

# **Year 1 - R.C.I.A. Sunday Gospel Readings**



## 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year A - 2<sup>nd</sup> August

### Isaiah 55:1-3

"Come, all you who are thirsty,  
come to the waters;  
and you who have no money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without cost.  
Why spend money on what is not bread,  
and your labour on what does not satisfy?  
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,  
and you will delight in the richest of fare.  
Give ear and come to me;  
listen, that you may live.  
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,  
my faithful love promised to David.

### Ps 144 (145)

*Listen to this setting:* <https://youtu.be/70IY7hXo6tc>

### Romans 8:35, 37-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship 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 convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### Matthew 14:13-21

On hearing about the death of John the Baptist, Jesus set out secretly by boat for a secluded place. But the people heard of it, and they followed him on foot from their towns. When Jesus went ashore, he saw the crowd gathered there and he had compassion on them. And he healed their sick.

Late in the afternoon, his disciples came to him and said, "We are in a lonely place and it is now late. You should send these people away, so they can go to the villages and buy something for themselves to eat."

But Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat." They answered, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fishes." Jesus said to them, "Bring them here to me."

Then he made everyone sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fishes, raised his eyes to heaven, pronounced the blessing, broke the loaves and handed them to the disciples to distribute to the people. And they all ate, and everyone had enough; then the disciples gathered up the leftovers, filling twelve baskets. About five thousand men had eaten there besides women and children.

### **Commentary & Reflection**

*The disciples were faced with an apparently insoluble problem: they had a large crowd listening to Jesus. they were out in a lonely place; it was already late evening. So they approach Jesus with a solution: 'Send the people away, and they can go to the villages to but themselves some food.' The solution Jesus offers is so different. It is a solution steeped in compassion, care and concern. He replies: 'There is no need for them to go; give them something to eat yourselves.'*

*All they have is five loaves and two fish. How would that suffice to satisfy a hungry crowd numbering five thousand men, not counting the women and children? 'Bring what you have to me.' The spectre of hunger stalks our world. Every four minutes someone somewhere in the world dies of hunger. We certainly cannot solve the problem of world hunger ourselves. But we can bring the little we have to Jesus. Little placed in His hands is always much! He works the miracle.*

*At the Eucharist bread is broken and the cup shared as Jesus breaks through into our lives by giving us his body and blood. That is the price of real love. We cannot break through to those in need without some way breaking ourselves. May His love inspire us to care and to share!*

### **To think about/do**

*Find out about Catholic or Christian organisations whose aid work is to relieve hunger eg CAFOD, Mary's Meals. Perhaps consider donating, fundraising or get involved in awareness-raising for that charity*

## **Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord - 6<sup>th</sup> August**

### **First Reading: Dan 7:9-10, 13-14**

As I watched: Thrones were set up and the Ancient One took his throne. His clothing was bright as snow, and the hair on his head as white as wool; his throne was flames of fire, with wheels of burning fire. A surging stream of fire flowed out from where he sat; thousands upon thousands were ministering to him, and myriads upon myriads attended him. The court was convened and the books were opened.

As the visions during the night continued, I saw: One like a Son of man coming, on the clouds of heaven; When he reached the Ancient One and was presented before him, the one like a Son of man received dominion, glory, and kingship; all peoples, nations, and languages serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away, his kingship shall not be destroyed.

### **Ps 97:1-, 5-6, 9**

*Listen to this setting* <https://youtu.be/yZIDWBL1uk8>

### **Second Reading: 2 Pt 1:16-19**

Beloved: We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that unique declaration came to him from the majestic glory, "This is my Son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven while we were with him on the holy mountain. Moreover, we possess the prophetic message that is altogether reliable. You will do well to be attentive to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

### **Matthew 17:1-9**

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they were alone. Jesus' appearance was changed before them: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became bright as light. Just then Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus.

Peter spoke and said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. If you so wish, I will make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." Peter was still speaking when a bright cloud covered them in its shadow, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, my Chosen One. Listen to him."

On hearing the voice, the disciples fell to the ground, full of fear. But Jesus came,

touched them and said, "Stand up, do not be afraid." When they raised their eyes, they no longer saw anyone except Jesus. And as they came down the mountain, Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone what they had just seen, until the Son of Man be raised from the dead.

### **Commentary**

*The wonderful thing about prayer is that it is always answered. 'Ask and you **will** receive; seek and you **will** find; knock and the door **will** be opened.'* We have the guarantee of being heard. We might wonder whether this is true. Have we not felt at times that our prayer has not been answered? God has **four** different answers to our prayer: sometimes he says **Yes**; at other times he says **No**; sometimes he says **Wait**; still at other times he says **If**. No matter what the answer might be, God always desires what is best for us. He is more ready to give than we are to receive. If he denies, delays with our request it is only because God wills our good.

