



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS



## Presentation of the Lord

*Feast Day: 02 February*

**FEBRUARY 2022** | DAILY READINGS & REFLECTIONS



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

FEBRUARY  
2022

“The **best thing** for us is not  
what we consider best, but  
what the lord wants of us!”

Saint Josephine Bakhita  
Memorial: 8th February

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## Prayer of invocation to the Holy Spirit

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,  
as we gather together in Your name.  
With You alone to guide us,  
make Yourself at home in our hearts;  
Teach us the way we must go  
and how we are to pursue it.  
We are weak and sinful;  
do not let us promote disorder.  
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path  
nor partiality influence our actions.  
Let us find in You our unity  
so that we may journey together to eternal life  
and not stray from the way of truth  
and what is right.  
All this we ask of You,  
who are at work in every place and time,  
in the communion of the Father and the Son,  
forever and ever. Amen.

Let us pray the above prayer for the Church.

## Tuesday February 1

Fourth Week in Ordinary time

2 Sam 18:9-10,14,  
24-25,31--19:3

Psalm  
85:1-6

Mark  
5:21-43

### What is my level of faith?

A woman subject to bleeding for twelve years heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched the hem of his cloak. Immediately she was freed from her suffering. She had only “heard”, but not “seen”, Jesus heal. Yet, she risked her life, despite the social prohibitions. Her reckless faith was proportionate to her instant healing. Let us be challenged and ask ourselves today – what is my level of faith in the healing power of Jesus? Is it weak, faint or reckless? Do social norms overtake my faith journey where I want to be part of the madding crowd rather than witness to my faith in Jesus? To the twelve-year-old daughter of Jairus, Jesus says “Talitha Koum” and immediately she rose. A father’s faith brings down the supernatural power of Jesus to a dead situation. Do we invite Jesus into our crises that seems insurmountable? Or do we hold onto our presumptions and pride, thereby missing the grace of God that is so freely available to anyone who asks and seeks.

Prayer: Abba Father, sometimes my faith is weak. But your grace is sufficient when I am weak. Amen

## Wednesday February 2

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Malachi  
3:1-4

Psalm  
23:7-10

Luke  
2:22-40

Obedience to authority.

The Lord Jesus was one of us! To redeem us from death, he became like us. He led a normal life just like us, in obedience to the law of that time. This is the uniqueness of the God we believe in, we have a God who went through pain and suffering just like what we go through, so that he can come to our aid. No matter what we have done, how distant we feel from God, he is near us, he will never forsake us or leave us. Let us come back to him with all our hearts and minds and he will rescue us. Today Jesus calls us to a life of obedience to authorities and to the church, to put aside our own freedom and opinions and to live for others. When we do that he promises wisdom, peace and the favour of God. As we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, let us also remember that we are consecrated to the Lord, from our Baptism. Many of us have also been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Let us ask for God's grace to become effective witnesses of Jesus, who came to be the "Light to the nations".

Prayer: Abba Father, pour out your grace upon us to live devout, obedient lives as you lived on earth. Come to our aid and give us your wisdom. Amen.

## Thursday February 3

Fourth Week of Ordinary Time

1 Kings  
2:1-4, 10-12

1 Chronicles  
29:10-12

Mark  
6:7-13

Love the Lord and operate in His authority.

The Lord has given us two commandments: to love the Lord our God with all our heart, strength, might and will. And then to love our neighbour as ourselves. For us to experience the perfect love and the will of God in our lives we need a perfect balance obeying the commandments in these two areas. If we lack in one the flow breaks. That is the challenge we face everyday. David's life is a good example. He, being the one after God's own heart, though he failed in life occasionally, managed to get back on track through repentance and forgiveness and experienced the power of God's love. He instructed his son Solomon to walk in God's ways and to keep His commandments, which he did and managed to establish his father's throne in Israel. The lesson here is that, when we are in perfect harmony with the Father's will we can operate in His authority. Although we may fail, we are invited again through repentance and to sustain ourselves through the power of the Holy spirit for the mission God has entrusted to us.

Prayer: Abba Father, we know that we are here by your choice. Reveal your plan and purpose to us. Amen

## Friday February 4

Our Lady of Lanka, Pray for us

### Solemnity of Our Lady of Lanka

Exodus  
17: 8-16

Psalm  
95:1-3,7-10

Acts  
16: 25-33

John  
2:1-12

Do not be afraid.

