

**PASTOR'S MEANDERINGS**  
**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME (B)**

**3 – 4 JULY 2021**



**SUNDAY REFLECTION**

The divine call to Ezekiel is a real challenge. Is the voice that addresses him as 'Mere Mortal' the voice of God, not too often heard in contemplation? Even with all the divine help available to them, the 'stubborn people' may fail to recognize God at work in this prophet. The phrase *ben- Adam* – offspring of Adam or child of humanity – denotes the mortality of the prophet contrasted with the immortality of the Great El Shaddai, the Almighty. The presence of this immortal God spans time and space.

Paul, another mere mortal and a man of visions and revelations from God, is also challenged in preaching the Word of God. Is he watering down the message for the Gentiles? He insists: Not at all. Rather, Paul is asserting that the authority for his preaching comes from God. It is through the power of Christ dwelling in him that he continues his mission to the Gentiles, in spite of distress, mistreatment and hardship. We are reminded that, apart from God, we can do nothing.

Jesus too encountered resistance in His ministry. Even after the miracle of raising the daughter of the synagogue official Jairus from the dead, the people of His own home town of Nazareth failed to see and hear the wisdom of God in His words. Why was it so difficult for His own people to recognize God at work in and through Him? What are the barriers to recognizing God at work in our world today?

What are the challenges today if we believe that as Christians we are all called by God? All anointed at Baptism to be prophets, having been commissioned, how do we today proclaim the Kingdom of God? How do we hear and interpret that call? What are the stumbling blocks to hearing the call? Where is the courage coming from when we hear the call to active service in the ministry of Christ? If we are all led by the Spirit who are the prophets we need to listen to, in order to experience God's wisdom working in and through Mere Mortals today? Have we got so caught up in the world we have lost our focus, our eyes shifted from the face of Jesus? We love and need our rituals but have we been focused too much on ritual and not enough on service? A lovely poem by the late Paul Byrne, O.M.I., called 'Towel People' reminds us of the role of the prophet as a servant of Christ.

You are the towel people,  
Soothers, cleaners, healers of tired feet and sore and cut from the journey.  
Veronica people,  
Wiping away the dirt and blood and spittle of the world's hatred  
Spewed onto the faces of the weak;  
You are the towel people, this is your badge of service,  
On your knees before others ...  
On your knees in service of others  
And in homage to them  
For Christ is there.

So are we prophets with 'towels', humbled by a 'God who hunkered and stooped to us / Loving us and needing us and our towel.'

**STEWARDSHIP:** During this time, we celebrate the independence of our country. We would do well to echo the psalmist, saying, "Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for His mercy." May we always recognize and use wisely the gifts of freedom and abundance He has showered upon us.

## **READINGS FIFTEENTH SUNDAY**

**11 JUL '21**

**Am. 7:12-15:** Amos lived during a time of great prosperity. It had all the trappings of unbridled capitalism, a kind of consumerism. What made Amos unpopular was the clarity with which he pointed out the disorder that lay below the surface.

**Eph. 1:3-14:** At the beginning of this letter, the writer thanks God for calling and choosing those who are baptized and bringing them to share in the plan of salvation under Christ.

**Mk. 6:7-13:** Jesus summons the Twelve and sends them out to participate in His own mission. Through them the word is to be preached and to become effective in the midst of those who welcome them.

## **PROPHET EZEKIEL ( Vision pictured above)**

Ezekiel is a very challenging book for several reasons. The author uses unfamiliar apocalyptic imagery to describe many things. The historical situation in which Ezekiel wrote is rather complicated and many of the events in the book occur only in visions. Even Ezekiel's geographical location is puzzling. Much of the exacting detail in his visions seems unnecessary.

Ezekiel was a priest and a prophet who was taken from Judah to Babylon in the second wave of exiles (597 BC). His prophecies are very attentive to the Temple, the liturgy and the Sabbath. He takes the ceremonial commands of the law just as seriously as the moral. He calls the exiled people to faithfulness to the Lord even though the signs of the Lord's blessing (the land and the Temple) have been taken away.