### **My thoughts/questions:**

## **19th Sunday in Ordinary Time 9th August**

### **First Reading: 1 Kings 19:9A, 11-13A**

At the mountain of God, Horeb, Elijah came to a cave where he took shelter. Then the LORD said to him, "Go outside and stand on the mountain before the LORD; the LORD will be passing by." A strong and heavy wind was rending the mountains and crushing rocks before the LORD— but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake— but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there was fire— but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire there was a tiny whispering sound. When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave.

### **Ps 85:9,10,11-12,13-14**

*Listen to this setting* <https://youtu.be/7qv4xpO89zM>

### **Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5**

Brothers and sisters:

I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie; my conscience joins with the Holy Spirit in

bearing me witness that I have great sorrow and constant anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. They are Israelites; theirs the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; theirs the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

### **Matthew 14:22-33**

Immediately Jesus obliged his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he sent the crowd away.

And having sent the people away, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. At nightfall, he was there alone. Meanwhile, the boat was very far from land, dangerously rocked by the waves for the wind was against it.

At daybreak, Jesus came to them walking on the lake. When they saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, thinking that it was a ghost. And they cried out in fear. But at once Jesus said to them, "Courage! Don't be afraid. It's me!" Peter answered, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you walking on the water."

Jesus said to him, "Come." And Peter got out of the boat, walking on the water to go to Jesus. But, in face of the strong wind, he was afraid and began to sink. So he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately stretched out his hand and took hold of him, saying, "Man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

As they got into the boat, the wind dropped. Then those in the boat bowed down before Jesus saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God!"

### **Commentary**

*As long as his eyes are fixed upon the Lord, Peter can do the seemingly impossible. But the moment he diverts his attention he begins to sink. Faith in the Lord means keeping our eyes fixed intently upon Him. Distractions abound, but in Him we find security, happiness and peace. Daily prayer is a tried and true ally for us as we face challenges of remaining focused in this life upon keeping the Lord at the absolute centre of our lives.*

*Peter began to sink, but the Lord was near. Praise God for the same merciful presence of the Lord in our lives.*

### **To think about**

*Remember a time you felt you were 'sinking'. Go through the experience, reliving it. Who or what saved you>*

**My thoughts/questions:**

## **The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary 16th August**

### **First Reading: Revelation (Apocalypse) 11:19A; 12:1-6A, 10AB**

God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant could be seen in the temple. A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and wailed aloud in pain as she laboured to give birth. Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven diadems. Its tail swept away a third of the stars in the sky and hurled them down to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, to devour her child when she gave birth. She gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert where she had a place prepared by God.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have salvation and power come, and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed One."

**Ps 45:10,11,12,16**

### **Second Reading 1 Corinthians 15:20-27**

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty 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 "he subjected everything under his feet."

### **Gospel Luke 1:39-56**

Mary then set out for a town in the Hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said, "You are most

blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How is it that the mother of my Lord comes to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. Blessed are you who believed that the Lord's word would come true!"

And Mary said:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit exults in God my saviour!

He has looked upon his servant in her lowliness,  
and people forever will call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me,  
Holy is his Name!

From age to age his mercy extends  
to those who live in his presence. He has acted with power and done wonders,  
and scattered the proud with their plans.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones  
and lifted up those who are downtrodden.

He has filled the hungry with good things  
but has sent the rich away empty.

He held out his hand to Israel, his servant,  
for he remembered his mercy,  
even as he promised our fathers,

Abraham and his descendants forever." Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

### **Commentary**

*The Gospel of the day is known as the Magnificat: According to another translation Mary proclaims, "My soul magnifies the Lord...." Mary knows the incredible grace that she has received in being called to be the mother of the Lord. This unprecedented gift, given in the most miraculous of ways is not of her doing, but is the outpouring of God's magnanimous favour to her and to the human race.*

*At the end of her life Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven. May we always regard the Blessed Mother as a model of discipleship and an intercessor for us along the way to heaven.*

***Try praying the Magnificat on an evening in praise of God for the day.***

**21st Sunday Ordinary Time 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

### **First Reading: IS 22:19-23**

Thus says the LORD to Shebna, master of the palace:

"I will thrust you from your office  
and pull you down from your station.