In today's scriptures, God is telling us: do not be afraid, because fear stops us from moving forward. Often we fear society and our future. But God's presence is always with us, so we can focus on him no matter what is happening around us. Several years ago when I was working for a reputed company in Colombo, I had made a mistake to a customer's order. The customer refused to accept the order, and threatened to complain to the management. I was afraid that I would lose my job. After work I went to the Wednesday prayer meeting. While struggling internally, suddenly I felt peace, and this scripture dropped in to my mind: "be still and know that I am God". After two days that customer came again, forgave me and proceeded with the purchase. Whenever we struggle let us go to God and wait upon him with faith and hope. He will empower us with the Holy Spirit. Let us trust and depend on him. Let us ask our Blessed Mother to intercede for us, so that we can increase our hope in God, especially as we pray for our country today.

Prayer: Abba Father, lead and guide us in your way for we trust in you. Help us to know you more. Amen.

## Saturday February 5

### Memorial of Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr

1 Kings  
3:4-13

Psalm  
118:9-14

Mark  
6:30-34

There is no barrier that God cannot overcome.

In the Gospel of Saint Mark, we see Jesus not just as a teacher. The compassionate love of Jesus extended to the disciples and beyond them to the weak and vulnerable people whom he saw. They were like sheep without a shepherd. He continues to seek us who are in that situation. He knows us by name and wants to be in our lives. Have we drifted away, caught up in this mesh of a materialistic, broken world which consumes us? He is always ready to bless, heal and forgive. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. There is no barrier he cannot overcome. King Solomon makes a genuine prayer in his vulnerability, the Lord asks him what he needs, his prayer was for divine wisdom. He was showered with Divine wisdom and much more. Saint Agatha whose Memorial we celebrate today, surrendered her life to God while being tortured by a persistent suitor. God gave her the grace to be strong and calm in the face of extreme torture and indignity. She died a virgin martyr, planting a seed of faith in many hearts.

Prayer: Abba Father, as you seek us in our weakness and inability may we experience powerful transformation in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Sunday February 6

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah  
6:1-8

Psalm  
137:1-5,7-8

1 Corinthians  
15:1-11

Luke  
5:1-11

Here I am, I have come to do Your will.

This Sunday's Liturgy is about being called and being sent by the Lord on a mission. In the First Reading, the prophet Isaiah saw his unworthiness though he served the temple as a priest of the Lord. When he admitted his sinfulness, the act of cleansing took place. Just then, he heard the Lord's voice and had the freedom to respond to God's call.

The Gospel proclamation describes the event of the Lord Jesus calling His first disciples. One could clearly see that it was not by accident that the Lord got into Peter's boat. Having finished preaching, once the crowd went away, the Lord Jesus asked Peter to "put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch" (Luke 5:4). It was the grace of God that gave the inner freedom to Peter to oblige with no resistance.

This moment of grace is given to all of us. Do we let it pass us by or respond like St. Peter? St. Peter's response led to an awesome miracle. In fact, St. Peter was the activator of that miracle, not the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus as the author of creation, had already willed a massive swarm of fish to flock in that area of the sea, but if St. Peter did not oblige, the miracle would not have taken place. I wonder how many such miracles I would have lost, simply because I did not trust my Lord enough to obey His word?

At times we may ignore the Lord's invitation and try to work out things on our own. But he is inviting us, offering us a solution...are we humble enough to accept his help? Or are we arrogant that we want to win without God's help?

How do we respond to the wonders the Lord Jesus has done and continue to do in our lives? Do we imitate Prophet Isaiah and St. Peter by experiencing a deep internal breaking that reveals our own sinfulness and unworthiness? Or do we become proud and arrogant and boast about our spirituality? Or do we thank the Lord, leave Him, and go back to our old ways?

In the Second Reading St. Paul speaks about his own calling to become an apostle of the Lord whom he persecuted severely. Here too, the Lord Jesus decides that St. Paul, then Saul, be called to discipleship. St. Paul's experience teaches us that it is only by the grace of God, that we have received the call to an intimate relationship with our Lord Jesus.

Today, before we set about our daily work, let us be mindful of the call God has placed in our lives. In everything we do, let us ask the Lord for His guidance to lead us through our day.

Prayer: Abba Father, you chose me to be holy and blameless in Your sight. Here I am, I have come to do Your will. Guide me Lord. Amen.

## Monday February 7

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

1 Kings  
8:1-7,9-13

Psalm  
131:6-10

Mark  
6:53-56

Divine presence among us.

Today's Gospel proclamation describes how people were filled with faith in the Lord Jesus. They brought all who were in need to the Lord, and he healed everyone who was brought to him. In the first reading we hear about the bringing of the Ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. People in the Old Testament had to go up to Jerusalem to worship God, by the time of Jesus, those who recognized him as the Messiah were able to experience the Lord's power even on the streets of Israel, no longer confined to the temple. How about us? How privileged are we, that we have access to the Lord from wherever we are. As Catholics we are blessed to have the Eucharistic presence of Jesus in our own neighbourhoods and cities. Do we make use of this opportunity? Do we consider it a blessing to have the Lord's presence among us? Or do we take it for granted. Let us not forget the immense love of Jesus, who sacrificed himself and continues to live among us sacramentally in the Eucharist. Let us seek him wholeheartedly.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for your presence among us. Amen.