Ezekiel's visions are categorized as apocalyptic literature. Daniel, Zechariah and Revelation also contain apocalyptic literature as do several non-canonical books from biblical times. Apocalyptic literature uses a mixture of complex symbols to talk about catastrophic events in the future. Each of Ezekiel's visions serves as a window into the spiritual life of Judah and its relationship with God. He has a vision of heaven (v 1-3), of idolatry in the Temple and the glory of the Lord leaving the Temple (v 8-10), of the valley of the dry bones (v 37), and of the New Temple and the restored land with God's glory returning (v 40-48). The lengthy final vision of a restored Israel with all of its precise measurements envisions a nation of God's people living in God's order but its details are open to many interpretations.

Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel performs some dramatic prophetic acts. These acts serve as visual aids to Ezekiel's prophetic message from the Lord. Most of Ezekiel's prophetic acts anticipate the Lord's judgment on Judah. The Lord commands Ezekiel to make miniature models of the imminent siege of Jerusalem and to lie on his side, eating rationed bread (v 4). Then the Lord tells Ezekiel to cut his hair and do various things with the clippings as a metaphor for Israel's coming punishment (v 5). Later he performs a mock exile from his tent and eats with anxiety to pre-figure the exile of Judah (v 12). To symbolize the re-unification of Israel and Judah, Ezekiel ties two sticks together (v 37).

Scholars debate exactly where Ezekiel was located during his ministry. Ezekiel seems to be transported by God a few times, but it is not exactly clear if the "transports" are physical or visionary (see v 8:3, 11:24, 43:5). The most likely proposals suggest he was located in Babylon from 597 onward, but had several visions in which he saw events in Judah.

Like the other prophets, Ezekiel has a message of judgment and a message of restoration. He announces God's judgment against Judah for its sins against the covenant and he pronounces God's judgment against the surrounding nations which oppressed Judah. When Ezekiel upbraids Judah for its gross infidelity to the Lord, some of the language he uses is so strong that it startles us by its harshness. Yet Ezekiel does not leave his hearers in a state of condemnation, but invites them to turn away from their sins and take advantage of God's promises and covenant. Though the Lord uses Ezekiel to chide the people, he also uses him to give hope to his suffering people in a time of exile and persecution. Ezekiel is a prophet of judgment and a prophet of renewal.

### **JULY INTENTION: SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP**

We pray that, in social, economic, and political situations of conflict, we may be courageous and passionate architects of dialogue and friendship.

### **JULY DEDICATED TO MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS**

In honoring the Blood of Jesus, we honor the price of our redemption. The Blood of the risen,

glorified, living Body of Christ in heaven is made present on our altars by the words of Consecration. How fortunate we are to have Divine Blood so near to us, to offer it to the heavenly Father for the sins of the whole world!

## **“MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS”**

### **Why this devotion?**

We turn to the writings of Pope St. John XXIII as found in his encyclical: “On Promoting Devotion to the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

To his Venerable Brother Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops and other Local Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See

Venerable brethren: greetings and apostolic blessings.

From the very outset of our pontificate, in speaking of daily devotions we have repeatedly urged the faithful (often in eager tones that frankly hinted our future design) to cherish warmly that marvelous manifestation of divine mercy toward individuals and Holy Church and the whole world redeemed and saved by Jesus Christ: we mean devotion to his Most Precious Blood.

From infancy this devotion was instilled in us within our own household. Fondly we still recall how our parents used to recite the Litany of the Most Precious Blood every day during July.

The Apostle’s wholesome advice comes to mind: “Keep watch, then, over yourselves, and over God’s Church, in which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops; you are to be the shepherds of that flock which he won for himself at the price of his own blood.”[1] Now among the cares of our pastoral office, venerable brethren, we are convinced that, second only to vigilance over sound doctrine, preference belongs to the proper surveillance and development of piety, in both its liturgical and private expressions. With that in mind, we judge it most timely to call our beloved children’s attention to the unbreakable bond which must exist between the devotions to the Most Holy Name and Most Sacred Heart of Jesus — already so widespread among Christians — and devotion to the incarnate Word’s Most Precious Blood, “shed for many, to the remission of sins.”[2]

It is supremely important that the Church’s liturgy fully conform to Catholic belief (“the law for prayer is the law for faith”[3]), and that only those devotional forms be sanctioned which well up from the unsullied springs of true faith. But the same logic calls for complete accord among different devotions. Those deemed more basic and more conducive to holiness must not be at odds with or cut off from one another. And the more individualistic and secondary ones must give way in popularity and practice to those devotions which more effectively actuate the fullness of salvation wrought by the “one mediator between God and men, Jesus Christ, who is a man, like them, and gave himself as a ransom for them all.” [4] Through living in an atmosphere thus charged with true faith and solid piety the faithful can be confident that they are “thinking with the Church” and holding fast in the loving fellowship of prayer to Christ Jesus, the high priest of that sublime religion which he founded and which owes to him its name, its strength, its dignity.

