

Sunday Readings

16 February 2025

Collect

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. 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 Jeremiah 17:5-8

Thus says the LORD: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.

'Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 1:1-4,6

R/. Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord.

Happy indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;
nor lingers in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponders his law day and night. **R/.**

He is like a tree that is planted
beside the flowing waters,
that yields its fruit in due season
and whose leaves shall never fade;
and all that he does shall prosper. **R/.**

Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they like winnowed chaff
shall be driven away by the wind.
for the Lord guards the way of the just
but the way of the wicked leads to doom. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 15:12,16-20

Brothers and Sisters: If Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 6:23

*Alleluia, alleluia.
Rejoice and leap for joy, says the Lord,
for behold, your reward is great in heaven.
Alleluia.*

GOSPEL

Luke 6:17,20-26

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus came down with the Twelve and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and spurn your name as evil on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.'

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



The Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year C

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

These are strong readings this week and we have to listen to them attentively. At first hearing, it can sound like the Lord will condemn all those who have money, those who have food, all who laugh and those about whom we speak well. On the other side we hear blessings for all who are poor, all who do not have food, those who mourn and those who are spoken badly about (but only for the sake of the name of Jesus).

So do we have to believe that anyone who has more than sufficient money or even just enough money will not enter the kingdom? Do we have to believe that anyone who has sufficient food cannot enter the kingdom? Do we have to believe that all those who laugh are not going to enter the Kingdom? Probably not! What our Lord is getting at is the inner attitudes that all of us have within us.

The temptation - and it is a temptation for all of us - is to get what we need and forget about others. This seems to be why so very often the poor are very generous and those who have enough are uneasy to give what they have lest they end up without enough. This is an inner attitude that is against the Gospel. There is a tendency to think about me having enough food before thinking about those who don't. Quite often, those who don't have enough food are more willing to share the little they have than those who have enough but are worried that they won't.

Christ is truly risen! Saint Paul tells us this so very strongly. If Christ has been raised so will we be raised. If we hope only for this life, we are to be pitied. It is when we begin to hope for eternal life and we can accept giving to others and helping others. It is in hope that we can fast so that others might have food. It is faith that we can cry when we see the misery of our sisters and brothers and finally find the compassion and mercy to help them.

May God lead us all into His kingdom and keep us on His path.



Friday 21 February 2025

St Peter Damian (1007-1072)



Peter Damian was born in Ravenna in 1007 and studied theology and canon law, becoming a renowned teacher in both Parma and Ravenna. In his late twenties he abandoned all this and joined the hermitage of Fonte Avellana, near Gubbio, where he became prior in 1043: a position he held until his death. He strongly promoted the religious life in many parts of Italy. The Church at that time was in a terrible state and he supported the Popes in their efforts at reform,

both by his writings and as a papal envoy. Pope Stephen IX named him a cardinal and Bishop of Ostia. He died on 21 February 1072 and was immediately acclaimed as a saint.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer for Increased Faith

Increase in us, Lord, the faith you have given us, and bring to a harvest worthy of heaven the praise we offer you at the beginning of this new day. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