## Tuesday February 8

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

1 Kings  
8:22-23,27-30

Psalm  
83:3-5,10-11

Mark  
7:1-13

We cannot honor God externally when not awakened internally.

Today's readings tell us that God has to be interiorized in relating to Him. The word "Immanuel" means "God with us". Since He is Spirit, He has to be approached spiritually, transcending the natural means we initially employed. The Lord says "They honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me". Probably I too follow meticulously the externals of ritual, but adhering to the Word of God is quite often lacking. I may even feel quite proud of my church going practices. That pride may become sinful. 'God in me' means I need to live differently. Surely if the Creator of the Universe is in me, should I not be living in a way that pleases Him? Thankfully He knows my weaknesses and sinful nature. He calls me to lay it at His feet. He promises to make me more like him. No more living in my natural ways, but spiritual. No more seeking acknowledgement from others. Or feeling I am better in my ministry or profession than the other. I don't need to seek the pleasures of this world when I could have the greater pleasure of knowing the Lord.

Prayer: Abba Father, may the thoughts of your Son mingle and override mine.

Amen

## Wednesday February 9

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

1 Kings  
10:1-10

Psalm  
36:5-6,30-31,39-40

Mark  
7:14-23

Blame it on ourselves.

Whenever anything goes wrong, we look for the underlying reason. Often we look to identify and blame an external factor, as the reason for the problem. While we point fingers around we seldom point fingers at ourselves. But the Word tells us today that, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him or her." It has been lying within and expresses itself at our weakest moment. Knowing that weakness and sin lie within us, we must every day open ourselves to the saving power of God. This is to protect ourselves from darkness and sin so that they may not get the better of us. As we choose to abandon ourselves to God's love and mercy, He begins to minister to us. Our sinfulness and ungratefulness are overshadowed by the Holy Spirit and transformed into heavenly wisdom similar to what the Lord Jesus had. True wisdom makes us aware of our deep sinfulness and gives us the grace to respond to God's love and mercy.

Prayer: Abba Father, we open our hearts to receive your perfect wisdom and humility. Amen.

## Thursday February 10

Memorial of Saint Scholastica, Virgin

1 Kings  
11:4-13

Psalm  
105:3-4,35-37,40

Mark  
7:24-30

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

In today's first reading we read that Solomon handled great pressures in running the government, but he could not handle the pressure from his wives who wanted him to worship their gods. In marriage and close friendships, it is difficult to resist pressure to compromise. Our love leads us to identify with the desires of those we care about. Faced with such pressure, Solomon at first resisted it, maintaining pure faith. Then he tolerated a more widespread practice of idolatry. Finally, he became involved in idol worship, rationalizing the potential danger to himself and the kingdom. For all his wisdom, Solomon had some weak spots. He could not say no to compromise or to lustful desires. Whether he married to strengthen political alliances or to gain personal pleasure, these foreign wives led him to idolatry. We may have strong faith, but we are also weak and that is where temptation usually strikes. Let us strengthen ourselves where we are weak because a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. If Solomon, the wisest man, could fall, so can we.

Prayer: Abba Father, teach us your ways when it's the moment in choosing friends who delight in your Kingdom. Amen.

## Friday February 11

Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes

1 Kings  
11:29-32; 12:19

Psalm  
80:10-15

Mark  
7:31-37

**Focussing on God's love.**

Healings can be divided into two categories: spiritual and physical. In the same way, miracles can also be classified into two: natural and supernatural. Often people approach God to obtain healings and miracles. Often our faith is based on how far we are satisfied by receiving the particular healing or miracle. Healings and miracles are part of the ministry of Jesus. At the same time healings and miracles should take us closer to the Kingdom of God. Further, today we can find some of us are deaf and blind, due to our focus on healings and miracles. On many occasions we fail to experience the love of God, in our day to day life; because we limit ourselves by focussing only on healings and miracles, hence we could fail to experience the love of God. God cannot be judged by healings and miracles. He is a loving God, who knit us in the womb of our mother. We were "fearfully and wonderfully made". He knows our needs. Let us continue our journey with God every moment of our life.

Prayer: Abba Father, help us journey with you, in the midst of crises and struggles. Open the eyes of our hearts to see and hear your voice. Amen.

