

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right;  
treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

**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**

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption,  
look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,  
that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom  
and an everlasting inheritance.  
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**

Wisdom 9:13-18

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

What man can know the intentions of God?  
Who can divine the will of the Lord?  
The reasonings of mortals are unsure  
and our intentions unstable;  
for a perishable body presses down the soul,  
and this tent of clay weighs down the teeming mind.  
It is hard enough for us to work out what is on earth,  
laborious to know what lies within our reach;  
who, then, can discover what is in the heavens?  
As for your intention, who could have learnt it,  
had you not granted Wisdom  
and sent your holy spirit from above?  
Thus have the paths of those on earth been straightened  
and men been taught what pleases you,  
and saved, by Wisdom.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Ps 89

Response:

**O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next.**

1. You turn men back into dust  
and say: "Go back, sons of men."  
To your eyes a thousand years  
are like yesterday, come and gone,  
no more than a watch in the night. (R.)

2. You sweep men away like a dream,  
like grass which springs up in the morning.  
In the morning it springs up and flowers:  
by evening it withers and fades. (R.)
3. Make us know the shortness of our life  
that we may gain wisdom of heart.  
Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever?  
Show pity to your servants. (R.)
4. In the morning, fill us with your love;  
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.  
Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:  
give success to the work of our hands. (R.)

**SECOND READING**

Philemon 9-10, 12-17

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Philemon.

This is Paul writing, an old man now and, what is more, still a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for a child of mine, whose father I became while wearing these chains: I mean Onesimus. I am sending him back to you, and with him – I could say – a part of my own self. I should have liked to keep him with me; he could have been a substitute for you, to help me while I am in the chains that the Good News has brought me. However, I did not want to do anything without your consent; it would have been forcing your act of kindness, which should be spontaneous. I know you have been deprived of Onesimus for a time, but it was only so that you could have him back for ever, not as a slave anymore, but something much better than a slave, a dear brother; especially dear to me, but how much more to you, as a blood-brother as well as a brother in the Lord. So if all that we have in common means anything to you, welcome him as you would me.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord,  
because I have made known to you  
everything I have learnt from my Father.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Luke 14:25-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them. "If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple. Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. "And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, the onlookers would all start making fun of him and saying, 'Here is a man who started to build and was unable to finish.' Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who advanced against him with twenty thousand? If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace. So in the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions."

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**

O God, who give us the gift of true prayer and of peace,  
graciously grant that, through this offering,  
we may do fitting homage to your divine majesty  
and, by partaking of the sacred mystery,  
we may be faithfully united in mind and heart.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,  
so my soul is yearning for you, my God;  
my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant that your faithful, O Lord,  
whom you nourish and endow with life  
through the food of your Word and heavenly Sacrament,  
may so benefit from your beloved Son's great gifts  
that we may merit an eternal share in his life.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen.

# Sunday Message

23RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## THE WORD

Year C • 7 September 2025 • Colour: Green • Psalter Week 3



In today's Gospel, Jesus points out the tremendous cost of becoming a disciple. It will involve 'hating' your nearest and dearest, hating even your own life. It is akin to taking up the cross and following Jesus.

The best way to understand the word 'hate' here is to take it as another way of stating a preference. Disciples are to prefer Jesus above all else, including their family and even their own life. For most who've grown up in Christian households, this will seldom be an issue. But Jesus is thinking of those who may be on the verge of deciding to follow him but find it difficult due to family opposition. If you were from a Jewish family, becoming a follower of Jesus meant breaking with ways and values that had been hard won by your ancestors. If you were a prospective pagan convert reading Luke's Gospel to decide whether to follow this 'new way,' the choice could seem just as demanding.

Christians were regarded as a very strange, foreign group whose way of life ran against the grain of Greek and Roman society. Their fellowship included people on the margins – poor workers, even slaves. Some new Christians might have been tempted to cover up their membership of the church by a kind of public conformity to their family's older ways. If this were the case, they would be constantly looking over their shoulders and could never be free enough to be whole-hearted Christians. They will only be able to find that freedom through a definitive break with their families that might appear to their parents as though their children 'hated' them.

For those deeply attached to their families, that kind of break can seem like a painful death. This is why Jesus compares it to the most painful death known, death on a cross. Genuine disciples must take up the cross as Jesus did. In doing so, they will discover it is the way that leads to the new life of Resurrection.

The two parable-like stories about the need to count the cost should be seen in the light of these stark sayings. By putting the parable of the tower builder and the king going to war immediately after the saying about taking up one's cross, Luke is clearly warning would-be converts to calculate carefully the cost involved in following Jesus. It will demand total freedom from everything we hold dear. ■

## PRAY

It is not easy to be a Christian in our secular society. Pray for the members of your family and your parish, and for the church throughout the world, that we will be steadfast in the faith and effective witnesses to it.

## SAY

**"Lord, help me to put you first at all times. Allow nothing to hold me back from being faithful to you. Amen."**

## REFLECT

Today's Gospel is really about freedom. To be truly free, you sometimes have to let go of dearly held plans or attachments that hold you back from being your best self or following your true calling. The founder of the Redemptorists, St Alphonsus Liguori, often wrote about this kind of freedom. He imagines how a skylark that has spent most of its life in a cage might long to escape. One day, the owner leaves the cage open. The bird flies out eagerly, but after a short flight, discovers it can go no further because it is shackled by a silken thread so fine it has never noticed it. Alphonsus suggests that our ambitions to do great things are often hampered by such invisible threads that we find too difficult to snap. As you read today's Gospel, consider if there is any silken thread preventing you from responding whole-heartedly to the good news. ■

## DO

Think about what it means to follow Jesus. Is there anything you need to change in order to be a more committed disciple?



## LEARN

The true disciple puts Jesus Christ and his teaching above everything else

The true disciple knows that discipleship costs

To follow Jesus faithfully is the wisest calculation any person can make

Religion isn't a hobby, a private concern – like golf or yoga or football. Everything we do must be at the service of God's kingdom