

Sunday Readings

27th September 2026

Collect

O God, who manifest your almighty power above all by pardoning and showing mercy, bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us and make those hastening to attain your promises heirs to the treasures of heaven. 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 18:25-28

Thus says the Lord: 'You say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.'

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

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 25:4-9. R/. v.6

R/. Remember your mercy, Lord.

Lord, make me know your ways.

Lord, teach me your paths.

Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour. **R/.**

Remember your mercy, Lord,

and the love you have shown from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth.

In your love remember me.

because of your goodness, O Lord. **R/.**

The Lord is good and upright.

He shows the path to those who stray,

He guides the humble in the right path,

He teaches his way to the poor. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul
to the Philippians

2:1-11

Brothers and Sisters: If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy; complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do

nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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

Gospel Acclamation

John 10:27

Alleluia, alleluia.

My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord,
and I know them, and they follow me.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 21:28-32

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 chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." And he answered, "I will not", but afterwards he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, "I go, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterwards change your minds and believe him.'

The Gospel of the Lord,

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer after Communion

May this heavenly mystery, O Lord,
restore us in mind and body,
that we may be coheirs in glory with Christ,
to whose suffering we are united
whenever we proclaim his Death.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

The Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

We are all like both of these sons in the Gospel of Matthew today, whether we are men or women. The image is not about men, it is about humans. These images from the Gospel are meant to help us see ourselves as we are and to choose to follow God as much as we can. It is important not to think that somehow we can become perfect. Yes, we can aim at that, but the perfection is always in the love that we have for God and for others, not in achieving everything perfectly in all that we do.

The first reading today, from the Prophet Ezekiel, is such a clear invitation to turn away from sin. Right away we must recognize that this invitation is a life invitation. It is not something that you or I can do once and for all - except perhaps with an incredibly special grace from God. What is more normal is that we spend our whole life seeking to turn away from sin and to give our hearts and our actions to the Lord. It is an ongoing process until our death.

Thus we can see the spirituality of the second reading today, from the Letter to the Philippians: become obedient, even unto death. For Jesus our Saviour, this was His whole life. For us, it can become our life, bringing us much joy and delight in the struggle. Even for Jesus, this obedience was a struggle, even though He was always obedient. For us, it is again the struggle to return to obedience when we fail and to keep trying to be obedient always.

The spiritual teaching of the readings today can be summed up in this sentence from the second reading: Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also for those of others.

Although this is truly simple advice, most of us cannot live it consistently and so we must struggle day after day. We want to live our relationship with God in such a way that we are responding to His love for us. Over and over most of us fail. What truly distinguishes a follower of Jesus is that the follower continues trying to be faithful, day after day, for a whole lifetime. We can understand the phrase: the Lord's way is not fair, and yet we accept that God's ways are always fair and ours are not, so we keep trying to be faithful.

Every Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord. We bear witness to the joy of the Resurrection by our faithfulness in seeking His will and in striving to be faithful. Our faith is renewed daily because we know God's compassion and forgiveness. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

Thursday 1 October 2026
Saint Thérèse of Lisieux
(1873 - 1897)



What makes St Thérèse so special? We have grown used to the idea that just as there are people with talents for sport or scholarship, and the rest of us can only admire them without trying to keep up, so there are people with a talent for holiness and heroic virtue, and the rest of us can only bumble along as best we can. We can't do better

because we're not designed to do better, so there's no point in trying. We sink into a consoling mediocrity.

Thérèse wrecks this. She was physically weak and psychologically vulnerable. For her the great saints were giants, they were inaccessible mountains, and she was only an "obscure grain of sand;" but she was not discouraged. St John of the Cross taught her that God can never inspire desires that cannot be fulfilled. The Book of Proverbs told her, "If anyone is *a very little one*, let him come to me." If you only look, Scripture is permeated with images of our littleness and weakness with respect to God, and of his care for us in our insignificance.

Thérèse's "Little Way" means taking God at his word and letting his love for us wash away our sins and imperfections. When a priest told her that her falling asleep during prayer was due to a want of fervour and fidelity and she should be desolate over it, she wrote "I am not desolate. I remember that little children are just as pleasing to their parents when they are asleep as when they are awake." If we can't advance to Heaven in giant strides, we can do it in tiny little steps. Our weakness is no excuse for mediocrity.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus

Deepen Your love in me, O Lord, that I may learn in my inmost heart how sweet it is to love, to be dissolved, and to plunge myself into Your love. Let Your love possess and raise me above myself, with a fervour and wonder beyond imagination. Let me sing the song of love. Let me follow you into the heights. Let my soul spend itself in Your praise, rejoicing for love. Let me love you more than myself, and myself only for Your sake. Let me love others, as Your law commands.