

IJ MATTERS



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SHRINE HAPPENINGS IN DECEMBER 2025

Christmas at the Shrine is incomplete without our regular Christmas party for special groups. For the last three years, we have been having a Christmas party for especially abled children from a nearby school. This year there were 150 children, not counting their teachers and minders. We began the programme at 11.30 am. We welcomed them with a soft drink and some snacks. It is usual for the host to entertain the guests. However, in the case of our special guests, it was they who entertained us with their music, skits and other skills. Bishop Emeritus Lourdes Daniel was present from the beginning of the programme until the end and enjoyed every moment. We ended with lunch. Each child was given a take-away gift and they went back with broader smiles than the ones they had come with it. The enthusiasm, childlikeness and innocence of the children was indeed a sight to behold.





सेंट झेवियरच्या प्रांगणात दिव्यांग बालकांचा ख्रिसमस साजरा

नाशिक (भ्रमर प्रतिनिधी)

:- दिव्यांग बालकांनाही या मोठ्या सणाचा आनंद घेता यावा, या हेतूने सेंट झेवियर व्यवस्थापनाने नाशिकरोड येथील मतिमंद दिव्यांग बालकांना व त्यांना शिकविणाऱ्या विशेष शिक्षकांना आमंत्रित करून त्यांच्यासमवेत ख्रिसमस साजरा केला.

यावेळी उपस्थित मान्यवरांनी मानसिकदृष्ट्या अपंग मुलांना धीराने शिकविणाऱ्या सर्व शिक्षकांना शुभेच्छा दिल्या, तसेच शाळेची प्रगती व दिव्यांग सेवा पाहून पाहुणे सुखावले. संस्था करीत असलेले कार्य म्हणजे जणू प्रभूसेवा आहे, असे प्रसंशोद्गार काढले.

याप्रसंगी बिशप लुक्स डॅनियल,



फादर ऐरोल फर्नांडिस, फादर आगस्तीन डिमेलो, मुंबईहून आलेले काही पाहुणे व नाशिकच्या प्रसिद्ध सामाजिक कार्यकर्त्या रितिका कलानी आदी मान्यवर

उपस्थित होते.

मुलांनी ख्रिस्त जन्मदिनाचे गाणे, नाचगाणी व विविध गुणदर्शन सादर केले. उपस्थित यजमान मान्यवरांनी स्वतःला विसरत

मुलांमध्ये सहभागी होऊन नाचण्याचा आनंद लुटला. त्यांनी मुलांना केक, चॉकलेट्स, फ्रुटी, बिस्किट्स व खेळणी वितरित करीत मुलांचा आनंद द्विगुणित केला. यावेळी मुलांच्या मुखावरील आनंद पाहून सर्व उपस्थित खुश झाले, तसेच कार्यशाळेतील सुषमा महाजन या मुलीने ३२ व्या वर्षात पदार्पण केल्याने तिचा वाढदिवस साजरा करण्यात आला.

नाशिकरोड येथील ऑल इंडिया डिसेबलड रिहॉबिलिएशन एज्यु. इन्स्टिट्यूटच्या सचिव डॉ. सुहासिनी घोडके यांनी सेंट झेवियर व्यवस्थापनाचे आभार मानले, तसेच सर्वाना नाताळ सणाच्या शुभेच्छा दिल्या.



The newspapers and TV News Channels reported this event as they do many of the events that we conduct at the Shrine. (Kindly click on the link for one of the ZTV reports https://youtu.be/Face4f0Z_C8?si=MOADndXxHZ-lqoDn)

सेन्ट झेवियर व्यवस्थापनाने दिव्यांग बालकांना केले आमंत्रित

महाराष्ट्र जीत

कॅम्प देवळाली प्रतिनिधी/गोकुळ लोखंडे : डिसेंबर 25 रोजी "नाताळ सण". जगभरात हा सण साजरा करण्याची धामधूम सुरू झालेली आहे. दिव्यांग बालकांनाही या मोठ्या सणाचा आनंद घेता यावा याच उदात्त जाणीवितून आज रोजी सेन्ट झेवियर व्यवस्थापनाने नाशिक रोड येथील मतीमंद दिव्यांग बालकांना त्यांना शिकविणाऱ्या विशेष शिक्षकांना आपल्या सेंट झेवियर प्रांगणात निमंत्रित केले होते.

याप्रसंगी, बिशप लुइस डॅनियल, फादर ऐरोल फर्नांडिस, फादर आगस्तीन डिमेलो, मुंबईहून आलेले काही पाहुणे व नाशिकच्या प्रसिद्ध सामाजिक कार्यकर्त्या सौ. रितिका कलानी आदी मान्यवर उपस्थित होते.

त्यांनी मानसिकदृष्ट्या अपंग मुलांना धीराने शिकवणाऱ्या सर्व शिक्षकांना शुभेच्छा दिल्या. तसेच, शाळेची



प्रगती व दिव्यांग सेवा बघून पाहुणे सुखावले. "संस्था करित असलेले कार्य म्हणजे जणू प्रभुसेवा आहे" असे प्रसंशोद्गार काढले. मुलांनी ख्रिस्त जन्मदिनाचे गाणे, नाचगाणी व विविध गुणदर्शन सादर केले. उपस्थित यजमान मान्यवरांनी स्वतःला विसरत मुलांमध्ये सहभागी होवून नाचण्याचा आनंद लुटला. त्यांनी मुलांना केक, चॉकलेट्स, फ्रुटी, बिस्किट्स आणि खेळणी वितरीत करित मुलांचा आनंद द्विगुणित केला. यावेळी मुलांच्या मुखावरील आनंद पाहून सर्व उपस्थित खुश झाले.

तसेच कार्यशाळेतील सुषमा महाजन या मुलीने 32 व्या वर्षीत पदार्पण केल्याने तिचा वाढदिवस साजरा करण्यात आला

सेन्ट झेवियर व्यवस्थापनाने या दिव्यांग बालकांना व शिक्षकांना खास आमंत्रित केले याबद्दल ऑल इंडिया डिसेबल्ड रिहॅ. एज्यु. इन्स्टिट्यूट नाशिक रोड. संस्थेच्या सचिव डॉ. सौ. सुहासिनी घोडके यांनी आभार व्यक्त केले. नाताळच्या शुभेच्छा देत व प्रीति भोजनाचा सर्वांनी आस्वाद घेतला. राष्ट्रगीताने कार्यक्रमाची सांगता झाली.

Bishop Lourdes was the main celebrant at our Christmas Mass at 8 pm on December 24, 2026. After the Mass, he blessed the crib prepared with much creativity and love by Sanju Makasare who had begun working on it from the end of November 2025. The theme this year was “Hope enters silently into our hopeless world”. The reason for the choice of this theme was the present reality of our world and nation. We are living in a war torn-world and in a nation in which many so-called leaders are trying to divide people on the basis of religion, caste, language, ethnicity and state. God in the form of a child comes into our world without fanfare. He brings hope not only to a select few, but to everyone who is willing to open their hearts and realise that peace, joy, love and hope are what will sustain us.