## Saturday February 12

Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

1 Kings  
12:26-32; 13:33-34

Psalm  
106:6-7,19-22

Mark  
8:1-10

**Give them all to Jesus.**

In today's first reading we see a ruler who was intent on preserving his power rather than holding on to God and heavenly values. King Jeroboam tried to replicate the rituals celebrated at the Temple in Jerusalem, by going against the directions given by God. How is this relevant to us? How often do we cling onto the Lord and obey his laws? Don't we often fall into the sin of presumption? We presume that we know God's mind, when in actual fact, we rationalize our own thoughts which may be clearly against God's will. We may even spiritualize our ideas and argue as if we are above God's Word. Let us be humble and repent for the times that we tried to take God's place. Let us invite him to once again be our guide on this journey of life. As we see in today's Gospel proclamation, the Lord wants us to do our part, no matter how insignificant it may seem. If we do not contribute, then the miracle may not take place. Let us lay our talents and resources at the feet of Jesus, and ask him to use them as he sees fit.

Prayer: Abba Father, you are my guide and strength. I surrender everything to you. Amen.

## Sunday February 13

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah  
17:5-8

Psalm  
1:1-4,6

1 Corinthians  
15:12,16,20

Luke  
6:17.20-26

Being blessed by God.

In today's readings the central theme is 'Blessing'. The readings draw parallels between the blessed and the cursed, and the stark contrast between the two types of people is made clear to us. What does it mean to be blessed? For me, blessing means the presence of God. When God is present in the situations of our lives, we consider ourselves blessed. For where God dwells, so does His favour, so does the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Where God is, there is peace, love, joy, providence. Alternatively, to be cursed is to lack these things. It is to not have God amid our situations and to deal with things without the help of the Lord. It is then that struggle, turmoil and strife become our reality.

The prophet Jeremiah speaks of blessings and curses. Those who trust in human beings, who seek worldly answers, who willingly turn away from the Lord to find their own solutions are considered cursed – not by the Lord but by their own actions. They themselves have closed the door to the hand of blessing on their lives.

No one could provide the way that God can, no one can solve impossible problems the way that God can; and if we attempt to seek this kind of answer, our hearts and lives will not be open to the blessing that the Lord is waiting to offer us. However, if we trust in the Lord, if we hope during adversity, if we follow God's laws, we are considered blessed. God's watchful eyes will be upon us, and though we may stumble, He will not let us fall.

In today's world, we seem to have more people who are trusting in people rather than God. This is because of the lack of faith that is among today's generations. Young people are trained to believe that God does not exist, that it is old fashioned to be religious, that science is superior to religion, and opinions are formulated that go against the reality of God. In this context, when we read the Gospel and see the Lord Jesus' teachings on the beatitudes, it seems no wonder that people find it difficult to believe in God.

Blessed are the poor, the hungry, the weeping, the hated – how can such people be blessed? Our idea of blessing is materialistic, we think it is for the rich, the powerful, the affluent, but the Lord Jesus calls those who are marginalized and persecuted because of the Lord's name as blessed. Why? Because they have the favour and the presence of God and are intimately connected to Him in a way that no material blessing could ever compensate for.

Prayer: Abba Father, let me see the blessings of the kingdom in my life rather than the blessings of this world. Amen.

## Monday February 14

Memorial of Saints Cyril and Methodius

James  
1:1-11

Psalm 118:  
67-68,71-72,75-76

Mark  
8:11-13

Seek the Lord above everything else.

Today's Gospel proclamation poses a challenge to many of us who pray, go to church and attend prayer meetings to witness signs and wonders. As the Lord Jesus warned the doubting Pharisees; he might tell us as well: "no sign shall be given to this people." Does this mean that we should not hope for miracles? The scriptures give many instances where people's faith brought down heavenly miracles. The key factor is faith. As we hear in the first reading, "ask with faith, not doubting." Sometimes we may pray out of habit, or because someone else has recommended it to us. Today let us resolve to be strong in faith. Some of us may feel weak or doubtful, it is here that we can approach the Lord in our weakness. As we responded to the Responsorial Psalm: "Be kind to me, Lord, and I shall live." Let us continue to hold onto Jesus with deep faith, believing that he is waiting to bless and guide us, because he loves us eternally. If we cling onto the Lord, we will not be disappointed, because he will sustain us.

Prayer: Abba Father, increase my faith. Amen.

## Tuesday February 15

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

James  
1:12-18

Psalm  
93:12-15,18-19

Mark  
8:14-21

What does our life depend on?