The Church’s wonderful advances in liturgical piety match the progress of faith itself in penetrating divine truth. Within this development it is most heart-warming to observe how often in recent centuries this Holy See has openly approved and furthered the three devotions just mentioned. From the Middle Ages, it is true, many pious persons practiced these

devotions, which then spread to various dioceses and religious orders and congregations. Nevertheless it remained for the Chair of Peter to pronounce them orthodox and approve them for the Church as a whole.

Suffice it to recall the spiritual favors that our predecessors from the sixteenth century on have attached to practicing devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus, which in the previous century St. Bernardine of Siena untiringly spread throughout Italy. Approval was given first to the Office and Mass of the Most Holy Name and later to the Litany.[5] No less striking are the benefits the popes have attached to practicing devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose rise and spread owe so much to the revelations of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.[6] So highly have all the popes regarded this devotion that again and again in their official acts they have expounded its nature, defended its validity, promoted its practice. Their crowning achievement on this devotion are three splendid encyclicals.[7]

Likewise the devotion to the Most Precious Blood, which owes its marvelous diffusion to the 19th-century Roman priest, St. Gaspar del Bufalo, has rightly merited the approval and backing of this Apostolic See. We may recall that by order of Benedict XIV the Mass and Office in honor of the divine Savior's adorable Blood were composed. And to fulfill a vow made at Gaeta Pius IX extended the feast to the whole Church.[8] Finally, as a commemoration of the nineteenth centenary of our redemption, Pius XI of happy memory raised this feast to the rank of first-class double, so that the greater liturgical splendor would highlight the devotion and bring to men more abundant fruits of the redeeming Blood.

Following our predecessors' example we have taken further steps to promote the devotion to the Precious Blood of the unblemished Lamb, Jesus Christ. We have approved the Litany of the Precious Blood drawn up by the Sacred Congregation of Rites and through special indulgences have encouraged its public and private recitation throughout the Catholic world. Amid today's most serious and pressing spiritual needs, may this latest exercise of that "care for all the churches"[9] proper to our sovereign office awaken in Christian hearts a firm conviction about the supreme abiding effectiveness of these three devotions.

As we now approach the feast and month devoted to honoring Christ's Blood — the price of our redemption, the pledge of salvation and life eternal — may Christians meditate on it more fervently, may they savor its fruits more frequently in sacramental communion. Let their meditations on the boundless power of the Blood be bathed in the light of sound biblical teaching and the doctrine of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. How truly precious is this Blood is voiced in the song which the Church sings with the Angelic Doctor (sentiments wisely seconded by our predecessor Clement VI [10] ) :

Blood that but one drop of has the world to win  
All the world forgiveness of its world of sin. [11]

Unlimited is the effectiveness of the God-Man's Blood — just as unlimited as the love that impelled him to pour it out for us, first at his circumcision eight days after birth, and more profusely later on in his agony in the garden,[12] in his scourging and crowning with thorns, in his climb to Calvary and crucifixion, and finally from out that great wide wound in his side which symbolizes the divine Blood cascading down into all the Church's sacraments. Such surpassing love suggests, nay demands, that everyone reborn in the torrents of that Blood adore it with grateful love.

The Blood of the new and eternal covenant especially deserves this worship of latria when it is elevated during the sacrifice of the Mass. But such worship achieves its normal fulfilment in sacramental communion with the same Blood, indissolubly united with Christ's Eucharistic Body. In intimate association with the celebrant the faithful can then truly make his sentiments at communion their own: "I will take the chalice of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. . . The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul for everlasting life. Amen." Thus as often as they come worthily to this holy table they will receive more abundant fruits of the redemption and resurrection and eternal life won for all men by the Blood Christ shed "through the Holy Spirit." [13] Nourished by his Body and Blood, sharing the divine strength that has sustained countless martyrs, they will stand up to the slings and arrows of each day's fortunes — even if need be to martyrdom itself for the sake of Christian virtue and the kingdom of God. Theirs will be the experience of that burning love which made St. John Chrysostom cry out: Let us, then, come back from that table like lions breathing out fire, thus becoming terrifying to the Devil, and remaining mindful of our Head and of the love he has shown for us. . . This Blood, when worthily received, drives away demons and puts them at a distance from us, and even summons to us angels and the Lord of angels. . . This Blood, poured out in abundance, has washed the whole world clean. . . This is the price of the world; by it Christ purchased the Church... This thought will check in us unruly passions. How long, in truth, shall we be attached to present things? How long shall we remain asleep? How long shall we not take thought for our own salvation? Let us remember what privileges God has bestowed on us, let us give thanks, let us glorify him, not only by faith, but also by our very works. [14]