Fr Errol was at the Generalate of the Ursuline Franciscan Sisters in Mangalore on December 29 and 30 addressing the General and her team and 160 Provincials, Superiors and Principals from three Continents (Asia, Africa and Europe) on the theme “Administration and Animation of Communities in keeping with the love command”.





On the last day of the year, we had a Thanksgiving service conducted by the laity. It was divided into three parts. In the first part we offered gratitude to God for all God's blessing, in the second part we did an introspection into what we learned in the past year and in the final part, we prayed for the grace to enter the New Year with Hope.

We began the New Year 2026 with Hope.

The first day of the New Year brings with it many thoughts, feelings and emotions. The fact that it is January and named after the Roman god Janus with two faces already indicates that it brings with it an invitation to look back and to look ahead. Thus, it is a day for retrospection and introspection and also a day for planning and goal setting. The retrospection must be with a view to help the planning and goal setting and not an exercise in condemnation of oneself or feeling regret.

It is fitting then that the first reading in the liturgy for the first day of the year, should speak of a blessing. The blessing is what is commonly called a Priestly blessing and pronounced on all the people of Israel. There are three pairs of verbs used in the blessing resulting in a threefold blessing. The first emphasizes concrete gifts—blessing and protection. The second stresses the hope that God will be well disposed toward the person and thus temper judgement with mercy and grace. The third asserts that God will pay attention and heed to his people thus providing fullness of life. The central message of the blessing is Peace, which must be translated as wholeness or completeness. The peace of God embraces every aspect of an individual's life.

The idea of blessing is taken up in the Second reading of today. Paul in writing to the Galatians speaks of the blessing that God conferred not just on Israel but on the whole world when he sent his Son. The sending of the Son was for one reason alone, namely to reconcile the world to himself and through that to make each of us sons and daughters of God. The Son that God sent in to the world was not an angel but born of a woman, Mary who dared to say that unconditional yes to God's invitation to be the mother of his Son.

This son whom God sent is human in every single aspect of the word and is therefore circumcised and given a name. The name that the child bears signifies his function. He is named Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. This child will be king, but a new kind of king. He will inaugurate a new world order, a world not like that of earthly kings but under the direction of God's design for the redemption of all peoples. In this world, God's Word is heard by all who remain open to that Word. In this world, there is hope for the oppressed, and those who heard what God is doing are filled with joy. God has not forgotten us or abandoned us to the brokenness we have created. God continues to be concerned and to make new and whole. The New Year thus, is for us as Christians, an announcement of hope. It is a call to continue to believe that God continues to be in control of all the events that will take place and that we only have to do what is required of us and leave the rest to God.

Thus the triple celebration of Mary Mother of God, the giving of the name of Jesus and New Year's Day all close in on one theme: Hope. The past is over and forgotten; it is forgiven and absolved; it is pardoned and made new. The challenge is for us to respond like Mary did to what God is doing in us and in our world. If we like Mary are open and receptive to the working of God in our lives, if we like her are willing to let God do in us, if we like her are willing to say that unconditional and categorical Yes, then the saviour Jesus will continue to be made present all through the year.

The priestly blessing of peace pronounced on the people in the first reading of today becomes then a blessing pronounced on each of us as we begin the New Year. We must keep in mind throughout the year that like the Galatians we are no longer slaves but sons and daughters of God. This means living in a fearless and bold manner. It means being able to face all the vicissitudes and challenges of life with equanimity and confident in the knowledge that we are loved unconditionally by God and that God will be with us every step of the way in the New Year.



From January 9-11, the Jesuit Community at the Shrine played host to the participants of the मराठी ख्रिश्चन साहित्य संस्थेचे २७ वे संमेलन. It was a gathering of renowned poets, writers, novelists and newspaper reporters. A total of 200 guests from different parts of the country

were accommodated at the Pilgrim and Retreat House. Fr Errol welcomed the guests at the inaugural session and exhorted to be fearless even in the midst of the challenges that we are facing and will continue to face. Often in the scriptures, the Lord exhorts to be fearless because all things are under his control. We must do what we must do and then leave him to do the rest.



We begin the Novenas in preparation for the feast of the Infant Jesus on February 5, 2026 and conclude on January 13, 2026. The feast of the Infant Jesus will be celebrated on Saturday, February 14, 2026 and on Sunday, February 15, 2026. Please see below the Liturgy for the nine days of the Novena and the feast days. This is to enable you to participate more fully in the Eucharist and Novenas.

FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS, NASHIK - 2026

THEME: "YOU SOW, GOD WILL MAKE IT GROW"
Gal 6:7-10; Ps 121; 2 Cor 4:7-11; Mk 4:26-30



DAY ONE - Feb 5, 2026

Giving up, is not an option for a disciple of Jesus.

Gen 18:20-33; Ps 27;
Lk 18:1-8

DAY TWO - Feb 6, 2026

Do what you can with what you have NOW.

James 4:13-17; Ps 23;
Mt 25:14-30

DAY THREE - Feb 7, 2026

God's love is so wonderful. O wonderful love.

Isa 43:1-7; Ps 136;
Lk 15:11-24

DAY FOUR - Feb 8, 2026

God calls sinners to repentance.

Isa 63:7-9; Rom 8:32-39;
Ps 36; Lk 15:1-7

DAY FIVE - Feb 9, 2026

Act wisely and decisively in the present.

Rom 12:1-5; Ps 8;
Lk 16:1-8

DAY SIX - Feb 10, 2026

Humility is a funny thing. If you think you've got it, you've lost it.

Phil 2:3-8; Ps 25; Lk 18:9-14

DAY SEVEN - Feb 11, 2026

God forgives every time and all the time.

1 Tim 1:15-17; Ps 103;
Mt 18:23-34

DAY EIGHT - Feb 12, 2026

We came with nothing, we will leave with nothing.

Rom 8:5-11; Ps 90;
Lk 12:15-20

DAY NINE - Feb 13, 2026

Unity even in Diversity.

1 Cor 12:12,20-27;
Lk 10:29-37

FEAST DAY
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2026

YOU SOW, GOD WILL MAKE IT GROW

GAL 6:7-10; PS 121; 2 COR 4:7-11; MK 4:26-30

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026

YOU SOW, GOD WILL MAKE IT GROW

GAL 6:7-10; PS 121; 2 COR 4:7-11; MK 4:26-30

www.infantjesusnashik.org

We wish each of you and your families a Blessed and grace filled New Year 2026. May the Infant Jesus bless you all and may Joseph and Mary always intercede.