In today's Gospel it seems the disciples only had to cross a shore to forget what Jesus had just done for them! In today's world, it is the same response we tend to give - it seems we only need one strike of anxiety or worry to overwhelm us. The fear that we are not living up to expected standards has crawled into our hearts. Anxiety over falling short of the duties and responsibilities is keeping us away from the good life God has promised us. We have a tendency to embrace the world for self-fulfillment; sometimes our achievements and own desires have polluted our hearts and minds and we forget who Jesus is for us! We see the world with its outward beauty and as a provider of happiness and satisfaction. We are even ready to risk the corruption of our inner being to go down the material way. Today, the Lord is asking us to be fixed on him; the miracles he has done in the past, what he is doing in our lives and the wealth of eternal life ahead of us. The Lord is asking: What does our life depend on?

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for helping me to turn my gaze on you. Amen.

## Wednesday February 16

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

James  
1:19-27

Psalm  
14:2-5

Mark  
8:22-26

Just one touch from you O Lord and I will never be the same.

Most of us have heard and experienced the power of the Lord's touch through the scriptures, in the lives of our near and dear ones and in our own lives. We have at one time or another received an instantaneous healing through simply hearing His words spoken over our lives. However, in today's Gospel we see Jesus having to touch the eyes of the blind man twice to give him complete healing. I am left wondering why the first touch of Jesus brought only partial vision... Was it intentional or did the man lack something on his part for the full healing to manifest in his eyes? The message that I received is that we should not stop asking..keep on praying until the miracle takes place. Whatever the obstacles that may be there, we are reminded that our Lord always intends to heal us, save us and deliver us. He gives us second chances over and over again so that we will never miss out on good things. He instructs us through the scriptures about the way we should conduct our lives and assures us His love and presence through all circumstances.

Prayer: Abba Father, may we be quick to listen, slow to react and submit to Your holy Word to experience Your salvation. Amen.

## Thursday February 17

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

James  
2:1-9

Psalm  
33:2-7

Mark  
8:27-33

Equality is a kingdom value.

There is an old saying: "You cannot judge a book by its cover". However aren't people accepted or treated for their looks, status and wealth? Are we treating people for their outer appearance or prestige? The first reading insists that God is impartial, and therefore we cannot love only the ones attractive in our sight. All people we meet must be treated with equal love and respect, for the heavenly Father loves all His children in the same measure. Interestingly, when we see the Gospel proclamation, we learn how only St.Peter was endowed with the ability to first recognize Jesus as the son of God. Yet, the Lord Jesus always had the freedom and courage to rebuke St. Peter whenever he tried to go against the will of the heavenly Father, saying "get behind me Satan". Do we possess the same freedom and capacity to shun all falsehood and distractions that rob us of our freedom to fully serve and obey our Lord and God? If not, it is not too late, let us start today. let us ask for God's grace to make it possible.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to identify the distractions on my journey and avoid them wisely. Amen.

## Friday February 18

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

James  
2:14-24,26

Psalm  
111:1-6

Mark  
8:34 -- 9:1

Jesus, we want nothing more than you.

Without people to love, the love inside our hearts remain stagnant and fruitless. Without the expression of laughter, our joy remains suppressed and unreleased. Similarly, without the medium of life, our faith remains inactivated, dormant, and sheathed in our belts. Today's scripture readings lead all followers of Jesus to expect an explosive faith that exudes from every aspect of life. Outside our quiet time with the Lord, outside the walls of the church, outside our charity work, our faith must still be evident. In our conversations, choices, planning, our priority lists, and in our reactions and responses, our faith in the living God must still be broadcasted. This kind of faith-led life leads to a desperation for God in all things, at all times. When we lose our life for Jesus, it points us to a freedom that comes from relinquishing control over our lives and enthroning God as the author of our everyday. We begin needing Him more than any thing and any one else. It is in total dependency that the magnitude of the power of faith is discovered.

Prayer: Abba Father, pour out more faith, so that we may let go of the world and receive You in the full measure. Amen.

## Saturday February 19

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

James  
3:1-10

Psalm  
12:2-5,7-8

Mark  
9:2-13

Striving for perfection.

Today's Gospel proclamation describes the transfiguration of Jesus, the glorious manifestation of the hidden Messiah. God confirms who Jesus is; "This is my Son, whom I love; listen to him." (Mark 9:8) Remember we too are sons and daughters of God adopted into the family of God through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. At Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons and daughters of God (CCC 1213). Let us hold on to this revelation, abandoning all other identifications, feelings and thoughts. The first reading describes the importance of taming the tongue. Let us examine our conscience, do we swear as a habit? Do we swear false oaths, use abusive, shameful or boastful language? Have we given attention to the slips of our tongue? Have we gossiped, used words that hurt others? Or have we used our tongue to praise and worship God and draw blessings upon the world? Let us give the truth of ourselves to Jesus. He will empower us to tame our tongue and lead us in the path of perfection.