If only Christians would reflect more frequently on the fatherly warning of the first pope: "Look anxiously, then, to the ordering of your lives while your stay on earth lasts.

You know well enough that your ransom was not paid in earthly currency, silver or gold; it was paid in the precious blood of Christ; no lamb was ever so pure, so spotless a victim." [15] If only they would lend a more eager ear to the apostle of the Gentiles: "A great price was paid to ransom you; glorify God by making your bodies the shrines of his presence." [16] Their upright lives would then be the shining example they ought to be; Christ's Church would far more effectively fulfill its mission to men. God wants all men to be saved, [17] for he has willed that they should all be ransomed by the Blood of his only-begotten Son; he calls them all to be members of the one Mystical Body whose head is Christ. If only men would be more responsive to these promptings of his grace, how much the bonds of brotherly love among individuals and peoples and nations would be strengthened. Life in society would be so much more peaceable, so much worthier of God and the human nature created in his image and likeness. [18]

This is the sublime vocation that St. Paul urged Jewish converts to fix their minds on when tempted to nostalgia for what was only a weak figure and prelude of the new covenant: "The scene of your approach now is mount Sion, is the heavenly Jerusalem, city of the living God; here are gathered thousands upon thousands of angels, here is the assembly of those first-born sons whose names are written in heaven, here is God sitting in judgment on all men, here are the spirits of just men, now made perfect; here is Jesus, the spokesman of the new covenant, and the sprinkling of his blood, which has better things to say than Abel's had." [19]

We have full confidence, venerable brethren, that these fatherly exhortations of ours, once brought to the attention of your priests and people in whatever way you deem best, will be put into practice not just willingly but enthusiastically. As a sign of heavenly graces and our

affection we impart our most heartfelt apostolic blessing to each of you and to all your flocks, and particularly to those who respond with devout generosity to the promptings of this letter. Given at St. Peter's in Rome, the eve of the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ's Most Precious Blood, June 30, 1960, the second year of our pontificate.

1. Acts 20:28.
2. Matthew 26 :2&
3. Encyclical "On the Sacred Liturgy," America Press edition (New York: 1954), No. 46.
4. I Timothy 2:5-6.
5. Acta Sanctae Sedis 18 (1886) :509.
6. Cf. Office for the feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, 2nd nocturn, lesson 5.
7. "On the Consecration of mankind to the Sacred Heart," The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII (New York: 1903), 454– 461; "The Reparation Due to the Sacred Heart," The Catholic Mind 26 (1928): 221-235; "On Devotion to the Sacred Heart," The Pope Speaks 3 (1956): 115-149.
8. Decree "Redempti Sumus," Aug. 10, 1849, Decreta Authentica S.R.C. (Rome: 1898), II, No. 2978.
9. II Corinthians 11:28.
10. Bull "The Only Begotten Son of God," Jan. 25, 1343, The Sources of Catholic Dogma (St. Louis: 1957), No. 550.
1. Hymn "Adoro te devote." Translation from Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins (Oxford: 1930), No. 89.
12. Luke 22:43.
13. Hebrews 9:14.
14. "Homily 46," Commentary on Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist (Fathers of the Church, New York: 1957), 469, 471-472.
15. 1 Peter 1:17-19.
16. I Corinthians 6:20.
17. Cf. I Timothy 2:4.
18. Cf. Genesis 1:26.
19. Hebrews 12:22-24.

## **PRAYER**

### **FOR THE CHURCH AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES**

**(Composed by Bishop John Carroll in 1800**

*The following prayer was composed by Baltimore Archbishop John Carroll in 1791 for the inauguration of President George Washington.*

We pray, O almighty and eternal God, who through Jesus Christ has revealed thy glory to all nations, to preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church, being spread through the whole world, may continue with unchanging faith in the confession of your name.