Fr. Errol Fernandes SJ

January 2026

TIME

We measure time in human style
And count the days that passed
But for our God who's always there
Today forever lasts
In his presence we can live
Full lives with joy and zest
And make the changes when we need
In course of doing our best



So days and nights may follow suite
And calendars have their say
But with our God beyond all time
We always live today

EPIPHANY

Who were those kings
who came to see
The Christ Child long ago
They signify the human quest
To search for truth to know
And we will find the truth of Christ
When we seek those in need
And reach out with our gifts of love
Not caring caste or creed



And all the world will find Christ's truth
When we can join as one
And put aside what will divide
Embracing everyone

REPUBLIC DAY

If India is to prosper
And rise from hate and fear
We all must grow in vision
Of unity so dear
Not unity from cloning
Our minds and hearts to fuse
But bringing to our nation's cause
Our diverse skills to use

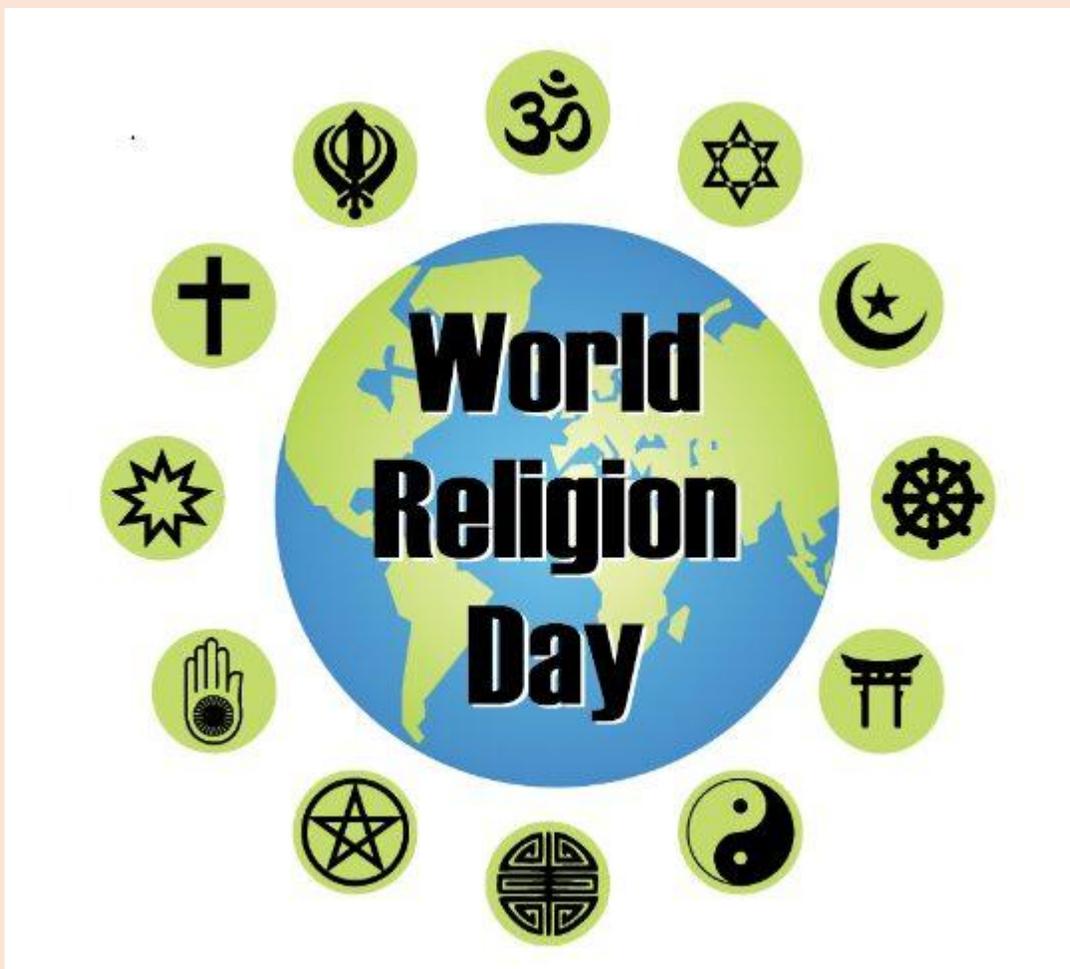


Our Republic then will flourish
With all its peoples sharing
Their rainbows of achievement
The nations progress raring

WORLD RELIGION DAY

What makes a true religion
Not just a creed sublime
Or stories of the saintly
Or it's holding long in time

But true religion rises
Where human care is shown
When wars give
way to fellowship
And peace and joy are known



Together forge religion
From diverse truths we hold
That human life be bettered
A new age to unfold

A New Year, A New Vision: Choosing Gratitude and Hope

A New Year always arrives with a certain freshness. Even before anything around us actually changes, something within us begins to shift. We greet one another with enthusiasm, exchange smiles and warm wishes, and speak words like *hope*, *peace*, and *joy*. It is worth pausing for a moment to ask ourselves: **where does this joy come from?**

Often, it does not come from our external circumstances. The calendar has changed, but life remains much the same. And yet, many of us feel lighter, more open. This reminds us of an important truth: **joy is not created by events; it already exists within us.** External celebrations—songs, sweets, greetings—can awaken this inner joy, but they are not its source. If we depend only on these, the feeling quickly fades. The deeper invitation of the New Year is to move beyond momentary excitement toward a lasting sense of meaning and purpose.

Jesus expresses this simply and powerfully:

“I came that you may have life, and have it in abundance” (John 10:10).

An abundant life does not mean a life without problems, but a life lived with depth, gratitude, and hope.

From Fear to Trust, From Anxiety to Hope

Many of us enter the New Year with mixed emotions. Alongside gratitude for what has gone well, there is also fear—fear of uncertainty, failure, loss, or change. Fear is often the greatest obstacle to growth. In fact, the opposite of love is not hatred, but fear. Fear narrows our vision, while love expands it.

Every new beginning calls for a leap of faith. It is never easy. There is always the risk of falling, of things not working out as planned. Yet without taking that step, there can be no movement forward. **Hope does not mean knowing exactly what lies ahead; it means trusting that we are not alone on the journey.**

St. Paul reminds us:

“Hope does not disappoint” (Romans 5:5).

Hope gives us the courage to begin again, even when the road ahead is unclear.

Beginning with Gratitude

One of the healthiest and most life-giving ways to enter the New Year is with gratitude. Gratitude changes the way we see life. When we take time to count our blessings, we begin to recognise that even difficult moments have shaped us, taught us, and helped us grow.

Gratitude does not deny pain or struggle; rather, it places them within a larger picture of meaning, trust, and growth. It helps us move from merely surviving to truly living.

Learning from Mary: A Reflective Heart

Mary offers us a beautiful New Year attitude. She reflects, remembers, and recognises God’s work in her life:

“The Almighty has done great things for me.”

Her humility is not self-denial, but awareness—an awareness that life itself is a gift. She pondered events in her heart, allowing them to mature into wisdom. As we begin this year, we too are invited to pause and reflect: *What has this past year taught me? Where have I grown? What has life revealed to me about myself and about God?*

In Ignatian spirituality, especially in the *Contemplation to Attain Love*, we are reminded that God is constantly working for us—in people, situations, successes, and even setbacks. When we become aware of this, gratitude naturally flows into generosity.

Life constantly presents us with choices—not so much in what happens to us, but in **how we respond**. Do we choose to be like the honeybee, drawing sweetness even from small and ordinary moments, or like the dung beetle, focusing only on what is negative?

Recovering Awe and Wonder

Somewhere along the way, many of us lose our sense of awe and wonder. Children look at the world with curiosity and delight, while adults often rush through life distracted, frequently absorbed by screens and schedules. The New Year gently invites us to slow down—to observe, to listen, and to appreciate the beauty around us: in nature, in people, and in the small moments of grace that fill our days.

