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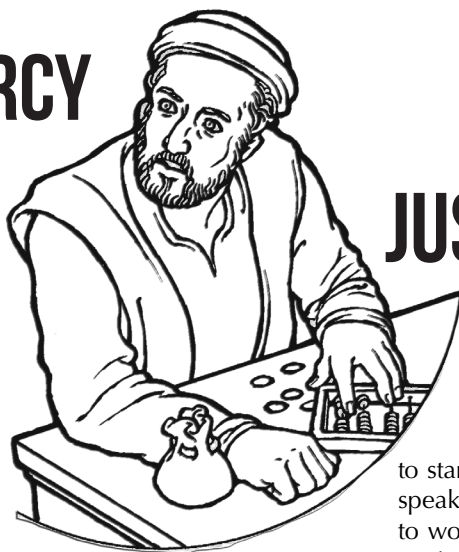


Year 27 No. 12

Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (B) — White

July 5, 2024

The CALL TO MERCY and



JUSTICE

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In the bustling markets of our world, where commerce thrives and transactions buzz incessantly, the words of the prophet Amos in today's First Reading pierce through the noise like a clarion call to conscience. "Hear this, you who trample on the needy and destroy the poor of the land," he declares (cf. Am. 8:4). This passage from Amos reveals a society plagued by greed, where the powerful exploit the vulnerable for their own gain.

Amid this bleak depiction, we encounter the figure of Matthew in today's Gospel—a tax collector, despised by his own people for collaborating with the oppressive Roman authorities. Yet, Jesus extends his hand of invitation to Matthew, saying, "Follow me." This simple call to discipleship transforms Matthew's life, leading him to become an apostle and an evangelist. It's a testament to the boundless mercy and grace of our Lord.

These two readings may seem disconnected at first glance, but they resonate deeply with each other, offering profound insights into the interconnectedness of mercy and justice. Amos condemns the exploitation of the poor and the marginalization of the needy, highlighting the grave injustice rampant in society. Meanwhile,

the encounter between Jesus and Matthew exemplifies the transformative power of mercy, which transcends social barriers and offers redemption to all.

In our world today, the message of the Prophet Amos remains as relevant as ever. We live in a society where inequality is pervasive, where the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. It's easy to become desensitized to the suffering around us, to prioritize our own comfort and success at the expense of others. But the prophet's words serve as a wake-up call, challenging us to examine our own actions and attitudes towards those in need.

At the same time, the story of Matthew reminds us of the limitless compassion of Christ. No matter how far we may have strayed or how deeply we may have fallen, Jesus is always ready to welcome us with open arms. His call to discipleship is a call to leave behind our old ways and embrace a new life centered on love and service.

As followers of Christ, we are called to embody both mercy and justice in our lives. We are called

to stand up for the oppressed, to speak out against injustice, and to work toward building a more equitable society. But we are also called to extend mercy to those who have wronged us, to forgive as we have been forgiven, and to offer hope to the hopeless.

As we dedicate this First Friday of the month to the Merciful Heart of Jesus, let us heed the call of the Prophet Amos to seek justice and uphold the dignity of every human person. Let us examine our own actions and attitudes, asking ourselves where we may be complicit in systems of oppression and inequality. Let us also take inspiration from the example of Matthew, embracing the transformative power of God's mercy in our own lives and extending the same mercy to others. Let us recommit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and the practice of mercy, knowing that in doing so, we fulfill the greatest commandments of our Lord: to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. May we strive to embody both mercy and justice in our lives, following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who calls us to love one another as he has loved us.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

[Ps 33 (32):11, 19]

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

The designs of his Heart are from age to age, to rescue their souls from death and to keep them alive in famine.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—In the Gospel, we hear the call of Matthew, the tax collector. Later, Jesus sits at table with other tax collectors and those regarded as sinners. This offends the Pharisees who object to such a table fellowship. Jesus comes as a physician who heals people of their ailments. But he cannot help those who are self-righteous, who feel they do not need God's mercy.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus proclaims the message that God desires mercy, not sacrifice. May we continue Jesus' mission of calling sinners and proclaiming the Good News of God's forgiveness and salvation to our world.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

P—Have mercy on us, O Lord.