We pray Thee, who alone are good and holy, to endow with heavenly knowledge, sincere zeal and sanctity of life, our chief bishop, the pope, the vicar of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the

government of his Church; our own bishop, all other bishops, prelates and pastors of the Church; and especially those who are appointed to exercise among us the functions of the holy ministry, and conduct your people into the ways of salvation.

We pray O God of might, wisdom and justice, through whom authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment decreed, assist with your Holy Spirit of counsel and fortitude the president of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness and be eminently useful to your people over whom he presides; by encouraging due respect for virtue and religion; by a faithful execution of the laws in justice and mercy; and by restraining vice and immorality.

Let the light of your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress, and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government, so that they may tend to the preservation of peace, the promotion of national happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety and useful knowledge; and may perpetuate to us the blessing of equal liberty.

We pray for his excellency, the governor of this state, for the members of the assembly, for all judges, magistrates, and other officers who are appointed to guard our political welfare, that they may be enabled, by your powerful protection, to discharge the duties of their respective stations with honesty and ability.

We recommend likewise, to your unbounded mercy, all our brethren and fellow citizens throughout the United States, that they may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of your most holy law; that they may be preserved in union, and in that peace which the world cannot give; and after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal.

Finally, we pray to you, O Lord of mercy, to remember the souls of your servants departed, who are gone before us with the sign of faith and repose in the sleep of peace; the souls of our parents, relatives and friends; of those who, when living, were members of this congregation, and particularly of such as are lately deceased; of all benefactors who, by their donations or legacies to this Church, witnessed their zeal for the decency of divine worship and proved their claim to our grateful and charitable remembrance. To these, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, grant, we beseech you, a place of refreshment, light and everlasting peace, through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior.

*Amen.*

**SCHEDULE THIRTEENTH WEEK ORDINARY TIME  
SATURDAY 26 JUNE - SUNDAY 4 JULY**

**Saturday 3 Jul St. Thomas Apostle**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Preface of Apostles, Eucharistic Prayer III**



(Intention: Mytych Family)

9:30 a.m. Baptism

1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass for Fourteenth Sunday

Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface IV, Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)

**Sunday 4 Jul** Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. Mass Proper, Creed, Preface IV, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Linda Zagame RIP)

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Creed, Preface IV, Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Michael Curran RIP)

11:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Creed, Preface IV, Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Robert Walters)

2:00 p.m. Mass Brig

**Monday 5 Jul** Holiday St. Elizabeth of Portugal (USA)

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Preface of Saints, Eucharistic Prayer III

**Tuesday 6 Jul** 14<sup>th</sup> Week Ordinary Time St. Maria Goretti Virgin, Martyr

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Preface of Martyrs, Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Victor Hrudowsky, Jr.)

6:30 p.m. Funeral Mass (Memorial)

**Wednesday 7 Jul** 14<sup>th</sup> Week Ordinary Time

6:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Evangelization of Peoples #18A, Preface,  
Eucharistic Prayer II

7:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m. Confessions

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Evangelization of Peoples #18A, Preface,  
Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: David Willmert)

**Thursday 8 Jul** 14<sup>th</sup> Week Ordinary Time

8:30 a.m. Mass 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday, Preface & Eucharistic Prayer IV

(Intention: Jose Demdam )

5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Confessions

6:30 p.m. Mass 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday, Preface & Eucharistic Prayer IV

**Friday 9 Jul** 14<sup>th</sup> Week Ordinary Time St. Augustine Zhao Rong, Priest,  
& Companions Martyrs

8:30 a.m. Mass Persecuted Christians #19, Preface, Eucharistic Prayer II

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

**Saturday 10 Jul** 14<sup>th</sup> Week Ordinary Time BVM on Saturday

8:30 a.m. Mass Mary, Help of Christians #42, Eucharistic Prayer II

1:30-4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass for Fifteenth Sunday Ordinary Time

(Intention: John R. Bach)

Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday V, Eucharistic Prayer III

**Sunday 11 Jul** Fifteenth Sunday Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. Mass Proper, Creed, Preface Sunday V, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Alice Kirk)

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday V, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Michael Curran)

11:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday V, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen Martyr)

2:00 p.m. Brig Mass