Gratitude, in the end, is a choice. As the saying goes, two people looked out through prison bars—one saw mud, the other saw stars. The difference lay not in what they saw, but in how they chose to see.

A Hopeful Step Forward

God never stops working for our good. We may face the consequences of our choices, but never the absence of God's care or presence. As we step into this New Year, may we do so with gratitude for the past, attentiveness to the present, and hope for the future.

A New Year is not about changing everything. It is about learning to see everything with **new eyes**. May this year gift us that vision.

Fr Wesley DCosta SJ

मराठी ख्रिस्ती साहित्य संमेलन !! वेन्सी डिमेलो.

(२७ वे मराठी ख्रिस्ती साहित्य संमेलन महाराष्ट्राचे सुप्रसिद्ध वास्तववादी जागृत कवी सायमन मार्टिन ह्यांच्या अध्यक्षतेखाली नाशिक येथे ९ ते ११ जानेवारी २०२६ रोजी भरत आहे.*त्या निमित्ताने...)

साहित्याला जात, धर्म, संप्रदाय आदि काही नसतो. कुठल्याही भाषेतील साहित्य हे धर्मनिरपेक्षच असते. आणि ते तसेच असावे. वाङ्मयाला धर्म जातीचे लेबल नसावे. असे अभिजात साहित्य हे नेहमीच गौरविले जाते. जो समानता, बंधुतेचा धर्म संविधानाने आपल्याला दिलेला आहे. तो आपल्या देशाचा आत्मा आहे. जिथे विविध रंगी प्रमाण भाषेच्या साहित्याची निर्मिती होते. आणि स्वागतही होते. तर मग अखिल भारतीय मराठी साहित्य संमेलन असताना वेगवेगळ्या धर्म, जाती साहित्य संमेलनाची गरजच काय? आणि ती का भासू लागली? असा प्रश्न येथे मराठी ख्रिस्ती साहित्य संमेलनाच्या निमित्ताने उभा राहतो.....

स्वातंत्र्य प्राप्तीनंतर भाषावार प्रांताची

निर्मिती झाली. शालेय प्रमाण भाषाही ठरली. त्यात शुद्ध अशुद्ध लेखन उच्चार व्याकरण असे प्रश्न निर्माण झाले. जो जसा बोलतो आणि लिहितो. त्यातून आपल्या व्यथा मांडतो अशी भाषा साहित्य सारस्वतात अशुद्ध कशी? हा प्रश्न उपस्थित झाला. आणि त्यातून सर्वप्रथम *बहुजन दलित साहित्य संमेलनाचा जन्म झाला. शासनाला ही भाषा स्वीकारावी लागली. शालेय तसेच महाविद्यालयीन अभ्यासक्रमात तसा भाषेचा समावेशही करावा लागला.

त्यातून मग अल्पसंख्यांक मुस्लिम, ख्रिश्चन मराठी भाषिकांनी उचल खाल्ली प्रेरणा घेतली. आणि प्रमाण मराठी भाषा बोलू, लिहू, प्रसिद्ध करू शकणाऱ्यांनीही आपल्या अभिमान अस्मितेसाठी आपल्या धर्म जाती नावाने आपल्या बोली भाषेसाठी वेगळी चूल मांडली. कारण सारस्वत मराठीचा तुरा मिरवणाऱ्यातील वर्चस्वामुळे धर्म जातीय अल्पसंख्यांकांना तेथे जागा नव्हती.

आता ही जागा प्राप्त झाल्यावरही आणि त्यांना सामावून घेऊनही, त्यांचे साहित्य शासनाने शालेय अभ्यासक्रमात समाविष्ट करूनही ते अजूनही वेगळी चूल का मांडत असावे बरे? त्यात भाषेपेक्षा आपल्या धर्म अस्मितेचा, प्रचाराचा वा प्रसाराचा भाग अधिक असावा का बरे? असा संशय दुणावल्याची शक्यता नाकारता येत नाही.

धर्म संस्थापकांचे प्रेम, दया, क्षमा, शांती स्वातंत्र्य, समता, बंधुता एकता न्याय हे मूळ साहित्य आणि तद्रंतर त्यांच्या भक्त संप्रदायाने माझाच धर्म श्रेष्ठ ह्यासाठी निर्माण केलेले साहित्य ह्यात खूप मोठा विरोधाभास आहे. तर मग ही धर्माच्या नि जातीच्या नावाने भरणारी साहित्य संमेलने ह्यांचा रंग समतेचा आपल्या सुरक्षिततेसाठीच्या भीतीचा अस्मितेचा की *स्वजात स्वधर्म संरक्षणाचा? असाही प्रश्न उपस्थित होतो.

कालिदासापासून कुसुमाग्रजापर्यंत आणि संत ज्ञानदेवापासून तुका चोखामेळापर्यंत शेक्सपिअरपासून आताच्या इंग्रजी भाषा साहित्यापर्यंत आणि फादर स्टिफन, रेव्ह. टिळकापर्यंत अगदी अखिल भारतीय मराठी साहित्य संमेलनाध्यक्ष फादर दिब्रिटो व कवयित्री सिसिलिया, सायमन मार्टिनपर्यंत आपण हिंदू

धर्मीय साहित्यिक वा ख्रिस्ती धर्मीय साहित्यिक असे म्हटल्याचे स्मरत नाही. किंबहुना अशा साहित्यिकांच्या धडे आणि कविता शालेय अभ्यासक्रमात समाविष्ट केल्या आहेत.

समाजाची त्या परिसराची सुखं दुःख वेदना मांडणारी आपल्या लेख कविता कादंबरी नाटके ह्यातून लेखन करणारी मंडळी म्हणजे साहित्यिक. त्यात धर्म जात ही ओळख कशाला? शब्द, स्पर्श गंध, रंग, रूप ह्यांना सजवून आस्वाद देणारी, आपल्या लिखाणात *नवरस पाझरून सृजनशीलता निर्मिती म्हणजे साहित्य.

मराठी साहित्य किंवा कुठल्याही भाषेतील साहित्य आणि कलाक्षेत्रात धार्मिक किंवा राजकीय क्षेत्राप्रमाणे कडव्या निष्ठा स्वीकारून पुढे जाणे गैर ठरेल. जात धर्मापलीकडचा विचार साहित्य करीत असते. म्हणूनच धर्मश्रद्धेतून ज्याप्रमाणे सुंदर संत साहित्यकृती निर्माण होऊ शकेल. त्याचप्रमाणेच धर्माची आवश्यकता नाकारणाऱ्या विवेकातूनही सुंदर साहित्यकृती घडू शकते.

अगदी अंधश्रद्धे आजीबाईच्या सोवळंओवळं पाळणाऱ्या जात्यावरील ओवीतूनही ती साहित्य निर्मिती होऊ शकते. ओवी शिवीतून, डिटेक्टीव, रहस्यमय, हेरकथेतूनही तसेच शृंगारिक नि अश्लिलतेतूनही ते निर्माण होते. संस्कृत भाषा देवे केली मग प्राकृत भाषा काय चोरांपासून आली. असे संत वचन आहे. म्हणून अभिजात साहित्य हे शुचिर्भूत आध्यात्मिक धार्मिक आणि इतर साहित्य काय अशुभ मानावे?

