

FIRST READING*1 Kings 3:5, 7-12*

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” And now, 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.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 119(118):57, 72. 76-77. 127-128. 129-130***R. O LORD, how I love your law!**

You, O LORD, are my portion; I have promised to obey your words. The law from your mouth means more to me than large quantities of silver and gold. R.

Let your merciful love console me by your promise to your servant. Show me compassion, that I may live, for your law is my delight. R.

That is why I love your commands more than finest gold, why I rule my life by your precepts, and hate false ways. R.

Your decrees are wonderful indeed; therefore my soul obeys them. The unfolding of your word gives light, and understanding to the simple. R.

R. O LORD, how I love your law!

SECOND READING*Romans 8:28-30*

And 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 those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have revealed to little children the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:44-52

“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 containers but threw away the bad. So it will be at the close 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.”

REFLECTION

Solomon asks not for riches or victory, but for a heart able to distinguish what truly matters. Jesus describes the same wisdom: once the treasure is found, everything else takes its proper place. The man sells all that he has, not reluctantly, but in his joy. The kingdom is not another burden added to life; it is the discovery that makes life intelligible. St John Chrysostom says that the treasure is hidden because the Gospel’s worth must be recognised by an attentive heart. St Augustine adds that the net gathering fish of every kind is the Church herself: we are gathered by grace before we are finally judged. We resist deciding who belongs in God’s kingdom and who does not. Wisdom is to recognise the treasure and allow it to reorder everything else.

Church Fathers: St John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 47; St Augustine, Sermon 47.

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

2 AUGUST 2026 • YEAR A

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:1-3

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 145(144):8-9. 15-16. 17-18

R. You open wide your hand, O LORD, and grant our desires.

The LORD is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in mercy. How good is the LORD to all, compassionate to all his creatures. R.

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. R.

The LORD is just in all his ways, and holy in all his deeds. The LORD is close to all who call him, who call on him in truth. R.

R. You open wide your hand, O LORD, and grant our desires.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:35, 37-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 14:13-21

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

REFLECTION

The disciples see an impossible crowd and a painfully small supper. Their answer is sensible: send the people away. Jesus' answer is wonderfully unreasonable: You give them something to eat. He asks them to place the little they have into his hands. St Hilary sees in the loaves the Scriptures opened and multiplied by Jesus, nourishing the whole Church. St John Chrysostom notices that Jesus could have created food from nothing, yet chooses to begin with what the disciples bring. Grace does not make our offering unnecessary; it takes our poverty seriously and makes it fruitful. The Eucharist trains us in this pattern. We bring bread, wine, ourselves, our parish, and needs that seem far beyond us. Jesus receives what is offered and provides more than enough.

Church Fathers: St Hilary of Poitiers, On Matthew 14; St John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 49.

FIRST READING*1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a*

There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” And he said, “Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 85(84):9ab, 10, 11-12, 13-14*

R. Show us, O LORD, your mercy, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what the LORD God speaks; he speaks of peace for his people and his faithful. His salvation is near for those who fear him, and his glory will dwell in our land. R.

Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have kissed. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth, and justice look down from heaven. R.

The LORD will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase. Righteousness will march before him, and guide his steps on the way. R.

R. Show us, O LORD, your mercy, and grant us your salvation.

SECOND READING*Romans 9:1-5*

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. I wait for the LORD; my soul waits, and in his word I hope. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

REFLECTION

Elijah meets God not in wind, earthquake, or fire, but in the quiet that follows. The disciples meet Jesus amid wind and water, when fear has made even his presence look like a threat. Both readings teach us that recognising God requires more than looking for the spectacular. St Augustine says that the boat is the Church, battered by the waves yet never abandoned by Jesus. Peter walks while his attention rests on Jesus and begins to sink when fear becomes the greater reality. St John Chrysostom observes that Jesus does not prevent the storm immediately: he first teaches Peter both the weakness of self-reliance and the strength of the hand that saves. Faith is not pretending the wind is harmless. It is hearing Jesus say, Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.

Church Fathers: St Augustine, Sermon 75; St John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 50.

FIRST READING*Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab*

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 45(44):10. 11. 12. 16*

R. On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

The daughters of kings are those whom you favour.
On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir. R.

Listen, O daughter; pay heed and give ear: forget
your own people and your father's house. R.

So will the king desire your beauty. He is your lord,
pay homage to him. R.

They are escorted amid gladness and joy; they pass
within the palace of the king. R.

