

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home
Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 12, 2021

“The Lord GOD is my help...”
– Isaiah 50:7

“...I will demonstrate my faith
to you from my works.”
– James 2:18

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“Whoever wishes to come after me
must deny themselves,
take up their cross
and follow me.”
– Mark 8:34

The phrase – “taking up one’s cross” – is often heard in everyday conversation to refer to putting up with the quirks of a friend or a spouse. At other times, the “cross to bear” is what people call the suffering endured from an abusive situation or a dire illness. All of these are not what Jesus means.

“He is speaking to his disciples about the suffering that is likely to befall a person for being his follower,” writes New Testament scholar Barbara E. Reid, O.P., president of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. “Bearing the Cross” is how historian David J. Garrow termed the non-violent Civil Rights Struggle. “The Cost of Discipleship” is what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called taking up the cross.

James Cone, the pioneer of Black Theology, wrote in the preface of his *God of the Oppressed*, “Faith is born out of suffering, and suffering is faith’s most powerful contradiction. This is the Christian dilemma. The only meaningful Christian response is to resist unjust suffering and to accept the painful consequence of that resistance.”

Hand in hand with taking up the cross of discipleship is denial of self, which is a spirituality by which one chooses each day to place the common good and Christ at the center, not one’s own desires. “It is a free choice to live a life of ever-deepening self-surrender to love,” notes Dr. Reid. “The

cross of which Jesus speaks is not a suffering imposed on persons who are downtrodden and marginalized,” Dr. Reid notes in *Abiding Word*.

Our second reading today from the Letter of James gives concrete examples of that “costly” love. If one encounters a sister or brother without adequate clothing or food or shelter, “to deny oneself and take up the cross” demands letting go of time and resources in self-surrender to the neediest ones. Simply talking about faith but not making it visible in concrete deeds of self-surrender is not authentic discipleship,” Dr. Reid writes.

The book of the Prophet Isaiah is a many splendored work.

- Isaiah (Chapters 1-39) is the vision of the prophet, some call Proto-Isaiah, the son of Amoz who lived in Jerusalem in the late 8th century BCE during the reign of four Judean kings and a period of Assyrian aggression.
- Scholars identify chapters 40-55 as the work of an anonymous prophet (or prophetic school) known simply as Deutero-Isaiah, or Second Isaiah, written at the close of the Babylonian exile through the rescue of Israel by King Cyrus of Persia.
- Chapters 56-66 are identified as the work of another later group of anonymous prophets who wrote in the early days of the restoration by Persia, and who are called Trito-Isaiah or Third Isaiah.

Our passage today is taken from the third of the four Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah: 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-7; and 52:13-53:12 (this fourth one is of the Suffering Servant and is read in every Good Friday liturgy). Despite rejection and abusive treatment, he voices God’s word with confidence.

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Prelude: Sing along with “The Storm Is Passing Over” Detroit Mass Choir: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3jgPsGQSdQ>

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you place in us a desire to know you more deeply,

Lord, have mercy

Christ Jesus, you are the perfect example of faith and good works:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you lead us into the ever-unfolding mystery of God's love:

Lord, have mercy.

“Fix Me Jesus” by the Soul Now Sings.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOyeZXGN5EY>

Opening Prayer

Make us one, O God,

in acknowledging Jesus the Christ.

As we proclaim him by our words,

let us follow him in our works;

give us strength to take up the cross

and courage to lose our lives for his sake.

We ask this 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. **LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN.**

First, listen to this choral echo of our psalm today: “I Love the Lord” from
Walter Hawkins’ “Love Alive” album (1975):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkWWB-i1bLI>

Then move on to this Sunday's readings:

Readings for Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time September 12, 2021

1st Reading – Isaiah 50:5-9A

⁵The Lord GOD opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled,
have not turned back.

⁶I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my
beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.

⁷The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face
like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

⁸ He is near who upholds my right; if anyone wishes to oppose me, let us appear together. Who disputes my right? Let that man confront me.

^{9A} See, the Lord GOD is my help; who will prove me wrong?

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm –116:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9

R. I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.

¹ I love the LORD because he has heard my voice in supplication,
² because he has inclined his ear to me the day I called.