ख्रिस्ती समाजाच्या किंवा इतर समाजाच्या काही धर्मविषयक कडव्या निष्ठा आहेत. परंतु कलानिर्मितीच्या व कलेच्या आस्वादाच्या क्षेत्रात साहित्याभोवती अशा कडव्या अभिनिवेशी धार्मिक निष्ठांचे पिंजरे बनणार नाहीत कोंडवाडे, कुंपणे तयार होणार नाहीत. याची दक्षता सर्वांनीच घेतली पाहिजे. आजच्या धर्मांध काळात तर ती दक्षता सर्वाधिक विचारवंतांनी घेतली पाहिजे. आणि अशी शिबीरे, संमेलने कुठल्या *गिरीजा घरात, मंदिरात, मस्जिदीत, तीर्थक्षेत्री अशा आवारात न भरता. खुल्या मोकळ्या हवेशीर मैदानात आयोजकांनी सर्वाधिक भरवावी. की जेणेकरून अशा उदात्त संमेलनाला धर्मांधांनी दुर्गंधी चढणार नाही. सात्विक सुंदर, सुगंधी वातावरणात ती पार पडावीत.

म्हणूनच कवी केशवसुतांनी म्हटले आहे.

मव्यास माझ्या कुंपण पडणे अगदी न मला साहे. म्हणूनच ख्रिस्ती समाजातील मराठी भाषिक साहित्यिकांनी आपल्या कलानिर्मितीला कुठलीही कुंपणे घालू नयेत असे सुचवावेसे वाटते.

त्यामुळे जितकी साहित्य संमेलने भरतील तितके ते अभिजात साहित्याच्या आणि एकूणच समाजाच्या हिताचं ठरणारं आहे. मात्र अशा साहित्यिकांच्या संमेलन स्थळी स्वार्थी राजकारण्यांचे, जाती, धर्माचे धर्मांध जात्यांध पिंजरे नि कुंपणे निर्माण होणार नाहीत ना? संमेलनस्थळी राजकारणींची लुडबूड नि साहित्यिकांना कोणी वेठीस धरणार नाहीत ना? हे कटाक्षाने टाळले पाहिजे. आजच्या सद्द स्थितीत अशा धार्मिक कडव्या निष्ठा टाळायला हव्यात. आणि येथे सुज्ञ विवेकी आयोजकांनी जपले पाहिजे....

प्रजासत्ताक !! वेन्सी डिमेलो.

पंधरा ऑगस्टला आपण ध्वजारोहण साजरे करतो. म्हणजे त्या दिवशी खाली बांधलेला ध्वज आपण उंचावतो. आणि आम्ही भारताचे नागरिक सर्वस्पर्शी स्वतंत्र आहोत ह्याची ग्वाही देतो.

आज २६ जानेवारी. आज आपण आम्ही भारताचे प्रजासत्ताक देशाचे सार्वभौम नागरिक आहोत ह्याची कबूली देतो. तसे मान्य करतो.

एव्हाना उंच बांधलेला ध्वज आपण फडकवतो. आणि त्या ध्वजाला मानवंदना देतो. भारतीय घटनेची संविधानाची आठवण करतो.

भारत स्वातंत्र झाला आणि दोन वर्षे अकरा महिने अठरा दिवसांनी हा संविधानाचा महान पवित्र ग्रंथ २६ नोव्हेंबर १९४९ रोजी आपणास प्राप्त झाला. आणि त्याची अंमलबजावणी २६ जानेवारी १९५० साली प्रजासत्ताक दिनी सुरू झाली.

स्वातंत्र्यानंतर १३ दिवसांनी २९ ऑगस्ट १९४७ रोजी भारतीय घटना, संविधान लिहिण्यासाठी सात जणांची एक सुकाणू समिती गठित करण्यात आली होती. त्यात. ए.के.अय्यर एन.गोपालास्वामी बि.आर.आंबेडकर. के.एम.मुंशी एम.साडुल्ला बी.एल मीतर डि.पी. खैतान आंबेडकर ह्या मसुदा समितीच्या प्रमुखपदी होते.

देशातील एकूण ३८९ सभासद होते. त्यात पंधरा महिलांचा सहभाग होता. त्या पंधरा विद्वान महिलांमध्ये हंसा मेहता. दक्षयानी वेलायुधान अनु स्वामीनाथन अॅनी म्हस्करान्हेस लीला राॅय बेगम रसूल दूर्गा देशमुख राजकुमारी कौर रेणुका रे कमला चौधरी मालती चौधरी सुचिता कृपालानी विजयालक्ष्मी पंडित सरोजिनी नायडू पूर्णिमा बॅनर्जी आदि महिला प्रतिनिधीत्व करीत होत्या.

जेज्वीट फादर जेरोम डिसुझा आणि भाषा तज्ञ बेनेगल नरसिंहराव ह्या दोघांनी मिळून संविधान मसुद्याचा इंग्रजी अनुवाद केला. संविधानात एकूण एक लाख पच्चेचाळीस हजार शब्द आहेत आणि चारशे सत्तर कलमे आहेत. संविधानाच्या प्रस्तावनेत स्वातंत्र्य समता बंधुता एकता न्याय ही मूख्य मूल्ये आहेत आणि सार्वभौम समाजवादी हे परवलीचे शब्द आहेत. प्रस्तावनेतील पंचशील मूल्ये प्रत्येक जबाबदार भारतीय नागरिकास प्रार्थना साधने समान आहेत. ती माहीत नि मुखोद्गत असणे आवश्यक नि अभिप्रेत आहे. जय संविधान! जय गणराज्य!!

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY ONE FEBRUARY 5, 2026

Giving up, is not an option for a disciple of Jesus

Gen 18:20-33; Ps 27; Lk 18:1-8

I. INTRODUCTION

When things go as we plan, it is easy to believe that God loves and cares for us. However, when challenges come our way, we are tempted to lose hope and give in to despair. The theme of the first day of the Novena is “**Giving up, is not an option for a disciple of Jesus**”. In the readings of today, Abraham and the widow show us the consequences of perseverance. Jesus, however, is the model of perseverance. No matter how insurmountable the challenges seemed, he persevered and never gave up even if it meant the cross. Will we learn from our Master and keep on keeping on.....?

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD’S MERCY

- For giving up before we begin Lord have mercy
 - For starting, but not persevering, Christ have mercy
 - For not turning to you for courage and strength, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of perseverance, we come to you asking that you open our hearts and minds to listen to your gracious word. Let our openness lead to an assimilation of that word and the courage to live it out in our lives. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Genesis

Then the Lord said, “How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me.” Then Abraham came near and said, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! And the Lord said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.” Abraham answered, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And he said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.” Again, he spoke to him, “Suppose forty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of forty I will not do it.” Then he said, “Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” He answered, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” He said, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.” Then he said, “Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.” And the Lord went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: The Lord is my light and my help

1. The Lord is my light and my help; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? (Our Response)
2. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, even then will I trust. (Our Response)

3. One thing I asked of the Lord, for this I long: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to savour the sweetness of the Lord, to behold his holy temple. (Our Response)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! Teach us Infant Jesus, to persevere in faith, hope and love. Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them.

