

Sunday Readings

26th July 2026

Collect

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A reading from the first book of the Kings 3:5,7-12

In those days: The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, 'Ask what I shall give you.' And Solomon said, 'O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?'

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. And God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life, or riches, or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.'

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 118:57,72,76-77,127-130. R/. v.97

R/. Lord, how I love your law!

My part, I have resolved, O Lord,
is to obey your word.

The law from your mouth means more to me
than silver and gold. **R/.**

Let your love be ready to console me
by your promise to your servant.

Let your love come and I shall live
for your law is my delight. **R/.**

That is why I love your commands
more than finest gold.

That is why I rule my life by your precepts,
I hate false ways. **R/.**

Your will is wonderful indeed;
therefore I obey it.

The unfolding of your word gives light
and teaches the simple. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul
to the Romans

8:28-30

Brothers and Sisters: We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel Acclamation

Cf. Matthew 11:25

Alleluia, alleluia.

I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
you have revealed the secrets of the kingdom to
little children.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:44-52

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus said to the crowd: 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

'Have you understood all these things?' They said to him, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

The Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer after Communion

We have consumed, O Lord, this divine Sacrament, the perpetual memorial of the Passion of your Son; grant, we pray, that this gift, which he himself gave us with love beyond all telling, may profit us for salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.

The Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

Friday 31st July 2026

St Ignatius Loyola

(1491 - 1556)

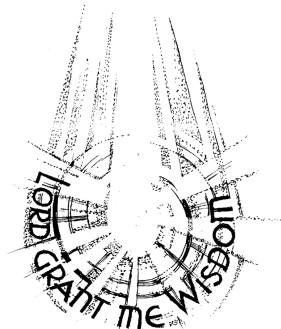
There are some things that we can know only by faith, such as the statement in the Letter to the Romans, which is our second reading today: We know that all things work for good for those who love God. For those who have no faith, it is impossible to good in every situation. Even for us with faith, it can be difficult at times, but if we persevere in looking for the good, we always find it.

This is very similar to the story in the Gospel today. If someone finds a hidden treasure in a field, that person will usually try to find a way to obtain it. We all like treasures and most of us would be happy to have more resources to live. Or if we are collectors of stamps or other types of things, we can get totally involved in acquiring what we lack to complete our collections. Most of us are not fishermen, yet we can understand a large haul of fish, and throwing out those that have no commercial value.

So the question for us today really comes down to this: what is the deepest and most important value in our lives? Do we see God as that value? Do we see value for the Kingdom of God in our lives? Or is it just something that we play at?

We can listen to the story about Solomon in the first reading, from the First Book of Kings. What gift would we ask of God? Honestly, there are times when we might ask for many things: life for another person, enough money for our families, safety for those who travel and so on. Solomon does not ask for a deeper relationship with God, but for a gift that will help him serve others better. We don't have to be pious about this. Instead, we need to seek that which will help us love others more because in loving others more, we love God.

God invites us to reflect on our lives and on our values today. God invites us to put our lives in order so that all of our choices reflect His love for us and our love for others. This is the project of a whole life time and not something that we can achieve and never worry about once more. God help us! Let us give Him praise.



Ignatius (or Iñigo) was born in Loyola in the Spanish Basque country. He was a soldier, but was wounded in the battle of Pamplona (against the French) at the age of 30. During a long convalescence he read a life of Christ and a collection of lives of the saints, and discovered that his true vocation was to devote his life wholly to God. He was as systematic about this as he had been about his military career: he spent a year's retreat in a Dominican friary, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and then set about learning Latin.

Such enthusiasm in a layman caused grave suspicion in the Spanish authorities, and he was questioned and imprisoned more than once. He moved to Paris in 1528 and continued his studies; and then in 1534 Ignatius and six companions bound themselves to become missionaries to the Muslims in Palestine. By the time they were ready to set out, war made the journey impossible and so the group (now numbering ten) offered their services to the Pope in any capacity he might choose. A number of them were duly ordained and they were all assigned to various tasks.

Soon it was proposed that they should organise themselves into a regular religious order, and in 1540 the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) was formed. Ignatius was the first Superior General until his death. Soon after their foundation the Jesuits began to meet the challenge of the Reformation: a tough task, given the debilitated state into which the Church had fallen, but one which, as Ignatius said, had to be undertaken "without hard words or contempt for people's errors".

Ignatius had a gift for inspiring friendship, and was the recipient of deep spiritual insight. Soon after his conversion Ignatius wrote the Spiritual Exercises, a systematic step-by-step retreat that can be followed by anyone – and has been followed by many, not all of them Catholics, ever since.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer of St Ignatius of Loyola

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do your will. Amen.