

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The Lord said: I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction.
You will call upon me, and I will answer you, and I will lead back your captives from every place.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God,
the constant gladness of being devoted to you,
for it is full and lasting happiness
to serve with constancy
the author of all that is good.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Malachi 3:19-20

A reading from the prophet Malachi.

The day is coming now, burning like a furnace;
and all the arrogant and the evil-doers will be
like stubble. The day that is coming is going to
burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, leaving
them neither root nor stalk. But for you who fear
my name, the sun of righteousness will shine
out with healing in its rays.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps 97:5-9

Response:

**The Lord comes to rule the peoples with
fairness.**

1. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp
with the sound of music.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord. (R.)
2. Let the sea and all within it, thunder;
the world, and all its peoples.
Let the rivers clap their hands
and the hills ring out their joy
at the presence of the Lord. (R.)
3. For the Lord comes,
he comes to rule the earth.
He will rule the world with justice
and the peoples with fairness. (R.)

SECOND READING 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians.

You know how you are supposed to imitate us: now we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we ever have our meals at anyone's table without paying for them; no, we worked night and day, slaving and straining, so as not to be a burden on any of you. This was not because we had no right to be, but in order to make ourselves an example for you to follow.

We gave you a rule when we were with you: not to let anyone have any food if he refused to do any work. Now we hear that there are some of you who are living in idleness, doing no work themselves but interfering with everyone else's. In the Lord Jesus Christ, we order and call on people of this kind to go on quietly working and earning the food that they eat.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Stay awake, praying at all times
for the strength to stand with confidence
before the Son of Man.**

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 21:5-19

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, "All these things you are staring at now the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed." And they put to him this question: "Master," they said "when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?" "Take care not to be deceived," he said "because many will come using my name and saying, 'I am he' and, 'The time is near at hand.' Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon." Then he said to them, "Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

"But before all this happens, men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. You will be hated by all on account of my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your endurance will win you your lives."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,**

**born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,**

(all bow during the next three lines)

**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.**

**I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant, O Lord, we pray,
that what we offer in the sight of your majesty
may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to
you
and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**To be near God is my happiness,
to place my hope in God the Lord.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred
mystery,
humbly imploring, O Lord,
that what your Son commanded us to do
in memory of him
may bring us growth in charity.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Unless we look at a person and see the beauty that is in them, we can contribute nothing to them. One does not help a person by discerning what is wrong, what is ugly, what is distorted. Christ looked at everyone he met, at the prostitute, at the thief, and saw the beauty hidden there. Perhaps it was distorted, perhaps damaged, but it was beauty none the less, and what he did was to call out this beauty.

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

Sunday Message

33RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 16 November 2025 • Colour: Green • Psalter Week 1



In today's Gospel, Jesus warns his followers of tough times ahead. The Church should brace itself for a time of persecution. Its members will know betrayal, even from family members and close friends. Above all, its witness to the truth will make it highly unpopular. And so it has proven.

Countless Christians have given their lives for the Gospel over the centuries. If anything, the numbers are increasing. Remember Fr Jacques Hamel, the elderly French priest murdered in 2016 while he celebrated Mass in a Normandy church. Or the image of a long line of young men kneeling in an arid desert, each with an executioner standing behind him. They were martyred because they were Coptic Christians.

Martyrdom takes other forms, too. As Pope Francis states in *Gaudete et Exsultate*: "Persecutions are not a reality of the past, for today too we experience them, whether by the shedding of blood, as is the case with so many contemporary martyrs, or by more subtle means, by slander and lies. Jesus calls us blessed when people 'utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.' At other times, persecution can take the form of gibes that try to caricature our faith and make us seem ridiculous."

In our modern society, to say you are a Christian is to invite scorn. National and social media are especially hostile to the church and religion. It is a cold climate for people of faith.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the final beatitude refers to two types of persecution - martyrdom and suffering for the sake of the kingdom. It's unlikely we will be put to death for our faith, but it is likely we will be asked to suffer the second type of martyrdom - the opposition that comes from being identified as Christian.

Being a committed Christian isn't easy. "Jesus himself warns us that the path he proposes goes against the flow, even making us challenge society by the way we live and, as a result, becoming a nuisance," writes Pope Francis. "He reminds us how many people have been, and still are, persecuted simply because they struggle for justice, because they take seriously their commitment to God and to others. Unless we wish to sink into an obscure mediocrity, let us not long for an easy life, for 'whoever would save his life will lose it.'"

"In living the Gospel, we cannot expect that everything will be easy, for the thirst for power and worldly interests often stands in our way," warns Pope Francis. Living the Gospel "will be viewed negatively, regarded with suspicion, and met with ridicule."

"Whatever weariness and pain we may experience in living the commandment of love and following the way of justice, the cross remains the source of our growth and sanctification," Pope Francis continues. "We must never forget that when the New Testament tells us we will have to endure suffering for the Gospel's sake, it speaks precisely of persecution."

Jesus' final words in today's Gospel are consoling. God will take account of every witness given to the truth; none of it will be forgotten, for even the hairs of the believer's head are numbered. Endurance and patience will be the hallmark virtues of Christians under persecution. ■

REFLECT

The monks had a major decision to make. An Islamic insurgency was taking place in Algeria, and many lives were being lost. A community of French Trappists had lived in the monastery of Tibhirine for decades, in harmony with the local Muslim population. Now, their harmony was being disrupted, and the monks had to decide whether to get out of the country. They chose to remain. Despite the growing danger, they decided to stand in solidarity with the townspeople. They agreed on the moral importance of maintaining their presence with the locals, even when faced with violence and death. On the night of 26–27 March 1996, terrorists seized seven of the monks and took them away. Two months later, their bodies were discovered. They had given their lives out of love for God and God's people. Their story is told in the beautiful film 'Of Gods and Men.'

Sixteen years earlier, American lay missionary, Jean Donovan, faced a similar dilemma. In 1980, El Salvador was in the middle of such a brutal civil war that the American Peace Corps withdrew their volunteers from the country. They were afraid Government death squads would target them. Jean's anxious parents wanted her to leave too. But she chose to stay. She wrote to a friend: "The Peace Corps left today and my heart sank low. The danger is extreme and they were right to leave... Now I must assess my own position because I am not up for suicide. Several times I have decided to leave El Salvador. I almost could, except for the children, the poor, bruised victims of this insanity. Who would care for them?"

Though afraid for her life, Jean overcame her fear and decided to stay. On 2 December 1980, she and three Maryknoll sisters were taken from their car and murdered by members of the El Salvadoran military. Jean was 27 years old when she became a martyr. Her story is told in the beautiful film 'Choices of the Heart.' ■

SAY

"Lord, I thank you for my faith. Help me to live it courageously."

DO

Speak to someone about why your faith is important to you.

LEARN

The Christian witnesses to the faith at all times and in all places

The Christian is happy to suffer for the sake of the Kingdom of God

PRAY

Pray for the Church and for Christians everywhere that they will always witness to and speak the truth, no matter how dangerous it may be.