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

1. That no matter how many challenges come our way, we might keep persevering till the very end, let us pray to the Lord...
2. That faith in the Lord and not fear will motivate our words and actions, let us pray to the Lord...
3. That the word of Jesus to Peter, "COME" will be the motivation for us to never take our eyes away from the Lord, let us pray to the Lord...
4. That encouraged by Abraham and the widow, we might keep persevering like they did, let us pray to the Lord...
5. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

Loving God, you are our strength and our hope. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, we ask for the gift of perseverance in and fidelity to your word. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to persevere till the very end and not give up or give in, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

God of grace and love, we thank you because even though we have often given up, you have not given up on us. You have shown this by giving us Jesus. We pray that with Jesus in us, we will persevere till the very end like he did. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY TWO FEBRUARY 6, 2026

Do what you can with what you have, NOW

James 4:13-17; Ps 23; Mt 25:14-30

I. INTRODUCTION

Many of us are busy regretting the past or are obsessed with the future. This is why we do not live in the present. The theme of today “**Do what you can, with what you have, NOW**” invites us to be men and women of action and not merely words. It invites us to enjoy the present moment. Acting wisely in the present moment not only opens up a bright future, it also helps us to look at the past with a sense of fulfillment and joy. Let us pray for openness to this grace during this Eucharistic celebration.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD’S MERCY

- For our regrets about the past, Lord have mercy
- For our obsession with the future, Christ have mercy
- For not living fully in the present, Lord have mercy

May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of the present. You revealed yourself as “I AM”, because you are a God of the NOW. Open our hearts to listen attentively to your word which is alive and active. Give us the courage to act on that word today. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the letter of James

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money.” Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want

4. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. (Our Response)
5. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Our Response)
6. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes; my head you have anointed with oil, my cup is overflowing. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. (Our Response)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! Teach us Infant Jesus, to remain in the present moment. Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

“For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so, I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So, take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

6. That we might act wisely in the present moment so that we will have no regrets about the past and not be obsessed with the future, let us pray to the Lord...
7. That we might do what we have to do at every moment and leave the rest in God's capable hands, let us pray to the Lord...
8. That we might know the difference between the things that we can change and those we cannot change, let us pray to the Lord...
9. That like the servants who used their talents well, we too might use the gifts that we have received for our good and the good of others, let us pray to the Lord...
10. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

Loving God, you have given each of us all that we need to live a happy life. Give us the grace never to compare with others. Help us to use what we have, selflessly, and to the best of our ability. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to live in the present so that we will not regret or be obsessed, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Eternal God, you are a God of each present moment. Open our hearts to the grace to live in the now. Help us to do what we have to do, with what we have and in the NOW. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY THREE FEBRUARY 7, 2026

God's love is so wonderful. O wonderful love

Isa 43:1-7; Ps 136; Lk 15:11-24

I. INTRODUCTION

Sometimes in the Old Testament, God is revealed as vengeful and angry. However, there are also passages in which God is also seen as unconditional love. It was Jesus, who made the unique revelation of God as pure and unadulterated love. The God whom Jesus reveals is a God who does not forgive because he does not condemn. Jesus revealed God as a non-condemning God. Let us ask for openness to the grace to experience such a God.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD'S MERCY

- For our image of you as a God who must be placated, Lord have mercy
 - For our fear that you will punish us when we sin, Christ have mercy
 - For relating with you out of fear and not love, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God, love incarnate you showed your love for us in the most tangible way when you sent Jesus to be our Saviour. He revealed you to us a God who does not need to forgive, because you do not condemn. Open our hearts to listen to your word which reveals you as such a God. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

But now thus says the Lord, the one who formed you: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you, for I am the Lord your God. You are precious in my eyes, and honoured, and I love you, Fear not, for I am with you. I am with anyone who calls on my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Our Response after every line will be: HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good (R)
Give thanks to the God of gods (R)
Give thanks to the Lord of lords: (R)
to him who alone does great wonders, (R)
who by his understanding made the heavens, (R)
who spread out the earth upon the waters, (R)
who made the great lights (R)
the sun to govern the day, (R)
the moon and stars to govern the night; (R)
who loves unconditionally (R)
who never condemns (R)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger and rich in mercy. Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Jesus said to the crowds, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So, he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.”’” And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

11. That we might relate with God out of love and not fear, let us pray to the Lord...
12. That we open our hearts as wide as we can to receive the love that you want to pour into them, let us pray to the Lord...
13. That we realise that no matter how far we go from you, you will keep inviting us back in love and for love, let us pray to the Lord...
14. That we show our gratitude for your openness by being open to others as you are to us, let us pray to the Lord...
15. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

God of unconditional love, you showed your love for us tangibly when you sent Jesus your son to show us the way to you. As we offer this bread and wine to become his body and blood, we offer our fear of you, knowing that you will transform it into love. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us who you really are when he revealed you to the whole world as eternal love, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Loving God, you have shown your love for us by giving us all that we need to love you by giving us Jesus. We pray that with Jesus in us, we will relate to you out of love, because you are eternal love. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY FOUR FEBRUARY 8, 2026

God calls sinners to repentance

Isa 63:7-9; Rom 8:32-39; Ps 36; Lk 15:1-7

I. INTRODUCTION

In his letter to the Romans, Paul is emphatic when he says, “For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by God’s grace as a gift, that is in Christ Jesus”. When we realise that we are sinners, then we become aware of our need for God’s grace. However, if we keep trumpeting the good deeds we do, we might imagine that we can save ourselves. The truth is that it is God who saves in his son, which is why he named him Jesus. Let us ask for the grace to know that we are sinners and in constant need of God’s grace.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD’S MERCY

- For the times we have been self-righteousness and proud, Lord have mercy
- For the times we paraded our good deeds before all, Christ have mercy
- For the times we thought we merited your love, Lord have mercy

May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. GLORIA

IV. OPENING PRAYER

God of sinners, you named your son Jesus because you wanted to reaffirm the graciousness of your love. Open our hearts and minds to hear and understand your enhancing word. Give us the grace to assimilate your word like Mary our mother did, and the courage to act on your word today. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

V. FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favour that he has shown to us according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, “Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely”; and he became our saviour in all our distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved us; in his love and in his pity, he redeemed us; he lifted us up and carried us all the days of old.

The Word of God

VI. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Our Response is: I will bless the Lord at all times

1. I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise ever on my lips. My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad.
2. Glorify the Lord with me, together let us praise his name. The poor called and he answered and rescued them from their distress.
3. I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed.
4. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who love him, and delivers them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.

VII. SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of God

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! “Come back to me with all your heart. Do not let fear keep us apart” says the Lord Alleluia!

