



PATRIARCHATUS LATINUS - JERUSALEM

بطريركية القدس لللاتين

Prot. N. (1) 45/2026

January 12, 2026

Dearest brothers and sisters in Christ,

May the Lord give you peace!

On January 25, 2026 we will celebrate the Sunday of the Word.

This year again, we will focus on a single text from the New Testament: the letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians. From this letter, we take a verse that will be at the center of our prayer: "Christ is our Peace" (2:14).

No one living in our Land is unaware of how delicate and serious the moment we are experiencing is. No one is unaware of how necessary it is for each of us to live this moment with intensity and full responsibility, and how necessary it is for everyone, but especially for us Christians, to fill the word PEACE with a new meaning, a word repeated too often without spiritual or human depth.

This is why we have chosen to concentrate on the Letter to the Ephesians: a very profound text that will help us perceive that peace is a GIFT that comes from above: CHRIST is our peace, the One who leads all things and all people to unity.

It will also help us realize that we cannot speak of peace without speaking of justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, and the daily commitment to become artisans of peace in our personal, family, community, and civic life; knowing well that the journey will be long and complex and requires perseverance.

I would like you also to feel how strong and urgent this commitment is. It requires us to open our hearts to receive the gift that comes from above, and it urges us to take concrete steps to walk in it.

I would like you to feel what I deeply feel: that peace is built above all from below, from the commitment of each one of us.

Therefore, it is very important that we let ourselves be formed by the Word of God in the ways of peace.

It is likewise very important to engage firmly and perseveringly in prayer and listening.

The letter is short, but very beautiful and full of strength.

I therefore encourage you to read it and reread it, together or personally, and to pray with the words it places on our lips.

I also suggest underlining those words that strike you most and that may accompany you on our journey.

If we do this together, with faith and trust, we will find in our consciences new joy, new strength, and new light to live as true Christians in this difficult time.

I bless you, and for you and with you all I pray with the very words of the Apostle Paul:

"For this reason I kneel before the Father, ... that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ, our peace, may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:14, 16-19).



Pierbattista Card. Pizzaballa

Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

Some practical Suggestions for Celebrating the Sunday of the Word

1. At the main Mass of the parish community, make a solemn entrance with the Book of the Gospel and place it in a suitably decorated, prominent location.
2. Propose to the community the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours (Lauds or Vespers), choosing the “short reading” from the Letter to the Ephesians.
(For example: for Lauds: Eph 2:14–15; 2:17–18 — for Vespers: Eph 5:1–2; 6:14–15)
3. To help everyone find the text of the letter easily, place the **link** to the Letter to the Ephesians on the parish website and/or send it through the parish mailing list.

Or:

Print the text (which is short) on a sheet to be distributed at the end of Holy Mass.

4. To assist the faithful in their personal or communal reading and prayer on the Letter to the Ephesians, priests, deacons, or well-prepared laypersons may offer, at the end of Sunday liturgy, a few simple methodological suggestions:

- Read and reread the text several times.
- Take one verse and repeat it until it is memorized.
- Read a passage and spend a few minutes in silence reflecting on it;
- Alternate the reading with responsories or with invocations to the Holy Spirit (see some examples below).

5. Priests or deacons may offer short catechesis during the week on certain passages that help in meditative reading and understanding of the letter
(for example: 1:15–23; 2:14–18; 3:1–7; 4:17–24; 5:8–14; 6:10–14).

Ways of Reading

The time needed to read the entire letter slowly and calmly is **at most 35–40 minutes**.
For each chapter, **about 6–7 minutes**.

Obviously, the ways of reading can vary widely:

- personal reading
- in small groups of parishioners or friends
- as a family
- in church during the Liturgy of the Word or during a Holy Hour
- online
- in religious communities, it is recommended to set a time for communal reading

- during meetings of various parish groups, on Sunday or even during the following week
- during the recitation of the Rosary (one chapter as an introduction to each mystery)
- reading the whole letter continuously, or reading only part of it
- reading the whole letter while alternating each chapter with a psalm
(for example:
chap. 1 – Ps 119:1–32;
chap. 2 – Ps 119:33–64;
chap. 3 – Ps 119:65–96;
chap. 4 – Ps 119:97–128;
chap. 5 – Ps 119:129–160;
chap. 6 – Ps 119:161–176)
- reading one chapter each day of the week.

Invocations to the Holy Spirit

- 1) Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the inmost hearts of your faithful;
open our minds to understand your Word;
grant that we may grasp its height, its width, and its depth.
- 2) Come, Holy Spirit,
without the Scriptures the events of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection remain
unreadable to us;
without the Scriptures we cannot understand the very mission of His Church in the
world, nor His mystery of salvation for all humanity.
- 3) Come, Holy Spirit,
send down upon us from heaven a ray of your light:
for who can understand even one of the words of Jesus?
So much escapes us, and we are like the thirsty who long for the fountain of life.
- 4) Come, Holy Spirit,
grant your faithful your seven holy gifts,
that we may contemplate the infinite and manifold beauty found in the words of Jesus,
and that we may welcome into our lives, with fitting love, His hidden treasures.

5) Come, Holy Spirit,
come, Light of hearts, as on the day of our Baptism;
open our ears to listen without resistance to the Word of Jesus;
make our whole life a clear transparency of the thrice-holy Trinity.

RESPONSES TO BE ALTERNATED WITH THE READING AT THE END OF EACH CHAPTER

Chapter 1

R. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (3a)
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens. (3b) **R.**

- He chose us in him, before the foundation of the world,
to be holy and without blemish before him in love. (4) **R.**
- He destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ,
in accord with the favor of his will. (5) **R.**
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Chapter 2

R. He is our peace, he who made both one. (14)

- He came and preached peace to you who were far off
and peace to those who were near. (17) **R.**
- For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. (18) **R.**
- So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners,
but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God.
(19) **R.**
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Chapter 3

R. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (21)

- To me, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles
the inscrutable riches of Christ. (8) **R.**
- And to bring to light for all the plan of the mystery hidden from ages past in God who
created all things. (9) **R.**
- That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. (17) **R.**
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Chapter 4

R. Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ. (32)

- One body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call. (4) **R.**
- One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (6) **R.**
- Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. (7) **R.**
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Chapter 5

R. Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light. (14)

- Live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us. (2) **R.**
- For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light. (8) **R.**
- Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. (18-19) **R.**
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Chapter 6

R. Draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power. (10)

- Put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day. (11) **R.**
- For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers. (12) **R.**
- And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (17) **R.**
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...