



## Christ in Our Neighborhood

## *Baptized in the Lord*

### Prayer

O God, in the abasement of your Son you have raised up a fallen world. Fill your faithful with holy joy. For on those you have rescued from slavery to sin, you bestow eternal gladness. Amen.

### Commentary

#### 1st Reading: Zechariah 9:9-10

The prophet Zechariah foretells the restoration of Israel about 70 years after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC. God continues to tell His people Israel through the prophets that they are not forgotten and that He is sending his “Anointed One,” the Messiah, to save them.

In this context, Zechariah announces the triumphant entrance of the King into Jerusalem. The Messiah will not be a warlike conqueror like Alexander the Great. He will be “humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

He will be the humble King of Peace whose dominion will last forever.

The message of the coming Messiah is a message of great hope to a people living in exile. God indeed sent his only Son to rescue them and us. Not from the earthly forces of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans, but from the greater forces of darkness, sin, and the death that separate us from God.

### Questions

- The prophet Zechariah foretold the coming of the King of Peace about 500 years before Christ.

How do we maintain our hope as we await the second coming of Christ?

### Commentary

#### 2nd Reading: Romans 8:9, 11-13

By the Sacrament of Baptism, we are washed clean from sin; and by the Sacrament of Confirmation, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. In the Sacrament of Eucharist, we are joined to his Body the Church.

Through these Sacraments, we are initiated into the Church as Children of Christ. We become temples of God and the Holy Spirit dwells within us. We belong to Christ because the Spirit of God dwells in us.

St. Paul says, “You are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit.”

Sin is always a selfish act, an act of the flesh. If we live according to selfish acts of the body, we will die. But if by the Spirit we put to death selfish and sinful acts, we will live.

We know this and yet, each time we gather for Mass we begin by acknowledging that we have again fallen into selfish acts. But, we are not without hope for we have a great Advocate in the Spirit who helps us to recognize our sinfulness and lead us to seek reconciliation. By the love and mercy of God, we are absolved from our sin and restored to life in the Spirit.

### Question

- As a baptized child of God, do you believe that the Spirit is your Advocate?
- Does the Spirit advocate for you even in sin?

Christ in Our Neighborhood is the evangelization program of the Diocese of Phoenix.

## 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Used with Permission. All rights reserved. Christ in Our Neighborhood © is a Scripture program designed by Bishop John Dolan of the Diocese of Phoenix. This free program may be found online at [dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood](http://dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood). Download free PDFs for your parish groups or family gatherings!

## Commentary

### Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30

“Our heart is restless until it rests in You.” – St. Augustine.

We are created with a deep longing for union with God. But too often, we don't know what or who we are longing for. Without God, we look to satisfy ourselves with things that cannot satisfy the longing of the heart; and so the restlessness continues.

Jesus tells us that the way to find rest from our longing is to take up His yoke and learn from Him, for His burden is easy and His yoke is light.

The burden, or work, of Jesus is to do the will of the Father. The burden of Jesus is made light because we are joined to Him in doing the work.

Jesus also tells us that the Father chooses to reveal to the little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. The little ones are those who seek and accept Jesus who is meek and humble of heart. So that by following the word and example of Jesus, they may shed their arrogance and learn to be meek and humble of heart like Him.

To those who are joined to Christ in doing the will of the Father, the Holy Spirit brings consolation, satisfaction, peace, joy, and rest.

## Question

- Silently reflect upon your spiritual journey. How were you able to find rest when you found Christ?

## This Week's Task

- Give thanks to God in prayer for the gift of peace in your life.
- Pray for those who do not yet know Christ, so that they may find him and find rest.

## Group Prayer

The leader invites the group to pray the following words together.

Lord Jesus, help us  
to follow you more closely each day,  
so that we may always be free  
from sin and anxiety.  
Shape us into the image of your likeness,  
so that we too may be meek  
and humble of heart.  
Help us to be merciful to others  
as you are merciful to us.  
Amen

## Psalm

**Psalm Response: I will praise your name  
for ever, my king and my God.**

I will extol you, O my God and King,  
and I will bless your name forever and ever.  
Every day will I bless you,  
and I will praise your name forever and ever.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.**

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger  
and of great kindness. The LORD is good to all and  
compassionate toward all his works.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.**

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD, and let  
your faithful ones bless you. Let them discourse of the  
glory of your kingdom and speak of your might.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.**

The LORD is faithful in all his words and holy in all  
his works. The LORD lifts up all who are falling and  
raises up all who are bowed down.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.**

**Conclude with an Our Father**