


## The symbol for Ordinary Time

- The Chi-Rho is a Christian symbol usually associated with the liturgical season of ordinary Time.
- It consists of the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ or Christos (anointed one). The Hebrew equivalent is Messiah.
- The letters that make up the Chi-Rho are: Chi = X and the letter Rho = P.
- The fusion of these two letters into an abbreviation became a symbol for Christ also known as labarum or monogram of Constantine.
- This symbol was adopted as an emblem by Constantine.



### SUNDAY REFLECTION

People turn to the Scriptures for solace and consolation and we are familiar with beautiful texts giving comfort to mourners and the afflicted. Perhaps some are going to be shocked when they hear the opening sentence of the passage from Jeremiah the prophet, who taught in Jerusalem from 627 B.C. until after the city was destroyed in 586. 'Cursed is the man who trusts in human beings, who seeks his strength in flesh (human nature), whose heart turns away from the Lord' (17:6).

Jeremiah did not pronounce a condemnation of all human relationships, which must be founded on trust. Rather, in strong terms he drew attention to the fundamental need in all situations: a single-hearted devotion to God. The person who ignores God and thinks that all can be accomplished through human effort and alliances will miss the essential perspective to all creative activity: whatever is valuable eternally must be grounded in charity.

Without judging the eternal destiny of entrepreneurs whose life is ruined as their 'empire' crumbles, one cannot but think of this misplaced energy and talent as a waste of gifts divinely bestowed for the purpose of building a world oriented toward the service of the Lord.

The link between Jeremiah's poem and Psalm 1 was noted long ago; so, this gem is our response to the First Reading. The Psalmist answers our query: 'How does one keep the human heart steadfast in fidelity to God?' The truly blessed or happy person not only avoids bad company; the individual 'delights in the Torah [Law] of the Lord and meditates on His Torah day and night' (Ps. 1:2). It was from such intimacy with the heavenly Father's will that Jesus gained the profound insights that His teachings convey.

Like the prophets and psalmists, Jesus proclaimed that God would bring a reversal to human standards for evaluating happiness and success in life. The poor should indeed strive by all honest means to better their lot, so that they will sense their innate dignity. However, rather than envy the rich, they should allow God to fill the vacuum of their lives with the divine presence. This perspective of faith will make them appreciate their intimacy with the King and share in His reign.

The last of St. Luke's beatitudes presents the paradox that Jesus' message will provoke strong negative reactions and persecution may well come upon those who live and teach His message. The pattern was known from ancient times. "Thus it was that your fathers treated the prophets" (Lk. 6:23). Certainly Jeremiah was both ostracized and persecuted for his proclamation of God's Word; later tradition claimed that he was stoned to death by the rebels who dragged him off to Egypt.

Quite naturally, we hope to get along with our neighbor, and not only do we want to be at peace – we'd like to be popular! On tour during their heyday, the Beatles exalted: 'We're more popular than Jesus!' People who knew the Gospel were slightly amused because the Lord never sought cheap acclaim or the 'rewards' it brings. Rather, He faithfully pursued the path of fidelity to His Father's will, no matter what the cost. If we wish to share in His promise of the kingdom, we must reflect on the ways in which the Gospel contradicts aspects of our culture and then ask for the strength to be witnesses to that teaching.

**STEWARDSHIP:** The words of the psalmist echo the theme of all of today's readings. "Blessed are they who hope in the Lord." As good stewards, firmly grounded in that hope, may we bear fruit in due season – assisting the poor, feeding the hungry and consoling the sorrowful whenever we have the chance.

## **READINGS SEVENTH SUNDAY**

**20 FEB '22**

**1 Sm. 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23:** David confronts his sleeping enemy, King Saul, but spares his life. He puts his duty to God before his own safety. We do not need to use power to destroy others. Like David we have a choice of actions.

**1 Cor. 15:45-49:** Through the first Adam we inherit our fallen human nature. Through Christ, the last Adam, we receive the Spirit that gives eternal life.

**Lk. 6:27-38:** Jesus asks us to love others, even our enemies, to a degree that goes beyond all human expectations. As God's love is boundless, so should be ours.

## **ST. LUKE Continued**

### **The Evangelist of Mercy**

From the parables and miracles that are unique to St Luke, we can determine the most characteristic feature of his Gospel. Luke shows in his Gospel a particular concern for the poor, and for victims of injustice, for repentant sinners welcomed by the forgiveness and the mercy of God; it is he who tells the story of Lazarus and the rich man; of the Prodigal Son and the merciful Father who welcomes him back with open arms; and of the sinful woman who was forgiven, and who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and dried them with her hair. It is St Luke who gives us the Magnificat, where Mary proclaims the mercy of God, Who "has put down

the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree," Who "has filled the hungry with good things," and sends the rich away empty (Lk 1:52-53).

## **THE MASS Continued**

Before entering into the second part of the Mass, a quick review of what has been covered over the past months in reference to the first part of the Mass, the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word.

