

# Sunday Readings

## 27th July 2025

### FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Genesis 18:20-32

In those days: The LORD said, 'Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know.' So the men turned from there and went towards Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.

Then Abraham drew near and said, 'Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?' And the LORD said, 'If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.' Abraham answered and said, 'Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking. Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?' And he said, 'I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.' Again he spoke to him and said, 'Suppose forty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of forty I will not do it.' Then he said, 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak. Suppose thirty are found there.' He answered, 'I will not do it, if I find thirty there.' He said, 'Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.' Then he said, 'Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.' He answered, 'For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.'

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

### Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 137:1-3. 6-8. R/. V.3

**R/. On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.**

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart:  
you have heard the words of my mouth.  
In the presence of the angels I will bless you.  
I will adore before your holy temple. **R/.**

I thank you for your faithfulness and love,  
which excel all we ever knew of you.  
On the day I called, you answered;  
you increased the strength of my soul. **R/.**

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly  
and the haughty he knows from afar.  
Though I walk in the midst of affliction  
you give me life and frustrate my foes. **R/.**

You stretch out your hand and save me,  
your hand will do all things for me.  
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,  
discard not the work of your hands. **R/.**

### SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians 2:12-14

Brothers and Sisters: You have been buried with Christ in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

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

### Gospel Acclamation

**Romans 8:15bc**

Alleluia, alleluia.

You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons,  
by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'  
Alleluia.

### GOSPEL

**Luke 11:1-13**

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

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

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' And he said to them, 'When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."''

And he said to them, 'Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey and I have nothing to set before him"; and he will answer from within, "Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything"? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

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

# The Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year C

## The Word of God

## Saint of the Week

Friday 1st August 2025

**St Alphonsus Liguori (1696 - 1787)**

**L**ord, teach us to pray. Every Christian who prays wants to pray better. They can't help but want this. If prayer is desire for God they want to desire more. If prayer is a reaching out they want to reach further. If prayer is opening to God they want to open wider. If prayer is union with God they want closer union. *Lord, teach us to pray*: this is the plea of every disciple.

The Lord's best answer to this question is: *Say this when you pray: 'Father, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come...'*

We can well imagine that these opening lines of the



Our Father formed part of Jesus' personal prayer as well. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine a more sublime form of words than these with which to begin

our prayer. We imagine them on the lips of Jesus, wondering how he spoke them, and then ask that we may learn to say them as he did.

Two wonderful things are going on here. Firstly we praying in the words Jesus himself has given us to pray and secondly, we discover that we are praying *with him*.

We are praying together, side by side – *prayer partners* – if you like. But more than that, Jesus allows us, through the prayer he has given us, to join him in *his* prayer, and we discover that we are praying *through him, with him, in him*. Our prayer becomes his prayer.

To summarise the rest of the Gospel reading today we might say that Jesus teaches us to pray also with *persistence* and with *hope*. Our prayers will be answered. That is his promise.

And what should we pray for? That is up to us. Jesus specifies only one gift the Father will never, ever refuse to grant us. The more experienced and mature we become in the Christian life of prayer the more we will come to appreciate that this gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love which exists between the Father and the Son, is the ultimate *Gift of gifts* – the deepest desire and fulfilment of every heart, the goal of all prayer.

He was a Neapolitan lawyer who lost a court case in a spectacular fashion, when it turned out that a key document in his case had been misinterpreted by him and in fact proved his opponent's case instead. He immediately left the law and studied for the priesthood. But God is not proud, and accepts people even on the rebound: Alphonsus became a priest.

He preached in the rural districts around Naples, and it was his boast that he never delivered a sermon that the poorest old woman in the congregation could not understand. His bishop asked him to establish an order of missionaries to work in the countryside, and the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists) was formally established in 1749.

He was a bishop from 1762 to 1775, insisting on the dignified and unhurried celebration of the Mass and the firm treatment of persistent wrongdoers.

The Redemptorists proved to be a quarrelsome congregation: their formal establishment had been delayed by more than a decade because of internal dissension. After his retirement Alphonsus had to try to make peace within the congregation. Unfortunately his old failing returned and he signed a new Constitution for the Redemptorists without reading it properly (though, to be fair to him, he was 80 and in poor health at the time). The result was that the Redemptorists split into two separate congregations, both of whom rejected Alphonsus: peace was not restored until some time after his death.

Alphonsus lived an exceptionally holy life. He was also an outstanding moral theologian.

## Prayer of the Week

### A Prayer for Pilgrims

Teach us, O God ,  
to view our life here on earth  
as a pilgrim's path to heaven,  
and give us grace to tread it courageously  
in the company of your faithful people.  
Help us to set our affections  
on things above,  
not on the passing vanities of this world,  
and grant that as we journey on  
in the way of holiness  
we may bear a good witness to our Lord,  
and serve all who need our help  
along the way,  
for the glory of your name. Amen