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8 THURSDAY (Morning)

HOLY THURSDAY – CHRISM MASS

Isaiah 61: 1-3, 6, 8-9

Ps 88: 21-22, 25, 27

Apocalypse 1: 5-8

Luke 4: 16-21

On this special day, there is only one public Mass in the morning in each diocese: it's celebrated by the bishop together with his priests, and it's the occasion for the blessing of the holy oils that are to be used for Easter baptisms, for the sacraments of confirmation and the anointing of the sick, and for priestly ordination. It's also the occasion for priests to renew their commitment to priestly service. The scripture readings focus on Jesus as the Messiah, the one on whom the Lord God has poured the oil of His Spirit, anointing Him to be the bringer of reconciliation, of justice and freedom, of joy and new vision. Pope John Paul II has made a tradition of addressing a special letter to all priests, for Holy Thursday. So this is an appropriate occasion for us all to pray for the priests who serve us, in our parish and diocese and in the particular apostolates of religious orders. Let us pray that as the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in the person of Jesus the anointed One, our own anointed priests may also fulfill the healing mission of Christ in their particular ministries and their persons. But let's remember too that every Christian, baptised into Christ, has also been anointed with the Spirit, to share in Jesus' anointing as priest and prophet and king. May we each fulfill in our own place and time and station in life the mission in God's kingdom for which we've received the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, in the power of the Spirit help us to be faithful witnesses in the world to the salvation that Christ has won for all humanity.

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