

## Homily of Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, 2026

### **Zechariah 9:9-10; Psalm 145:1-14; Romans 8:9, 11-13; Matthew 11:25-30**

The first reading is Prophet Zechariah's prophecy about the coming of Jesus Christ. As we see in the reading, Zechariah prophesied Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, "See, your king shall come to you; a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass, a foal of an ass." In this prophecy, Zechariah recognizes Jesus as king and just savior. Zechariah explains Jesus' ministry: He will banish the chariot, the horse and warrior's bow; proclaim peace; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Christianity which is Jesus' dominion extends from the Sea of Galilee (where he preached) and the River Jordan (where he was baptized) to every part of the world.

Our world, at this time, is weighed down by the burdens and yokes of "the chariot, the horse and warrior's bow" (endless wars, conflicts, and violence). We continue to pray that peace is proclaimed and accepted in places of wars, conflicts, and violence.

Jesus came to a people who were burdened and who were under several yokes. They were under the burden and yoke of the Roman colonial masters and corrupt officials. The ordinary people were under the yoke and burden of rules and regulations of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the lawyers, the scribes, and the chief priests. The Samaritans (Gentiles) were under the burden and yoke of rejection by the Jews. Additionally, many people were also under the burden and yoke of sicknesses and demonic possessions. Very importantly, the whole world, at that time, was under the burden and yoke of sin and in need of salvation. For all these, Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Jesus' invitation is for us. Not only that we are weighed down by all kinds of political, economic, and social burdens and yokes, we are, also, weighed down by all kinds of afflictions. As we work hard physically and struggle to cope with situations around us, we need spiritual sustenance from the Lord. We do not take spiritual sustenance lightly. By "flesh" (human strength) alone, failure is certain.

This is why St. Paul encourages us in the second reading not to be "in the flesh;" that is not to be self-reliant apart from God. St. Paul stresses the importance of keeping God's Spirit alive in us. Paul says, "If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also..." Jesus says in John 6:63, "It is the Spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail." The Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead is the Holy Spirit. In the Creed we pray, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life." The Holy Spirit gives us life by granting us strength to overcome sin, trials, and temptations. We know that God's Spirit is alive in us by the manifestation of the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Jesus says, "By their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 7:20).

When Jesus says, “Take my yoke upon you ... For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” A yoke is a wooden crosspiece fixed on animal’s neck, shoulder, or forehead to pull heavy load/burden or to plow land. Yoke is usually stiff and hard on an animal. Each of us has his or her yoke that enables us to pull and plow through life. Some of us wear stiff and hard yoke. Some of us are pulling heavy burden. This is why Jesus invites us so that he replaces our stiff and hard yoke with his easy yoke, and makes light the burden we pull. It is important to note that Jesus does not promise to remove our yoke and our burden completely. Rather, he promises a replacement. In our prayers, we bring to Jesus our stiff, or stuck, or locked yokes. May he to break them, remove them, and replace them. Amen.

Also in today’s gospel, Jesus praises God who reveals to little one what he has hidden from the wise and the learned. We pray to God, “Revealer of Secrets” (Daniel 2:47), for divine revelations in whatever way it pleases him. We pray to God to reveal to us the hidden things that we are desiring, seeking, and praying for. May God reveal to us things hidden from us by men and women. May God reveal to us hidden truths. May God reveal to us things hidden from us by unknown forces. Like Jesus, may we praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, as we give testimonies of your divine revelations. Amen and amen.

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