VIII. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” So, he told them this parable: “Which of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbours, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

The Gospel of the Lord

IX. HOMILY

X. CREED

XI. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

16. That we might realise our sinfulness and our need for God’s grace and love, let us pray to the Lord...
17. That we might refrain from judging others and avoid all condemnation, let us pray to the Lord...
18. That we might be aware of the plank in our eye, before we can point to the speck in others eyes, let us pray to the Lord...
19. That like Paul, we too may realise that there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Jesus, let us pray to the Lord...
20. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

XII. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

Gracious God we offer along with these gifts of bread and wine, the numerous times we acted self-righteously. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, give us grace to know that with your love and grace, we can do all things. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

XIII. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to be loved by you when he became incarnate and unconditional love, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XIV. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Gracious God, we thank you that even though we are sinners you give us love incarnate when you give us Jesus. We pray that with Jesus in us, like him, we will always be aware of the need for your love. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY FIVE FEBRUARY 9, 2026

Act wisely and decisively in the present

Rom 12:1-5; Ps 8; Lk 16:1-8

I. INTRODUCTION

In the Gospel text of today, we are shown the advantages of acting in the present. Prompt and decisive action in the present, helps prepare a bright future. In the parable of the shrewd steward, Jesus is not praising the dishonesty of the steward, he is pointing us to his shrewdness, his decisiveness and determination. In the last verse of the Gospel, when Jesus says, *“the children of this age are more astute in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light”*, he is exhorting us to act wisely, prudently and decisively in the present. He is asking us to “Carpe Momentum” which means “to seize the moment”. Let us ask for openness to God’s grace to do so.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD’S MERCY

- For our procrastination, Lord have mercy
 - For our laziness and lethargy, Christ have mercy
 - For our lack of faith and trust, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of the present, we ask you to open our hearts and minds to be attentive to your word. It is a word which calls us to act in the present and to act decisively. We pray for the courage to do as your word directs. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: Great is your name Lord, its majesty fills the earth

7. Your majesty is praised above the heavens, on the lips of children and of babes. You have found praise to foil the enemy, to silence the foe and the rebel (R)
8. When I see the heavens the work of your hands, the moon and the stars which you arranged, who am I that you keep me in mind? Mortal me that you care for me. (R)
9. Yet, you have made me little less than a God, with glory and honour you crowned me, given me power over the works of your hand, put all things under my feet. (R)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! “Forgetting what lies behind, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more astute in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light.

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

21. That we might get rid of our procrastination, NOW, let us pray to the Lord...
22. That we might realise that the present moment is all we have, let us pray to the Lord...
23. That we might act decisively and prudently in the present, so as to secure a bright future, let us pray to the Lord...
24. That like the shrewd steward, we might be persons of promptness, let us pray to the Lord...
25. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

Gracious God we offer along with these gifts of bread and wine, the numerous times we procrastinated. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, give us the grace to act decisively in the here and now. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us how we must act decisively and prudently when he let your word be his constant guide, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Loving God, we thank you that even though we have put off things till later, you have given us your son Jesus, here and now. We pray that with Jesus in us, like him, we will seize the present moment and act wisely

and decisively in it. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY SIX FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Humility is a funny thing. If you think you've got it, you've lost it

Phil 2:3-8; Ps 25; Lk 18:9-14

I. INTRODUCTION

The readings of today place before us two ways of proceeding. One is that of pride and self-righteousness and the other that of humility and self-effacement. If we choose the first, we deny our dependence on and the grace of God. If we choose the latter, we acknowledge our dependence on God and that it is God's grace which sustains us. Let us pray for the grace to choose the way of humility and dependence on God.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD'S MERCY

- For our independence and self-righteousness, Lord have mercy
 - For our focus on merit and good deeds, Christ have mercy
 - For our not opening our hearts to your love and grace, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of all peoples, we ask for the gift of openness to your word. Let us listen with attentive hearts and minds, that we might assimilate that word and translate it into action in our lives. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: Lord teach me your ways

10. Make me to know thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation; for thee I wait all the day long. (R)
11. Be mindful of thy mercy, O Lord, and of thy steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, or my transgressions; according to thy steadfast love remember me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord! (R)
12. Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. (R)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! "Christ became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Jesus told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a

sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

26. That we might realise that we are dependent on God for every breath that we take, let us pray to the Lord...
27. That we might realise that without God’s grace and love we can do nothing, let us pray to the Lord...
28. That we might know that our good deeds are not to earn God’s favour, but are the result of God’s love for us, let us pray to the Lord...
29. That like the humble tax-collector, we might be self-effacing and meek, let us pray to the Lord...
30. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

God lover of the meek, we offer along with these gifts of bread and wine, our pride and self-righteousness. As you transform the bread and wine into the body and blood of your son, transform our pride and arrogance into humility. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to become like little children when he became like a child and called you father, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Loving God, we thank you that even though we have been proud, arrogant and self-righteous you have given us your son Jesus freely and lovingly. We pray that with Jesus in us, like him, we will learn to be meek and humble of heart. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY SEVEN - FEBRUARY 11, 2026

God forgives every time and all the time

1 Tim 1:15-17; Ps 103; Mt 18:23-34

I. INTRODUCTION

God forgives every time and all the time. However, the forgiveness of God is one side of the story. The story is completed when we show the same attitude to others. If we cannot or will not forgive others, it means that we have not received God's forgiveness and mercy. Since God does not force his gifts on us, if we do not receive them, they return to him. Let us pray that we will show our acceptance of God's forgiveness as we forgive others.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD'S MERCY

- For our lack of forgiveness, Lord have mercy
 - For keeping resentment and anger in our hearts, Christ have mercy
 - For not opening our hearts to receive your love, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of forgiveness and love, we ask you to open our hearts and minds to see you as a God who loves us unconditionally. Give us the grace to receive your forgiveness so that we can love and forgive others as you love and forgive us. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to Timothy

I received mercy because the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: Bless the Lord O my soul

13. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his deeds, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases (R)
14. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. (R)
15. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who love him (R)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! "Teach me Lord to forgive and love others as you forgive and love me" Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to

be made. So, the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything. And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

31. That we might open our hearts to receive God's forgiveness and show it by forgiving others let us pray to the Lord...
32. That we might be disciples of the Lord not only in word, but also in deed, let us pray to the Lord...
33. That we might not hold resentment and anger against others in our hearts, let us pray to the Lord...
34. That like Paul we may realise that even though we keep sinning, the Lord will keep forgiving us, let us pray to the Lord...
35. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

God of forgiveness and love we offer along with these gifts of bread and wine, the numerous times we have not been forgiving of others. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, give us the grace to forgive unconditionally as you forgive us. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to forgive, by forgiving even from the Cross, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

God of love and forgiveness, we thank you that even though we have not been forgiving, you have given us your son Jesus, to show your love. We pray that with Jesus in us, we might learn to keep forgiving as you

keep loving and forgiving us. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY EIGHT - FEBRUARY 12, 2026

We came with nothing we will leave with nothing

Rom 8:5-11; Ps 90; Lk 12:15-20

I. INTRODUCTION

The Psalmist in Ps 90 fixes the maximum age for a human as fourscore which is 80 years. Though longevity has increased since the Psalmist wrote that Psalm, the truth is that most humans do not live that long. This is a reminder that our lives on earth are temporary and impermanent. Our eternal and permanent home is with God in heaven. Because this is so, we must live this moment fully and completely. In the Gospel text of today, ‘the fool’ was living in the future and so never really lived. Let us pray for the grace to live fully and completely our today.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD’S MERCY

