

## HOMILY FOR THE XI SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIMES

Ex 19:2-6; Rom 5:6-11; Mt 9:36-10:8

### “Freely You Have Received; Freely Give”

My dear brothers and sisters,

The message of today's readings can be summed up in one simple truth: **God has loved us generously, and He now sends us to share that love with others.**

In the first reading from Exodus, God reminds the Israelites of what He has done for them. He rescued them from slavery, cared for them in the wilderness, and called them His own people. He tells them, "You shall be my special possession... a kingdom of priests, a holy nation."

Notice that God does not reserve holiness for a select few. His call is for the whole people. Every member of His family has a role to play. The same message continues in St. Paul's Letter to the Romans. Paul reminds us that God's love is not something we earned. Christ died for us not when we were perfect, but while we were still sinners. God's love always comes first. Before we ever sought Him, He sought us. Before we loved Him, He loved us.

That is the foundation of our faith: not what we have done for God, but what God has done for us.

In the Gospel, Jesus looks upon the crowds with compassion. He sees people who are confused, burdened, struggling, and searching for meaning. Matthew tells us they were "like sheep without a shepherd."

If we are honest, many people today feel the same way. Many carry worries about their families, their health, their finances, or the future. Some feel lonely. Others struggle with grief, anxiety, or disappointment. Many people around us are searching for hope but do not know where to find it.

When Jesus sees these people, He does not turn away. His heart is moved with compassion.

Then something remarkable happens. Instead of trying to do everything Himself, Jesus calls the Twelve and sends them out. He gives ordinary men a share in His mission. He entrusts them with His work. And that mission continues today. The Lord still calls ordinary people—not just priests and religious, but every baptized Christian. He calls parents, grandparents, teachers, carers, volunteers, workers, and students. He calls all of us to bring His presence into the world.

Most of us will never preach to large crowds or perform spectacular miracles. But we can still be instruments of God's compassion. A kind word can heal a wounded heart. A visit to someone who is lonely can bring hope. A phone call, an act of forgiveness, a helping hand, a listening ear—these are often the ways Christ continues His work through us.

That is why Jesus says, "Freely you have received; freely give."

Everything we have is ultimately a gift from God: our faith, our abilities, our time, our families, and even our very lives. We have received so much from the Lord, and He asks us not to keep these gifts to ourselves. The Church grows not only through preaching but through countless quiet acts of love performed every day by ordinary believers.

Think of the people who helped you in your faith journey. Perhaps it was a parent who taught you to pray, a teacher who encouraged you, a priest who guided you, or a friend who stood by you in difficult times. They were sharing what they had freely received. Now the Lord asks us to do the same.

As we come to the altar today, let us thank God for His great love and mercy. Let us ask Him to open our eyes to those around us who need encouragement, kindness, and hope.

And may we leave this church today ready to answer the Lord's call, sharing freely what we ourselves have freely received.

Amen.