our faith.

L: For all of us, inhabitants of the earth and citizens of heaven: that we may inspire one another to engage in dialog for the welfare of the environment like the hygienic disposal of wastes, a stop to unbridled destructive quarrying of sand, limestone and soil, the destructive exploitation of the coral reefs and marine sanctuaries and the destructive poisonous mining. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, strengthen our faith.

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, strengthen our faith.

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

R: Lord, strengthen our faith.

P: Lord God, behold your people in prayer today. Hear the groaning of your creation wanting to be free from human selfishness and degradation.

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, through Christ our Lord.

For out of compassion for the waywardness that is ours, he humbled himself and was born of the Virgin; by the passion of the Cross, he freed us from unending death, and

by rising from the dead, he gave us life eternal.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end 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.

After the Consecration follows the Acclamation:

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.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection 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:

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 forever 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 fatherly will, they may have the unfailing protection of your fatherly 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 forth, the Mass is ended.

C: *Thanks be to God.* ■

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