Prayer: Abba Father, may the revelation of divine childhood be the reality in my heart. Amen

## Sunday February 20

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Sam 26:2,7-9,12-13,22-23

Psalm 102:  
1-4,8,10,12-13

1 Corinthians  
15:45-49

Luke  
6:27-38

Let us honour God through our actions.

Today's readings paint a picture of the men and women God calls us to be in the world today. It goes against our natural instincts. He gives us the example of David to show us how to be a person after God's heart. In the First Reading, David had the opportunity to destroy King Saul. King Saul and his soldiers had fallen into a deep sleep giving David the opportunity to come into the camp and kill King Saul. David recognizes that no matter what wrong King Saul is doing, he was anointed by God and therefore, David cannot touch him. Many people would have killed the person coming after them. They would have followed their worldly instincts and tried to protect themselves. David honoured God by looking beyond his human instincts and seeing the situation the way God saw it. David places his life and trusts in the Lord when he refuses to kill King Saul. His actions spoke louder than words.

In today's Gospel proclamation, the Lord Jesus calls us to do the same - to honour God by being merciful to others, no matter who they are. He calls us to "be merciful just as your Father is merciful" (v.36). Instead of following the world and imitating what others do, the Lord is calling us to imitate Him. Today, God sets out a challenge for us. It will not be easy. He raises the standards we are called to live by. We may feel He is asking us to do the impossible and we may fail even before we start.

The Lord speaks to us through His Word. Luke 1:37 says, "nothing will be impossible with God." Mark 10:27 says, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." God is telling us that we cannot meet these high standards by our own strength or will power. We need supernatural strength and wisdom from God to meet His standards. We are not called to do these things on our own; instead we are called to do these things by His strength and power. All He asks of us is to have a relationship with Him, rely on Him and to do his will.

I once read a quote that said "You will never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is found in your daily routine". The Lord is calling us to make a change in our daily routines - to make prayer a priority. When we make this small change in our lives, God will make the impossible possible. He will give us the supernatural power to meet the standards He sets for us. What we need to do is make time for Him. The Psalmist gives us hope when he writes "As a father is kind to his children, so the Lord is kind to those who honour him" (Ps. 103:13).

Prayer: Abba Father, I pray for Your supernatural power to come upon me so that I may be able to do what You ask of me. Amen.

## Monday February 21

Seventh Week in Ordinary Time

James  
3:13-18

Psalm  
18:8-10:15

Mark  
9:14-29

Do we believe that God can help us?

"If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." We see this cry from a heartbroken father desperate for the healing of his son. How many times in our life do we display this same lack of faith, maybe it is that illness that has plagued our lives for many years, maybe it is that situation in our workplace or the relationship with our loved one that seems to be too broken to be repaired. We too resign ourselves to live our lives with these problems. We too tell the Lord "if you can help me" we beg the Lord for relief, with no real belief that our prayer in this instance will be answered. At the Lord Jesus' gentle admonishing "everything is possible for him who believes", the father answers with the truth of his heart: "I do believe; help me to overcome my unbelief!". This is the prayer we too can make in those instances when we feel our faith faltering. Faith is a gift from God. And our God supplies our needs bountifully when we turn to him and ask. Let us believe that our Father will continue to bless us, guide us and increase our faith.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me in the areas of my life where I have not surrendered to you. I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief. Amen.

## Tuesday February 22

Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle

1 Peter  
5:1-4

Psalm  
22:1-6

Matthew  
16:13-19

How are we to shepherd?

In the first reading it is clear that shepherding is not referring simply to our spiritual elders. We are all called to shepherd those the Lord has placed in our lives. Let us reflect who those people are to us. Our parents, uncles and aunts, children, friends who have been through challenges and depend on us for consolation and whoever the spirit will impress on our hearts. And how are we to shepherd them? With love, respect, not using the upper hand of our position, not to make the receiver of our shepherding to feel that it is a burden to us. When we are truly connected to our true Shepherd, then we can be all that He wants us to be to His sheep. The Gospel today highlights who Jesus is. It was revealed to Peter by God the Father. Has God the Father revealed to you who Jesus is? Jesus clearly says that it is not flesh and blood. So we can assume it is the Spirit of God the Father, that has revealed Jesus' identity to Peter. This can be food for meditating on the beautiful mystery of how the Holy Trinity operates.

Prayer: Abba Father, give us the grace to be loving shepherds of YOUR sheep. Amen.

## Wednesday February 23

Memorial of Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

James  
4:13-17

Psalm  
48:2-3,6-11

Mark  
9:38-40

If God wills, we will do that.

