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Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart (B) — White

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REJECTING Bias, ACCEPTING THE Truth



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In communication studies, bias—i.e. assumptions, preferences, and stereotypes—affects how we perceive and respond to others. We've all been accused of bias at some point. This happens when we reject others' opinions due to our preconceptions or when we stereotype of others, diminishing their authority. But when we call out others' biases, are we really identifying their bias, or is it our own bias projecting onto them?

In today's readings, bias is evident among the people, leading to a rejection of the Lord God's message. In the First Reading, Jeremiah was sent by God to prophesy to Judah about an impending punishment if they did not change their ways. The priests, prophets, and others who heard Jeremiah's prophecy became angry at him because they preferred to believe in falsehoods and lies. They clung to a false sense of

security based on Isaiah's oracles, believing God would always be with them. Their bias blinded them to God's message, and when this bias was challenged, they became angry and even wanted to kill the prophet.

Even Jesus' preaching faced bias, as shown in the Gospel Reading. Despite wanting to teach in his hometown, He encountered skepticism. His neighbors whispered, "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary?" They focused on his background, unable to believe that a carpenter's son could have profound theological insights. Their bias blinded them to Jesus' message and ministry, preventing them from accepting his teachings and healings, even though God was right in front of them.

These episodes in the ministries of Jeremiah and Jesus underscore the reality that the effectiveness of God's message hinges on the reception of the

audience, regardless of the method employed—be it through blunt truths, easy language, or relatable experiences. Bias skews our perception, causing us to spurn uncomfortable truths. Like Jeremiah's contemporaries and Jesus' community, we may disregard teachings that challenge our preconceived notions, obstructing our ability to discern God's presence and voice.

Nevertheless, in the face of bias and rejection, it is important to maintain unwavering faith and convictions. Both Jeremiah and Jesus confronted opposition and skepticism, yet they remained steadfast in their mission. Let us learn from their examples which urge us to stand resolute in truth, even in the face of adversity or dissent.

May we learn from the Psalmist when faced with insults and shame for the sake of our faith. Just as he became an outcast among his own kin due to his zeal for God's house, let us also embrace unwavering dedication, even when others blaspheme God and ridicule 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—Familiarity breeds contempt. The townmates of Jesus saw him as very ordinary. They saw Jesus growing as an ordinary child to his ordinary parents. Joseph worked as a carpenter while Mary managed their household. In the Eucharistic celebration, God gives himself to us in the form of ordinary bread. It is pulsating with life, filled with the blood of Jesus Christ.

Penitential Act

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

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

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

All—Amen.

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 (Jer 26:1-9) *(Sit)*

Because Jeremiah repeats the Lord's severe warning to the people of Judah, the priests and the other prophets accuse him of being a false prophet. But Jeremiah remains constant to the word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

IN THE BEGINNING of the reign of Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, king of Judah, this message came from the LORD: Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the house of the Lord and speak to the people of all the cities of Judah who come to worship in the house of the LORD; whatever I command you, tell them, and omit nothing. Perhaps they will listen and turn back, each from his evil way, so that I may repent of the evil I have planned to inflict upon them for their evil deeds. Say to them: Thus says the LORD: If you disobey me, not living according to the law I placed before you and not listening to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I send you constantly though you do not obey them, I will treat this house like Shiloh, and make this the city to which all the nations of the earth shall refer when cursing one another.

Now the priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speak these words in the house of the LORD. When Jeremiah finished speaking all that the LORD bade him speak to all the people, the priests and prophets laid hold of him, crying, "You must be put to death! Why prophesy in the name of the LORD: 'This house shall be like Shiloh,' and 'This city shall be desolate and deserted?'" And all the people gathered about Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 69)

R—Lord, in your great love, answer me.

1. Those outnumber the hairs of my head/ who hate me without cause./ Too many for my strength/ are they who wrongfully are my enemies./ Must I restore what I did not steal?(**R**)

2. Since for your sake I bear insult,/ and shame covers my face,/ I have become an outcast to my brothers,/ a stranger to my mother's sons,/ because zeal for your house consumes me/ and the insults of those who blaspheme you fall upon me. (**R**)

3. But I pray to you, O LORD,/ for the time of your favor, O God!/ In your great kindness answer me/ with your constant help. (**R**)

Alleluia (1 Pt 1:25) *(Stand)*

All—Alleluia, alleluia. The word of the Lord remains forever; this is the word that has been proclaimed to you. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mt 13:54-58)

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

JESUS came to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house." And he did not work many mighty deeds

there because of their lack of faith.

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—The people of Nazareth, although astonished by Jesus' teaching, took offense at him because of his humble background and his ordinary trade. Let us learn from the example of Jesus who humbled himself to share our humanity in order to raise it up. For every petition, we say:

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—May Church leaders forsake the trappings of titles and high office to remain humble, and be great only in the eyes of God. We pray. (**R**)

C—May today's prophets persevere in renouncing injustice, corruption, and worldliness wherever these may be found. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we not judge anyone on account of the color of one's skin, humble appearance, or disabilities. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we listen to today's prophets and teachers who remind people of God's will in and out of season. We pray: (**R**)

C—May we honor ordinary people who help us in our daily needs, rather than money, sports, fame, and politics. We pray: (**R**)

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

P—Lord God, Jesus your Son chose to be born in an ordinary family and in a small village to teach us to value simple things and humble people. Teach us to look at people's heart rather than their outside appearance.

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 II (*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 for the blessing.

(*Pause*)

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

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 petition/s).*

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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