All—For we have sinned against you.

P—Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

All—And grant us your salvation.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Clothe us, Lord God, with the virtues of the Heart of your Son and set us aflame with his love, that, conformed to his image, we may merit a share in eternal redemption.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Am 8:4-6, 9-12) *(Sit)*

Amos, castigates those who trample the poor and the needy and even use the festivals of the Lord for sordid gain. The Lord will certainly punish those who persist in their wickedness.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Amos

HEAR THIS, you who trample upon the needy and destroy the poor of the land! "When will the new moon be over," you ask, "that we may sell our grain, and the Sabbath, that we may display the wheat?" We will diminish the containers for measuring, add to the weights, and fix our scales for cheating! We will buy the lowly man for silver, and the poor man for a pair of sandals; even the refuse of the wheat we will sell!"

On that day, says the LORD GOD, I will make the sun set at midday and cover the earth with darkness in broad daylight. I will turn your feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentations. I will cover the loins of all with sackcloth and make every head bald. I will make them mourn as for an only son, and bring their day to a bitter end.

Yes, days are coming, says the LORD GOD, when I will send famine upon the land: Not a famine of bread, or thirst for water, but for hearing the word of the LORD. Then shall they wander from sea to sea and rove from the north to the east in search of the word of the LORD, but they shall not find it.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 119)

R—One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

1. Blessed are they who observe his decrees,/ who seek him with all their heart. **(R)**

2. With all my heart I seek you;/ let me not stray from your commands. **(R)**

3. My soul is consumed with longing/ for your ordinances at all times. **(R)**

4. The way of truth I have chosen;/ I have set your ordinances before me. **(R)**

5. Behold, I long for your precepts;/ in your justice give me life. **(R)**

6. I gasp with open mouth/ in my yearning for your commands. **(R)**

Alleluia (Mt 11:28) *(Stand)*

All—Alleluia, alleluia. Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest, says the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mt 9:9-13)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

AS JESUS passed by, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" He heard this and said, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, I desire mercy, not sacrifice. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily *(Sit)*

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Jesus called Matthew to follow him. Immediately he left behind his customs post to begin a new life. May we have the courage to follow Jesus and leave behind whatever hinders us from following him. Let us pray:

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—May the leaders and ministers of the Church trust in the Lord's mercy in their challenging and delicate task of guiding the flock of God. May they be a sign of the primacy of mercy in their pastoral ministry. We pray: **(R)**

C—Like the tax collector Matthew, may sinners turn their gaze on Jesus and accept his call to work in the promotion of God's Kingdom. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we not focus on our sinful past but rather on the Lord's invitation to face the present and the future, trusting in his mercy rather than in our capacities. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we become a Church that welcomes sinners and outsiders and shows them merciful and compassionate love. We pray: **(R)**

C—May our departed brothers and sisters come before a merciful Father rather than an exacting Judge. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions *(pause)*. We pray: **(R)**

P—Father, having had mercy on Matthew, Jesus your Son chose him to be an Apostle. May we experience you as God who calls us to the Truth that is Christ and to life-changing discipleship.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

**LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST**



Presentation of the Gifts *(Stand)*

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—O God, Father of mercies, who because of the great love with which you loved us, with untold goodness gave us your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that being perfectly united with him, we may offer you worthy homage.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface *(The Boundless Charity of Christ)*

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For raised up high on the Cross, he gave himself up for us with a wonderful love and poured out Blood and water from his pierced side, the wellspring of the Church's Sacraments, so that, won over to the open heart of the Savior, all might draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation *(Stand)*

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion

(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God...

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(Cf. Jn 19:34)

One of the soldiers opened his side with a lance, and at once there came forth blood and water.

Prayer after Communion

(Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Made partakers in your Sacrament of charity, we humbly implore your mercy, Lord, that we may be conformed to Christ on earth and merit to be coheirs of his glory in heaven.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing.

(Pause)

Be gracious to your people, O Lord, and do not withhold consolation on earth from those you call to strive for heaven.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART *of Jesus*

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions).*

To whom can I turn to if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to you, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted,

protection when persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising and serving you. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled in and by me and all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity for those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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