

Conquering hardships through the love of Jesus Christ

The Gospels speak to us of the humanity of Christ. Jesus took on a real, complete human nature while retaining His full divine nature. Though He was in the form of God, Jesus did not deem equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, He emptied Himself and took the form of a slave, coming in human likeness (Phil 2:6-7). The humanity of Christ covers three key areas: (1) His human body, (2) His human intellect and wisdom, and (3) His human feelings. In His human body, Jesus experienced hunger, thirst, pain, weariness and death. Growing up as a human being, Jesus grew in intellect and wisdom (Lk 2:52). Jesus also felt human emotions like joy, sorrow, indignation, sympathy and love; He felt anguish and cried (Jn 11:35).

In Matthew 14, Jesus felt intense grief upon hearing about the death of His cousin, John the Baptist; He withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by Himself (Mt 14:13). But despite His grief and weariness, Jesus had no time to rest – a large crowd followed Him on foot; rather than sending them away, Jesus felt pity for the people and spent the entire day teaching and healing the sick among them. The day passed by quickly, and evening came. The disciples asked Jesus to dismiss the crowds, so that the people can go to the villages and buy food for themselves. However, Jesus performed a miracle which fed five thousand men, including their women and children. In doing all of these things, Jesus showed how great His love was for the people. When all were said and done, Jesus dismissed the crowds so that He could go up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Once again, this showed the humanity of Christ and His human need to withdraw, quiet His mind, and restore His strength through His Father.

You might think, “I wasn’t there, I wasn’t healed or fed. It is hard for me to feel that Jesus loves me.” St. Paul wasn’t there either when Jesus performed His miracles, but he came to understand the love of Christ through his dramatic encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, through his experience of receiving mercy despite persecuting the followers of Christ, and through the various means of how the mysteries of the faith were revealed to him. Eventually, Christ chose St. Paul as an apostle to the nations, showing him grace each step of the way. St. Paul viewed his conversion as evidence of Christ's boundless love and mercy toward him. St. Paul wrote: “I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given Himself up for me” (Gal 2:20). In this way, St. Paul made the Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross deeply personal rather than just a biblical event.

As St. Paul acquired a deep understanding of the love of Christ; he wrote: “What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?” (Rom 8:35) In order to understand this fully, we must look at the seven specific words St. Paul used for suffering: (1) anguish – mental and emotional stress caused by life situations, (2) distress – the feeling of being trapped and helpless with no way out, (3) persecution – organized hate, social exclusion, and abuse from persecutors, (4) famine – extreme hunger and economic hardship where a person lacks the most basic food to survive, (5) nakedness – destitution, exposure to the elements and stripped of dignity, (6) peril – living in extreme danger, in high-risk and life-threatening conditions, (7) the sword – the ultimate threat of a bloody and violent death.

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St. Paul quotes Psalm 44: “As it is written: For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered” (Rom 8:36, Ps 44:23). In Psalm 44, the psalmist expressed fear that their immense suffering was because God had abandoned them for worshipping false Gods. In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul points out that in the new covenant with Christ, these hardships no longer meant abandonment; instead, Christians have conquered all these things through Christ's unfailing love.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

We will have Masses on Sunday, August 2, at the regular schedule.

Fr. Bill will administer the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the Sanctuary after the 10:30am Mass on Sunday.

The Fall Schedule for the Chinese Language Classes have been posted in our church website: hnojat1.org. Classes begin on August 15, please download the registration form from the website.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta has launched its “Rooted in Christ – Growing in Faith” campaign to raise funds for the programs and activities of the Archdiocese. Each parish and mission church in the Archdiocese is expected to participate with their individual goals. The Archdiocese has designated our parish goal of \$60,000, and has scheduled our parish to begin with a preparation period from January to March 2027 and actual campaign period from April to September 30, 2027.

Did you know that you can make donations to the church directly from your retirement account? Each time you make a distribution from your retirement account, it is counted as taxable income. However, if you make a donation (up to \$108,000), to qualified charities through QCD (Qualified Charitable Distributions), these donations, although not tax-deductible, are excluded from taxable income. Many older retired donors use this strategy to lower their taxable income, but it also satisfies Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) without increasing their adjusted gross income (AGI). Consult your financial advisor or contact your retirement account specialist.

Prayer List: Ka Cheng Zhang, Susan Lee, Michael Tan, Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 6:30 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 6:30 PM (English)		