R. I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.

³ The cords of death encompassed me; the snares of the netherworld seized upon me;

⁴ I fell into distress and sorrow, and I called upon the name of the LORD,
“O LORD, save my life!”

R. I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.

⁵ Gracious is the LORD and just; yes, our God is merciful.

⁶ The LORD keeps the little ones; I was brought low, and he saved me.

R. I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.

⁸ For he has freed my soul from death,
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

⁹ I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

R. I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.

2nd Reading – James 2:14-18

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

¹⁵ If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day,

¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,”

¹⁷but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸ Indeed someone might say, “You have faith and I have works.” Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Gospel – Mark 8:27-35

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples set out for the villages of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

²⁸ They said in reply, “John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets.”

²⁹ And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter said to him in reply, “You are the Christ.”

³⁰ Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹ He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days.

³² He spoke this openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.”

³⁴ He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

³⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it.”

The Gospel of the Lord.....Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection Prompts:

- What is the cost for you as you choose to follow Jesus more closely?
- How does “denial of self” take form in your life?
- We’re called to be “other-directed”. What “other” are you drawn to serve?

Meditation Prompts:

- In today’s Gospel, Jesus asks “who do you say that I am?” What’s your answer?
- Classic preachers in the Black Church tradition had dozens of names for God and Jesus: Redeemer, Liberator, Wisdom, Morning Star, Evening Star, Doctor, Lawyer, Heart Fixer, Rose of Sharon, Lilly of the Valley, Friend, to name a few. What name works for you? Sit quietly with that name and call it out internally. Ask for

Then move into this week’s prayers of the faithful.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS –September 12, 2021 24th Sunday of the Church Year

Presider: My friends, we who want to be followers of Christ rely on prayer to strengthen us. And so we pray now for one another and for the whole world.

Worship Leader

1. For the courage, as baptized Christians, to follow where Jesus leads us. We pray: **Guide us, O God.** (Respond: **Guide us, O God.**)
2. For our Jewish sisters and brothers as they celebrate the High Holy Days, that these feasts bring abundant blessings and be the source of great joy, spiritual refreshment and renewed hope. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
3. For those willing to risk danger for others: for essential workers, organ donors, first responders, missionaries, and the armed forces. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
4. For all those on the Gulf and East Coasts who are struggling to recover from Hurricane Ida and its aftermath. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
5. For those who live in danger, especially for people in war-torn areas, in prisons and refugee camps. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**

6. For hope and healing to wrap the hearts of those who continue to be afflicted physically, emotionally and spiritually by the attacks of 9/11 and the 20-year war in Afghanistan. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
7. For the intentions of Cheryl Medlock-Anderson on her birthday. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
8. For the success of our Moving Forward in Faith campaign to build a new spiritual home. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
9. For an end to the Death Penalty and Human Trafficking, especially in Georgia and for the success of the Innocence Project to restore lives to the unjustly accused. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
10. For our Stephen Ministry, its leaders, and all Care Team members and receivers here at Lourdes. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
11. For all who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those listed in our bulletin and prayer book, and for all those living with HIV and AIDS, that they know God's mercy and our care. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
12. For all the dead, that they see God face to face, especially Evelyn Burrows, Raymond Burrows and Robert Burrows, for whom this Mass is Being celebrated. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**
13. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Guide us, O God.**

Presider: Loving God, you uphold us in times of turmoil and danger. Like your people of old, we call upon your name, and we ask for the courage to follow wherever Jesus leads us. We pray in the name of your son Jesus, the Chosen One. LET THE CHURCH SAY.....AMEN!

Sing or recite "The Lord's Prayer."

Then, behold this song – "Come Unto Me" – Hezekiah Walker "Live in New York" By Any Means Necessary tour album:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0c8bdu2cyl>

Closing Prayer

O God,
Creator and Ruler of all that is,
look kindly upon the prayers of your servants: grant that we may serve you
with undivided hearts and so experience the power of your mercy.

We ask this 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. **LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN.**

Closing Song

“Take Up Your Cross” from The Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77RHISYAD_E