

SUNDAY *Plus*

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time **Divine Office Week II** Year A

Hearts that listened



Dear brothers and sisters, how we look at others is what counts, because it shows what is in our hearts. We can look and walk by, or we can look and be moved with compassion.

Pope Leo XIV

Being faithful

Being faithful is not
never losing one's way,
never fighting,
never falling.

It is always getting up and going on again.
It is wanting to follow to the end the route
that you have decided on and mapped out together.

It is trusting each other,
beyond the darkness and shadows.

It is supporting one another,
beyond the falls and bruises.

It is having faith in the total power of God's love,
beyond human love itself.

Michel Quoist, *The Breath of Love*

Compassionate Jesus, you feed those who are hungry and heal those who are broken. There are so many people who are hungry for love and broken by suffering. Comfort and strengthen them.  Amen.

The great mystery of the Incarnation, which meant that God became man that humanity might become God, was the joy that made us want to kiss the earth in worship, because his feet once trod that same earth... he was born in a stable, that he did not come to be a temporal king as he worked with his hands, spent the first years of his life in exile, and the rest of his early manhood in a crude carpenter shop in Nazareth... He trod the roads in his public life, and the first men he called were fishermen, small owners of boats and nets. He was familiar with the migrant worker and the proletariat, and some of his parables dealt with them. He spoke of the living wage, not equal pay for equal work, in the parable of those who came at the

first and the eleventh hour.

He died between two thieves because he would not be made an earthly king. He lived in an occupied country for thirty years without starting an underground movement or trying to get out from under a foreign power... And he directed his sublime words to the poorest of the poor, to the people who thronged the towns and followed after John the Baptist, who hung around, sick and poverty-stricken at the doors of rich men...

We did not feel that Christ meant we should remain silent in the face of injustice and accept it even though he said, "The poor you shall always have with you."

Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*

Feast of the week Wednesday 5 August

Our Lady of Africa

Our Lady of Africa is a cherished title of the Blessed Virgin Mary, venerated especially in the Basilica of Notre-Dame d'Afrique in Algiers. Represented as a Black Madonna, she embodies maternal compassion and solidarity with the peoples of Africa. The devotion began in the mid-nineteenth century, when missionaries sought Mary's intercession for peace, healing and unity across the continent. Her statue, crowned in 1876, bears the inscription, "Our Lady of Africa, pray for us and for the Muslims" – a powerful call to interreligious harmony. She is Patroness of Africa, a symbol of hope amid suffering, and a spiritual refuge for all who seek mercy. Her feast invites us to entrust our prayers to her maternal care, especially for justice, reconciliation, and the flourishing of faith communities. May Our Lady of Africa continue to guide the Church in its mission of love and peace.

READINGS

Today:
Isaiah 55:1-3
Romans 8:35, 37-39
Matthew 14:13-21

Monday:
Jeremiah 28:1-17
Matthew 14:22-36

Tuesday:
Jeremiah 30:1-2.
12-15, 18-22
Matthew 15:1-2, 10-14

Wednesday:
Jeremiah 31:1-7
Matthew 15:21-28

Thursday:
Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14
2 Peter 1:16-19
Luke 9:28-36

Friday:
Nahum 2:1, 3; 3:1-3, 6-7
Matthew 16:24-28

Saturday:
Habakkuk 1:12 – 2:4
Matthew 17:14-20

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 55:1-3
Romans 8:35, 37-39
Matthew 14:13-21