We are often presumptuous and we incline to think we are the ones in control of everything; our plans are the 'and all' and 'be all' of everything. And when they fail to bear fruit, we sulk, question ourselves and blame God. Why couldn't God help us? When the Lord has been saying, "I know the plans I have for you...plans to give you hope and a future" (Jer 29:11). In today's first reading, the writer encourages us to follow a better way of living, where one depends and relies upon God. "You have no idea what your life will be like tomorrow." (vs 14) How true, did we imagine we would live in a world like this? Let us not fool ourselves any longer, but humbly submit to the Lord, asking the Master to reveal His plans for us, as we say; "If the Lord wills we shall live to do this or that." We do not need to have all the answers, He will work it out for our good, as we love Him. Let us hold on to the promises of the Scriptures which remind us that we are called according to God's will and we have a heavenly calling to fulfill on earth.

Prayer: Abba Father, I surrender my life today, bringing every thought and action captive unto You. Amen.

## Thursday February 24

Seventh Week in Ordinary Time

James  
5:1-6

Psalm  
48:14-20

Mark  
9:41-50

Let us remain as the salt of the earth.

We are reminded today that our ultimate purpose of life is to be rewarded with eternal life. But sadly, sin has always presented itself to be attractive and pleasing to our human senses that we stumble and fall into it many a times. We fail to realize that the pleasure that sin offers us is only temporary. The results of sin are always destructive and would finally deprive us from the real joy we are destined for in the Kingdom of God. This is why Jesus invites us today to reject anything and everything that leads us to sin and fix our eyes on the treasures in heaven. But how do we do this? Is this really possible? Jesus has already conquered sin through His death and resurrection. As in our response to the Psalm for today, let us be poor in spirit and call out to Jesus in complete surrender and trust. He is waiting to pour His love into us and fill us with the power of His Holy Spirit so that our fight against the sin and evil of this world would be effortless. Remain in Him and we remain the salt of the earth.

Prayer: Abba Father, fill us with your mighty presence that we may conquer every temptation. Amen.

## Friday February 25

Seventh Week in Ordinary Time

James  
5:9-12

Psalm  
102:1-4.8-9.11-12

Mark  
10:1-12

### Relationship with God the Father.

“God is Love” we have heard it many times, it almost sounds cliché. Yet, it is the underlying truth in all of creation. The amazing aspect is that we humans have been called to be partakers to play an active part in the procreation of this Love. It is never more so seen as in the Sacrament of Marriage, it is not merely an act of two human beings coming together to say “till death do us part” but a union of two bodies becoming one, to form the most visible impression of God on earth. Hence, the sanctity of marriage. Children first form an impression of God through their parents’ lives. Through our Lord Jesus Christ it is of utmost importance that our primary relationship is with God our Father because that is how it was meant to be from the beginning. As mature Christians let us become aware that there is a sinful nature that hardens our heart to work contrary to this union with God. But we also have a great counselor; the Holy Spirit who is constantly at work in us to make this union possible and aid us in overcoming our sinful nature.

Prayer: Abba Father, let my hardened heart be open to your love and compassion. Amen.

## Saturday February 26

Seventh Week in Ordinary Time

James  
5:13-20

Psalm  
140:1-3.8

Mark  
10:13-16

### I am your child, Abba Father, I am your child.

Today Jesus is giving us the key to come to Him. And the Key to enter the gates of heaven. The Gospel proclamation further explains that anyone who is like a small child can enter the heavenly kingdom. What is the qualification that a child would have that we don't? God is inviting us to have a heart like that of a child, to have a fully opened heart, and to simply trust in their parents. A heart that would know and believe that there is nothing impossible to their parents. God today is inviting us to have the same childlike faith in our heavenly Father who is far greater than worldly parents. He desires us to run to him and trust in him, in all circumstances. He is reminding us that if we are discouraged or if people or the world have failed us, to run to our heavenly Father and pray to him. Let us continue to praise him for all the blessings he has showered upon us. We see the heart of the heavenly Father and the desire he has for us to share our life with him. Because we belong to him, he will always carry us through thick and thin.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I trust in you wholeheartedly. Amen

## Sunday February 27

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sirach  
27:5-8

Psalm  
91:2-3,13-16

1 Corinthians  
15:54-58

Luke  
6:39-45

Do we trust our savings, or do we bank on the Word of God?

Today's liturgy speaks of the "heart matters". Collectively all the readings tell us that we as God's children are invited to be mindful of the state of our heart at all times.

It is a fact that the shaking of the sieve through the COVID-19 pandemic over the last two years has sifted a lot of rituals and routines that played significant parts of our spiritual life. Many feel-good activities have been brought to a halt. How does this make us feel about our own relationship with the Lord? Do we feel alone, dry and somewhat lost, or have we moved to a better place in our intimacy with the Holy Spirit? In short, what is left behind in our sieve, after the shaking?