The Mass is the most beautiful act of worship of Almighty God and a precious treasure of the Catholic Church. To fully appreciate the Mass, one has to understand its historical development. Granted, the root of the Mass is the Last Supper, a Passover meal. Here our Lord and the apostles read the Sacred Scriptures, and then for the first time He took bread and wine, pronounced the words of consecration, and gave His Body and Blood to them. The action of this first Mass must be understood in the whole context of our Lord's passion, death, and resurrection. Since that time, the Church has offered the Mass, which participates in the ever-present, everlasting reality of the Last Supper and the passion, death and resurrection. Granted, the Mass has evolved over time, but the essential elements and structure have not. Three of the best references describing the Mass of the early Church are the *Didache (Teaching of the Twelve Apostles)* (c. 80), St. Justin the Martyr's *First Apology* (c. 155), and St. Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* (c. 215). These references attest to the living tradition of the Mass. The form of the Mass we have today was promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1969.

The Introductory Rites have a definite objective, namely "to make the assembled people a unified community and to prepare them properly to listen to God's word and celebrate the Eucharist" ("General Instruction of the Roman Missal", No. 24). Since the earliest times of the Church, the people gathered as an assembly on the Lord's Day (*Didache*, No. 14). As they were gathering, oftentimes psalms were recited in preparation for the Mass.

To give the Mass a definite starting action, at a very early age, an entrance ritual evolved whereby the priest passed into the community to recite the first prayer. Eventually, the priest entered to the accompaniment of the choir. Other traditions were soon adopted, which included the incensation and the asperges. The incensation ritual came from the East. The blessed smoke was intended to signify and awaken sentiments of purification and sanctification. Psalm 50, the Miserere, was chanted. Keep in mind that in the Old Testament times, incense was used to keep demons away as well as to purify the sacrifices to God.

The Gloria is indicative of the glory of God. Coming together in the Mass, the faithful give glory to God. The Gloria has two primary sections. In the first part, we praise and thank the Heavenly Father who has revealed in creation and throughout salvation history His glory to His people. In the second part, the hymn focuses on Jesus not only as the Lamb of sacrifice but also as the triumphant Christ. The Gloria ends with a Trinitarian acclamation.

The Opening Prayer or Collect is addressed to God, the Father, and commemorates the particular feast day or highlights the spirit of the liturgical season. The prayer ascends to the Father "through Jesus Christ", and in the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete and Advocate, who is the

personified union between Father and Son as well as the uniting force between the Church and God. Here we invoke God's divine assistance as we begin the offering of the Mass.

With the conclusion of the Collect, Opening Prayer we now move to the Liturgy of the Word. At Vatican II, the Council Fathers, in providing guidelines for the renewal of the Mass, directed, "the treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly so that a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. In this way, a more representative part of the Sacred Scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years" (*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, No. 51). Therefore, a three-year cycle of readings for Sunday's and a two-year cycle for weekday Masses was devised. Regarding the Sunday Cycle, each Sunday Mass will have a first reading from the Old Testament (or from Acts of the Apostles or the Book of Revelation depending upon the liturgical season or feast), a responsorial psalm, a second reading from one of the epistles of the New Testament, and finally a Gospel passage. Each cycle will take the gospel passages from a particular gospel. Cycle A, St. Matthew; Cycle B, St. Mark; and Cycle C, St. Luke. Passages from St. John are scattered throughout the year, especially during the Easter season and during Cycle B.



**SAINT OF THE WEEK St. Valentine, Martyr d. 269 Feast Day 14 Feb**

Valentine's Day is not just a day to buy your loved one(s) flowers and chocolate. Believe it or not, it is a historic day named after a very real and holy saint. San Valentino (St. Valentine) was a Third Century Roman priest and martyr during the reign of Claudius II, known as *Claudius the Goth*. He was arrested for helping Christians who were being persecuted by Claudius in Rome and for performing marriage ceremonies between young Christian couples in love. While imprisoned and under threat, Saint Valentine would not sway from answering questions of the Emperor regarding his beliefs.

The emperor tried to no avail to convert Saint Valentine. Regardless of what was asked however, Valentine would not renounce his faith so Claudius had him sent away to prison. The guard where Valentine was imprisoned listened as he preached day in and day out. As the legend goes, the guard, Asterius, had a daughter who was blind. He asked Valentine to hear her confession in which he did. Afterwards, Valentine put his hands over the girl's eyes and chanted: "*Lord Jesus Christ, enlighten your handmaid, because You are God, the True*

*Light.*” Immediately the little girl regained her eyesight. Because of this miracle, the guard and many of his family members converted to Christianity and were baptized. Upon hearing of the conversions, Emperor Claudius condemned all of them to death.