- For our desire to keep accumulating, Lord have mercy
 - For our refusal to share even when we have more than we need Christ have mercy
 - For constantly turning our wants into our needs, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of life and eternity, open our hearts to the promptings of your Holy Spirit, which gives us the grace to live fully in the here and now. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, indeed it cannot; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: Lord you have been our refuge from one generation to the next

16. You turn us back to the dust, and say, “Go back, sons of men” For your eyes, a thousand years are like yesterday come and gone, no more than a watch in the night. (R)
17. You sweep us away like a dream, like grass which is renewed in the morning: in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. (R)
18. Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favour of the Lord God be upon us, and establish the work of your hands. (R)

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! “Teach me Lord that I received without charge and so must give without charge”
Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Jesus said to the crowds, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'"

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

36. That we might not be obsessed with the future but live in the present, let us pray to the Lord...
37. That we might not accumulate things that we do not need, but be generous with others let us pray to the Lord...
38. That we might not convert our wants into our needs and know when enough is enough, let us pray to the Lord...
39. That we will live not in the flesh but in the Spirit and so set our minds on life and peace, let us pray to the Lord...
40. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

God of eternity, along with these gifts of bread and wine, we offer you our obsession with things of this world. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, give us the grace to know that you alone are eternal and that all else is temporary and passing. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to live fully in the present moment when he asked us to look at the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Eternal God, though we have been preoccupied with impermanent things and joys, you have not held it against us and have shown it by giving us Jesus. We pray that with Jesus in us we will concern ourselves with the things of heaven. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

NOVENA FOR THE FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – DAY NINE - FEBRUARY 13, 2026

Unity even in Diversity

1 Cor 12:12,20-27; Lk 10:29-37

I. INTRODUCTION

We sometimes tend to stereotype and place people and groups in brackets or pigeon holes. The theme of today invites us to get rid of our stereotypes and look at people in a non-prejudicial way. When people walked by Matthew's toll office, they would have seen a cheat, a thief and an extortionist. Jesus, however, looked at the same Matthew and saw in him a potential disciple. Discipleship was latent in Matthew. Jesus brought it out. When we look at others in a positive way, we bring out the best in them. During this Eucharist, let us ask for the grace to look as Jesus looked.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD'S MERCY

- For the stereotypes and prejudices, we have of others, Lord have mercy
 - For looking at others with tainted glasses Christ have mercy
 - For not seeing people as they are, but as we want them to be, Lord have mercy
- May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. OPENING PRAYER

God of love and mercy, open our minds and hearts to so assimilate your word, that we might look at others as Jesus would have done and bring out the best in them. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

IV. FIRST READING

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. There are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

The Word of God

V. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

1. When I needed a neighbour Were you there, were you there? When I needed a neighbour Were you there? And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter Were you there?
2. I was hungry and thirsty Were you there, were you there? I was hungry and thirsty Were you there? And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter Were you there?
3. I was cold, I was naked Were you there, were you there? I was cold, I was naked Were you there? And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter Were you there?

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! Teach us Lord to look at others as you looked without bias, prejudice or stereotype." Alleluia!

VI. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Jesus said, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?'

The Gospel of the Lord

VII. HOMILY

VIII. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

41. That we might avoid labelling people on the basis of colour, creed, language or nationality, let us pray to the Lord...
42. That we might realise that the whole of humanity is moving towards you each in his or her own way, let us pray to the Lord...
43. That we might not expect people to be as we are but accept that we can be united even in our diversity, let us pray to the Lord...
44. That we will realise that we are all parts of one body, and though different, are each needed to make the body whole, let us pray to the Lord...
45. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

IX. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

God of all that is good and wholesome, we offer you along with these gifts of bread and wine our stereotypical way of looking at people and things. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of your son, transform our prejudices into openness. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

X. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he opened his arms to embrace the whole world. He showed us what it means to be unbiased when he choose those whom society looked down upon as his disciples, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XI. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

God of the whole human race, though we have often looked at others stereotypically, you have looked at us with love and have shown it by giving us Jesus. We pray that with Jesus in us, we will learn to look at others as Jesus would have done. We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

FEAST OF THE INFANT JESUS – FEBRUARY 14, 2026

You sow, God will make it grow

Gal 6:7-10; Ps 121; 2 Cor 4:7-11; Mk 4:26-30

I. INTRODUCTION

For the last nine days of the Novena, we have been reflecting on themes which affect our lives and inform our faith. Through the parables he told, Jesus has revealed God as a God who is prodigal with love, who does not condemn and who loves unconditionally. He also explained the kingdom as a gift from God which we can accept with open minds and hearts. Today on the feast day of the Infant Jesus, through the parable of the seed growing quietly, Jesus invites us to do what we have to do, to leave no stone unturned and to leave what we cannot do in God's capable hands. God will bring it to completion and fruition. Let us pray that through the grace that the Infant Jesus gives, we will be able to do this.

II. ASKING FOR OPENNESS TO GOD'S MERCY

- For leaving many stones unturned, Lord have mercy
- For our half-hearted efforts, Christ have mercy
- For our lethargy and pessimism, Lord have mercy

May Almighty God have mercy on us, may he forgive us our sin and may he bring us to everlasting life.

III. GLORIA

IV. OPENING PRAYER

God of hope, we come to you on the feast of your Infant son and ask you to open our hearts and minds to listen attentively to your word like Mary did. Give us the grace to ponder that word in our hearts and to bring forth plentiful fruit. We ask this through the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary, of the same Jesus Christ your son our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. Amen.

V. FIRST READING

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Galatians

Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. So, let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

The Word of God

VI. RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Response: My help comes from the Lord

19. I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will come my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (R)
20. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. (R)
21. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and for evermore. (R)

VII. SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death

of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh.

The Word of God

ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, Alleluia!! Give us the grace to do our best Lord, in the firm hope that you will do the rest. Alleluia!

VIII. GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to St. Mark

Jesus said to the crowds, the kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.'

The Gospel of the Lord

IX. HOMILY

X. CREED

XI. PETITIONARY PRAYER:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer

46. That we might leave no stone unturned when we have to act, let us pray to the Lord...
47. That we might focus on our action and not worry about the result, let us pray to the Lord
48. That we might know the difference between the things we can and cannot change, let us pray to the Lord...
49. That we will not give up till we have done all that we are required to do, let us pray to the Lord...
50. Please make your personal intention, let us pray to the Lord...

XII. OFFERTORY PRAYER:

God of eternity, along with these gifts of bread and wine, we offer you the numerous times we have focussed more on the result than on our action. As you transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, give us the grace to do what we have to do and leave what we cannot do in your hands. We make this prayer through Jesus our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

XIII. PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Saviour and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy spirit and born of the Virgin.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he showed how to sow, leave no stone unturned and then to leave the rest in your hands and to your will, and so with the angels and all the saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

XIV. POST COMMUNION/CONCLUDING PRAYER

Eternal God, though we have not done what we ought to do, you have done everything for our good by giving us Jesus. We We make this prayer through the same Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.