Through the Gospel proclamation, the Lord Jesus stresses the importance of filling our heart and mind with good things, at all times. Pretence is short lived and benefits no one. I remember a writing on a handcrafted simple card our class teacher - a nun dearly loved by all - presented to every 10th grade student; "What you are, speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." Later I learned that it was a modified quote of a famous American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson. Four plus decades later those words are still fresh in my mind.

The Lord Jesus assures us if we store up heavenly realities in our heart, we will bring good out of our life even in bad times. He manifested this truth on the cross, while the crowds were jeering at Him and mocking Him, allowing the words of forgiveness and mercy to flow from His mouth.

Is this how we have responded to fear, anxiety and uncertainty of the current season? Was it in the reality of heaven that we responded to the pandemic, or did we lose our sense of fairness, compassion and generosity in the face of scarcity and risk of loss and death?

Now is a good time to revisit our realities. Most of us have been Christians for generations. We might have advised others to be Christ-like in their times of trials. Now the test is upon everyone! Is Christ seen, heard and experienced by others through us during this time? Or, are we still clinging on to perishables? What is real to us right now? Do we trust our savings, or do we bank on the Word of God that gives a fortune of promises for our future?

The pandemic teaches us that we cannot wait till that "one day", when we are old and grey, to let go of the perishable and hold onto the imperishable. It needs to be our way of life now, as citizens of heaven while still living on the earth.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank You for being my refuge and fortress. Amen.

## Monday February 28

Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

1 Peter  
1:3-9

Psalm  
110:1-2.5-6.9-10

Mark  
10:17-27

### Attachments to earthly things.

In the first reading, St. Peter tells us that the resurrection of Jesus gives us hope of our heavenly future from our faith in Him. The psalmist speaks of God's steadfastness in His covenant and promises the demonstration of His power. In the Gospel proclamation, Jesus' answer to the rich man's question is unpalatable to him and perplexing to the disciples who question as to who can be saved, because they are accustomed to earthly standards of recognition and understanding, which saw wealth as a sign of righteousness. Jesus emphasizes that what people consider impossible, is possible with God. The instruction to give up our possessions extends to all earthly things to which we have formed strong attachments to. These include obsessions, addictions to power, ambition and various forms of self-gratification which separate us from God's love. Our possessions, family, friends, environment and life itself, are gifts from God, which we need to use for His glorification and be prepared to give up for the reward of eternal life.

Prayer: Abba Father, send your Holy Spirit into our hearts to enable us to give up our attachments to worldly possessions. Amen.

### How do we turn our weaknesses into strength?

Many of us believe that our weaknesses become our strength.

This is true, but how does it happen?

God does 99.99% and, on our part we have to do 0.01%.

The moment we hit a crisis the first casualty we lose is God. Internally we lose our peace and security.

The Gospel message is good news to the poor. Be human and not God!!

This poverty and inadequacy, revolting to our nature, is blessed when it is accepted, because it opens us to God.

When we realize this, we begin to draw wisdom, pearls of treasure from God himself.

Turning back to the Lord via promises of scripture and placing ourselves in his presence enables us to 'return to the Spirit.'

Whenever you feel distanced or separated from the Lord, take a promise of scripture into your heart.

"Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:39

"God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

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# Presentation of the Lord

Traditionally, the Church has set aside Feb. 2 in observance of the Presentation of the Lord, the day in which Joseph and Mary presented Jesus to the priests and elders in the Temple.

For years, this feast marked the end of the Christmas season. In old days, the Presentation was often referred to as “Candlemas” and was celebrated by a candle-lit procession into the church, signifying Christ as the “light of nations.”

Known originally as the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is a relatively ancient celebration. We know that the Church at Jerusalem was observing the feast as early as the first half of the fourth century, and likely earlier.

According to Jewish law, the firstborn male child belonged to God, and the parents had to “**buy him back**” on the 40th day after his birth, by offering a sacrifice of “**a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons**” (*Luke 2:24*) in the temple, thus the “**presentation**” of the child. On that same day, the mother would be ritually purified, thus the “**purification**”. Mary and Joseph kept this law, even though, since Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Christ, she would not have had to go through ritual purification. Jesus was welcomed in the temple by two elderly people, Simeon and the widow Anna. They embody Israel in their patient expectation. They acknowledge the infant Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

The feast of the “**Presentation**” is on 02 February.

**On Our Knees - In His Hands** is a book of reflections and aid to prayer, based on the daily readings of the mass. Its purpose is to help Catholics and other Christians engaged in the normal hustle and bustle of life to discover God's presence and direction in the practical situations they are placed in. This is made possible by a group of writers who themselves are lay people living at the heart of busy day-to-day life.