The night before his execution, Valentine wrote the young girl a note and signed it, “*From your Valentine.*” Valentine was then beaten with clubs and stoned and finally beheaded on February 14th, around the year 269. He was buried on the Flaminian Way and a chapel was later built over his remains. On the same day, another Valentine, bishop of Terni, was imprisoned and beheaded by Placidus, prefect of Terni, about sixty miles outside of Rome. Many believe mysteriously that the two are one in the same priest, the same Valentine who was earlier brought to Rome for execution and buried on the Flaminian Way.

Feast Day 14 February

Patron of Engaged couples, Happy Marriages, Love, Lovers, Young people, beekeepers, fainting, Epilepsy.

## **LENT Begins three weeks from this Wednesday**

### **Three Categories for a Personal Program**

There are three principal works for Lent, as taught to us by Christ: prayer, fasting and mortification, and almsgiving. More categories from Catholic tradition can be added, such as Good Works, Education, and Self-Denial. All are linked to each other. It is through prayer that we know Christ, understand His Will for us. Through our prayers we open ourselves to charity, generosity towards others and self-denial to ourselves. Details in the next three publications.

## **PRAYERS**

### **Prayer of St. Ambrose before Mass**

Lord Jesus Christ,

We approach your banquet table as saints and sinners, and dare not rely on our own worth, but only on your goodness and mercy.

Gracious God of majesty and awe,

We seek your protection,

We look for your healing.

We appeal to you, the fountain of all mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ, eternal king,

crucified for us, look upon us with mercy and hear our prayer, for we trust in you.

Merciful Father, purify us in body and soul, and make us worthy to taste the Holy of Holies. May your body and blood, which we intend to receive, unworthy as we are, be for us the remission of our sins, the washing away of our guilt, the end of our evil thoughts, and the rebirth of our better instincts. May it incite us to do the works pleasing to you and profitable to our health in body and soul, and may it deliver us from evil. Amen.

### **Prayer to Jesus Christ Crucified After Mass**

My good and dear Jesus, I kneel before You, asking You most earnestly to engrave upon my heart a deep and lively faith, hope, and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm resolve to make amends. As I reflect upon Your five wounds, and dwell upon them with deep compassion and grief, I recall, good Jesus, the words the prophet David spoke long ago concerning You: "They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have counted all My bones!" (Ps 21:17)

### **Prayer to St. Valentine**

Dear Saint and glorious martyr,  
Teach us to love unselfishly and  
to find great joy in giving.  
Enable all true lovers to bring  
out the best in each other.  
Let them love each other in God  
and in God in each other

## **FIFTH WEEK ORDINARY TIME**

**12 - 19 FEBRUARY 2022**

**Saturday 12 Feb Weekday 5 BVM**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper BVM Mother of Consolation #41, Preface,  
Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention: Michael Curran RIP)**

**1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Confessions**

**5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Sixth Sunday**

**Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday VI, Eucharistic Prayer III  
(Intention: John Jupina, Jr. RIP)**

**Sunday 13 Feb Sixth Sunday Ordinary Time**

**7:00 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday VI, Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday VI, Eucharistic Prayer III  
(Intention: Denise Davies RIP)**

**11:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday VI, Eucharistic Prayer III  
(Intention: Holy Souls in Purgatory)**

**2:00 p.m. Mass Brig**

**Monday 14 Feb Day Off**

**Tuesday 15 Feb Weekday 6**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper for Those Suffering Hunger #33, Preface & Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention: Linda Zagame RIP)**

**Wednesday 16 Feb Weekday 6**

**6:30 a.m. Mass Proper 1<sup>st</sup> Week Ordinary Time, Preface, Eucharistic Prayer IV  
(Intention: Thelma Spehar RIP)**

**7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper 1<sup>st</sup> Week Ordinary Time, Preface, Eucharistic Prayer IV  
(Intention: Tom Flynn)**

**Thursday 17 Feb Weekday 6**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper For The Church #1D, Common Preface Weekday II,  
Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention: Sarah “Sally” Busacco RIP)**

**5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Confessions**

**6:30 p.m. Mass Proper For The Church #1D, Common Preface Weekday II,  
Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention: Joseph & Nancy Kifus)**

**Friday 18 Feb Weekday 6**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, Common Preface Weekdays III, Eucharistic  
Prayer III  
(Intention: Tom Flynn)**

**12 Noon Mass Portsmouth Naval Hospital**

**5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Confessions & Adoration**

**Saturday 19 Feb Weekday 6**

**8:30 a.m. Mass BVM Gate of Heaven #46, Preface for the day, Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention: Lea Buchanan RIP)**

**1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Confessions**

**5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Seventh Sunday Ordinary Time  
Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday I, Eucharistic Prayer I  
(Intention: Nancy Beasley RIP)**

**Sunday 20 Feb Seventh Sunday Ordinary Time**

**7:00 a.m. Mass Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface II, Eucharistic Prayer II  
(Intention Fusty Morris)**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer I  
(Intention: Anthony Nicolosi RIP)**

**11:30 a.m. Mass Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer I  
(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)**

**2:00 p.m. Mass Brig**