

**Affirmation Prayer...**

How many are the wonders God has worked for us!  
Let us give thanks and praise!

**All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the  
beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.  
Alleluia!**

**Hymn** **Meter: CM**

Once, only once, and once for all,  
His precious life he gave;  
Before the Cross our spirits fall,  
And own it strong to save.  
For, as the priest of Aaron's line  
Within the holiest stood,  
And sprinkled all the mercy-shrine  
With sacrificial blood;  
So he, who once atonement wrought,  
Our priest of endless power,  
Presents himself for those he bought  
In that dark noontide hour.  
And so we show thy death, O Lord,  
Till thou again appear,  
And feel, when we approach thy board,  
We have an altar here.

**Canticle** **cf. Daniel 3:26-27, 29, 34, 39-41**

*To love God with all your heart, with all your  
understanding, with all your strength, and to love  
your neighbor as yourself is worth more than all  
burnt offerings and sacrifices. (cf. Mk 12:33)*

*The one true sacrifice that wins our salvation is the  
absolute self-offering in love of Jesus Christ on the  
cross. The fruit of that sacrifice in us is holiness of  
love. To be holy is to participate in, reflect, and  
offer to all the unimaginable love that Christ has  
shown for the Father and for us. Our self-offering in  
love to the God we worship and the neighbor we  
serve is our true sacrifice.*

Blessed are you, and praiseworthy,  
O Lord, the God of our fathers, and glorious forever  
is your name. For you are just in all you have done;  
all your deeds are faultless, all your ways right,  
and all your judgments proper. For we have sinned  
and transgressed by departing from you, and we  
have done every kind of evil. For your name's  
sake, do not deliver us up forever, or make void  
your covenant. But with contrite heart and humble  
spirit let us be received; as though it were  
holocausts of rams and bullocks, or thousands of  
fat lambs, let our sacrifice be in your presence  
today as we follow you unreservedly; for those who  
trust in you cannot be put to shame. And now we  
follow you with our whole heart, we fear you and  
we pray to you.

**All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the  
beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

**Word of God**

**Romans 12:1-2**

I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of  
God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy  
and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not  
conform yourselves to this age but be transformed  
by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern  
what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing  
and perfect.

Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a  
spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer  
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through  
Jesus Christ. (1 Pt 2:5)

**Canticle of Zechariah**

*For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, / and  
knowledge of God rather than holocausts.*  
(Hos 6:6)

**All: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; he  
has come to his people and set them free. He  
has raised up for us a mighty savior, born of  
the house of his servant David.**

**Through his holy prophets he promised of old  
that he would save us from our enemies, from  
the hands of all who hate us. He promised to  
show mercy to our fathers and to remember his  
holy covenant.**

**This was the oath he swore to our father  
Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our  
enemies, free to worship him without fear, holy  
and righteous in his sight all the days of our  
life.**

**You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the  
Most High; for you will go before the Lord to  
prepare his way, to give his people knowledge  
of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.**

**In the tender compassion of our God the dawn  
from on high shall break upon us, to shine on  
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of  
death, and to guide our feet into the way of  
peace.**

**All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the  
beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

**Intercessions**

Let us offer to God the sweet-smelling incense of  
prayer, as we say:

**R/ Hear us, O Lord!**

For those who have been sealed in upon  
themselves by ill treatment, loss, and pain: free  
them for love, we pray: **R/**

For those who find themselves unable to offer you  
worship: free them to rejoin the Sunday assembly  
of your people, we pray: **R/**

For those who have given their lives freely in  
service of others: bring them to the everlasting joy  
of your kingdom, we pray: **R/**

**Personal intentions**

**All: Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

God and giver of all good gifts, we give you thanks for the saving love you have shown us in the self-gift of Jesus Christ on the cross which we celebrate with joy on this holy day. Through our Sunday worship, grant us the grace to grow in this love, that we may serve more faithfully throughout the coming week, through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**SUNDAY, October 31, 2021**  
**Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Reading 1**                      **Deuteronomy 6:2-6**

Moses said to the people: 'If you fear the Lord your God all the days of your life and if you keep all his laws and commandments which I lay on you, you will have a long life, you and your son and your grandson. Listen then, Israel, keep and observe what will make you prosper and give you great increase, as the Lord the God of your fathers has promised you, giving you a land where milk and honey flow.

'Listen, Israel: the Lord our God is the one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength. Let these words I urge on you today be written on your heart.'

**Reading 2**                      **Hebrews 7:23-28**

There used to be a great number of priests under the former covenant, because death put an end to each one of them; but this one, because he remains for ever, can never lose his priesthood. It follows, then, that his power to save is utterly certain, since he is living for ever to intercede for all who come to God through him.

To suit us, the ideal high priest would have to be holy, innocent and uncontaminated, beyond the influence of sinners, and raised up above the heavens; one who would not need to offer sacrifices every day, as the other high priests do for their own sins and then for those of the people, because he has done this once and for all by offering himself. The Law appoints high priests who are men subject to weakness; but the promise on oath, which came after the Law, appointed the Son who is made perfect for ever.

**Gospel**

**Mark 12:28b-34**

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken, said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

**Men of St. Joseph Prayer**

**All: St. Joseph, help me to be like you. Help me to be obedient to the teachings of the Church and faithful to God's commands. Help me to patiently endure my cross each day. Let me be a model of holiness and a pillar of virtue. I solemnly promise to embrace God's will and I accept the challenge to work tirelessly for my family's salvation. Be my guide and companion on this journey. St. Joseph, terror of demons, pray for us!**

*Prayer for the text used with permission  
of Magnificat*