

Sunday Readings

6th September 2026

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, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel 33:7-9

Thus says the Lord: 'So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.'

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

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 94:1-2. 6-9. R/. v.8

**R/. O that today you would listen to his voice!
Harden not your hearts.**

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;
hail the rock who saves us.

Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord. **R/.**

Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us:
for he is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. **R/.**

O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my
work.' **R/.**



SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

13:8-10

Brothers and Sisters: Owe no one anything, except to love each other. For the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet', and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

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

Gospel Acclamation

2 Corinthians 5:19

Alleluia, alleluia.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:15-20

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 his disciples, 'If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.'

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

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.

The Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

What's the best way to repair a damaged relationship? Jesus offers his disciples spiritual freedom and power for restoring broken or injured relationships. Jesus makes clear that his followers should not tolerate a breach in relationships among themselves. Sin must be confronted and help must be offered to restore a damaged relationship. When relationships between brothers and sisters in the Lord are damaged, then we must spare no effort to help the brother or sister at fault to see their error and to get things right again. Saint Augustine of Hippo comments on Jesus' instruction:

If someone has done you injury and you have suffered, what should be done? You have heard the answer already in today's scripture: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone." If you fail to do so, you are worse than he is. He has done someone harm, and by doing harm he has stricken himself with a grievous wound. Will you then completely disregard your brother's wound? Will you simply watch him stumble and fall down? Will you disregard his predicament? If so, you are worse in your silence than he in his abuse. Therefore, when any one sins against us, let us take great care, but not merely for ourselves. For it is a glorious thing to forget injuries. Just set aside your own injury, but do not neglect your brother's wound. Therefore "go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone," intent upon his amendment but sparing his sense of shame. For it might happen that through defensiveness he will begin to justify his sin, and so you will have inadvertently nudged him still closer toward the very behaviour you desire to amend. Therefore "tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother," because he might have been lost, had you not spoken with him. [Sermon 82.7]

What can we learn from this passage about how to mend a damaged relationship? If you feel you have been wronged by someone, Jesus says the first step is to speak directly but privately to the individual who has done the harm. One of the worst things we can do is brood over our grievance. This can poison the mind and heart and make it more difficult to go directly to the person who caused the damage. If we truly want to settle a difference between someone, we need to do it face to face. If this fails in its purpose, then the second step is to bring another person or persons, someone who is wise and gracious rather than someone who is hot-tempered or judgmental. The goal is not so much to put the offender on trial, but to persuade the offender to see the wrong and to be reconciled. And if this fails, then we must still not give up, but seek the help of the Christian community.

Do you tolerate broken relationships or do you seek to repair them as God gives you the opportunity to mend and restore what is broken?

Wednesday 9th September 2026

St Peter Claver (1581 - 1654)

He was born in Catalonia and studied at the University of Barcelona. He became a Jesuit; and while he was studying philosophy in Mallorca, the door-keeper of the college, Alfonso Rodríguez, saw that his true vocation was to evangelize the New World, and encouraged him to fulfil that vocation. (Rodríguez was later canonized on the same day as Peter Claver himself).

He arrived in Cartagena, in what is now Colombia, in 1610, and after his ordination six years later he laboured there for 33 years. He brought fresh food to the slave-ships as they arrived, instructed the slaves and baptized them in the faith, followed their progress and kept track of them even when they were sent to the mines and plantations, defending them as well as he could from oppressive slave-owners. He organized teams of catechists who spoke the many languages spoken by the slaves. He worked in hospitals also, looking after lepers among others, and in prisons.

Naturally he made himself unpopular by his work: as his superior said, 'unfortunately for himself he is a Catalan, pig-headed and difficult'. Opposition came from both within the Church and outside it, but there were always exceptions. For instance, while many fashionable ladies refused to enter his city churches, a few, such as Doña Isabel de Urbina, became his strong and lifelong supporters.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer of Thomas Merton

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that, if I do this, you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore, I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Amen.