R. On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

SECOND READING*1 Corinthians 15:20-27*

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection", it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. Mary is taken up to heaven; a chorus of angels exults. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-56

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring for ever." And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

REFLECTION

Mary's song begins not with herself but with God: My soul magnifies the Lord. The Assumption is the fulfilment of that life of attention. The one who made room for the Word is gathered, body and soul, into the life of her risen Son. St John Damascene calls Mary the living ark, because she bore within her not tablets of stone but Jesus himself. St Germanus says that her bodily glorification is fitting because her body gave human flesh to the Word. Mary's Assumption is not an escape from human life but the declaration of its destiny. What God has done in her is the first flowering of the resurrection promised to the whole Church.

Church Fathers: St John Damascene, Homily II on the Dormition; St Germanus of Constantinople, Homily I on the Dormition.

FIRST READING*Isaiah 22:19-23*

I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your station. In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honour to his father's house.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 138(137):1-2a, 2bc, 3, 6, 8bc*

**R. O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;
discard not the work of your hands.**

I thank you, LORD, with all my heart; you have heard the words of my mouth. In the presence of the angels I praise you. I bow down towards your holy Temple. R.

I give thanks to your name for your merciful love and your faithfulness. On the day I called, you answered me; 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. O LORD, your merciful love is eternal; discard not the work of your hands. R.

**R. O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;
discard not the work of your hands.**

SECOND READING*Romans 11:33-36*

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counsellor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

REFLECTION

Peter's confession is not the result of clever deduction. Jesus says it has been revealed by the Father. Faith begins as a gift before it becomes a task. St John Chrysostom notes that Jesus gives Simon a new name and a real share in his own authority. St Augustine insists that Peter must never be separated from the confession he makes: the rock is Peter confessing Jesus, and the Church stands firm as she shares that apostolic faith. The keys are therefore not a private honour. They are given for service: to open the kingdom, reconcile sinners, and keep the household of God centred upon Jesus.

Church Fathers: St John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 54; St Augustine, Retractations I.21.

FIRST READING*Jeremiah 20:7-9*

O Lord, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughing-stock all the day; everyone mocks me. For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name", there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 63(62):2. 3-4. 5-6. 8-9*

R. For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

O God, you are my God; at dawn I seek you; for you my soul is thirsting. For you my flesh is pining, like a dry, weary land without water. R.

I have come before you in the sanctuary, to behold your strength and your glory. Your loving mercy is better than life; my lips will speak your praise. R.

I will bless you all my life; in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul shall be filled as with a banquet; with joyful lips, my mouth shall praise you. R.

For you have been my strength; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice. My soul clings fast to you; your right hand upholds me. R.

R. For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

SECOND READING*Romans 12:1-2*

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia. May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our hearts, that we may know the hope to which we are called.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:21-27

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

REFLECTION

Peter has just confessed Jesus rightly, yet now rebukes him for speaking of the cross. It is possible to use the right words about Jesus while resisting the road on which he leads us. St John Chrysostom says that Jesus corrects Peter sharply because Peter's love has become an obstacle to salvation. St Augustine teaches that taking up the cross means receiving the demands of love rather than manufacturing suffering for ourselves. St Paul calls this our spiritual worship: the offering of our bodies and the renewal of our minds. We follow Jesus not by despising life but by refusing to make self-preservation its highest good. Life is found when it is given.

Church Fathers: St John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 55; St Augustine, Sermon 96.

FIRST READING*Ezekiel 33:7-9*

“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.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 95(94):1-2. 6-7b. 7c-9*

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

Come, let us ring out our joy to the LORD; hail the rock who saves us. Let us come into his presence, giving thanks; let us hail him with a song of praise. R.

O come; let us bow and bend low. Let us kneel before the LORD who made us, for he is our God, and we the people of his pasture, the flock of 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 forebears put me to the test; when they tried me, though they saw my work. R.

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

SECOND READING*Romans 13:8-10*

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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

“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.”

REFLECTION

Jesus speaks about correction because life in the Church is real life among real sinners. The aim is never humiliation or victory: If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. St John Chrysostom notices the gentleness of the order Jesus gives: begin privately, involve others only when necessary, and seek restoration at every stage. St Augustine warns that silence can masquerade as kindness when it leaves another person trapped in harm. The second reading supplies the rule: love does no wrong to a neighbour. Correction without love becomes punishment; love without truth becomes neglect. Jesus gives the Church a patient way of holding both together, sustained by his presence wherever two or three gather in his name.

Church Fathers: St John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew 60; St Augustine, Sermon 82.