On that day I will summon my servant  
Eliakim, son of Hilkiah;  
I will clothe him with your robe,  
and gird him with your sash,  
and give over to him your authority.  
He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,  
and to the house of Judah.  
I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim's shoulder;  
when he opens, no one shall shut  
when he shuts, no one shall open.  
I will fix him like a peg in a sure spot,  
to be a place of honour for his family."

### **Ps 138:1-2,2-3,6,8**

<https://youtu.be/URLxQO6uqVo> (paraphrased version)

### **Second Reading Romans 11:33-36**

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

### **Matthew 16:13-20**

Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples, "What do people say of the Son of Man? Who do they say I am?" They said, "For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "It is well for you, Simon Barjona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

"And now I say to you: You are Peter (or Rock) and on this rock I will build my Church; and never will the powers of death overcome it.

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in heaven."

Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

### **Commentary**

*The confession of St. Peter is the rock solid foundation upon which the Church is built, and upon which we can build our lives. When we, like Peter, identify Jesus as the Lord of our lives and the only begotten Son of God, we are on the path that leads to heaven.*

*Jesus is not merely a figure from ancient history. He is the one in whom we place our trust, the one who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. When we, like Peter, renew daily our confidence in the Lord, we can be confident that our faith rests upon a firm foundation.*

### **To think about**

*At this stage in your life, what is your answer to Jesus' question: "Who do you say I am?"*

## **22nd Sunday Ordinary Time 30<sup>th</sup> August**

### **First Reading Jeremiah 20:7-9**

Lord, you have seduced me and I let myself be seduced. You have taken me by force and prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long'; they all make fun of me, for every time I speak I have to shout, "Violence! Devastation!" The Lord's word has brought me insult and derision all day long. So I decided to forget about him and speak no more in his name. But his word in my heart becomes like a fire burning deep within my bones. I try so hard to hold it on, but I cannot do it.

### **Ps 62 (63):2,3-4,5-6,8-9**

[https://youtu.be/f\\_hXc-dUqg](https://youtu.be/f_hXc-dUqg)

### **Second Reading Romans 12:1-2**

I beg you, dearly beloved, by the mercy of God, to give yourselves as a living and holy sacrifice pleasing to God; that is the kind of worship for you as sensible people. Don't let yourselves be shaped by the world where you live, but rather be transformed through the renewal of your mind. You must discern the will of God: what is good, what pleases, what is perfect.

### **Matthew 16:21-27**

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem; he would suffer many things from the Jewish authorities, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. He would be killed and be raised on the third day. Then Peter took him aside and began to reproach him, "Never, Lord! No, this must never happen to you." But Jesus turned to him and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You would have me stumble. You are their king not as God does, but as people do."

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If you want to follow me, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. For whoever chooses to save his life will lose it, but the one who loses his life for my sake will find it. What will one gain by winning the whole world if he

destroys himself? There is nothing you can give to recover your own self.

"Know that the Son of Man will come in the Glory of his Father with the holy angels, and he will reward each one according to his deeds."

### **Commentary**

*We cannot follow the Lord without being influenced by Him, for he has a way of changing even the hardest of hearts. Many can use the words of Jeremiah to describe their relationship with Jesus: "You seduced me, Lord, and I let myself be seduced."*

*To follow Jesus is to imitate Him, even to the point of carrying His cross. To many this seems sheer foolishness, but faith tells us that this is the path of everlasting life. May His strength be ours as we face the challenges of life, and may ours be the consolation that only He can give.*

### **To think about**

*What am I prepared to give up in my life in order to follow Jesus?*

## **23rd Sunday Ordinary Time 6th September**

### **First Reading Ezekiel 33:7-9**

For your part, son of man, I have set you as a watchman for Israel; and when you hear my word, you must give them my warning. When I say to the wicked: 'Wicked man, you shall die for sure.' if you do not warn the wicked man to turn from his ways, he will die because of his sin; but I will also call you to account for his blood. If you warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin; but you, yourself, will be saved.

### **Ps 95:1-2,6-7, 8-9**

<https://youtu.be/ASDqpe1JSJk>

## Second Reading Romans 13:8-10

Do not be in debt to anyone. Let this be the only debt of one to another: Love. The one who loves his or her neighbour fulfils the law. For the commandments: Do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not covet, and whatever else, are summarised in this one: You will love your neighbour as yourself. Love cannot do the neighbour any harm; so love fulfils the whole law.

## Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "If your brother or sister has sinned against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are in private, and if he listens to you, you have won your brother. If you are not listened to, take with you one or two others so that the case may be decided by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he still refuses to listen to them, tell it to the assembled Church. But if he does not listen to the Church, then regard such a one as a pagan or a publican.

"I say to you: whatever you bind on earth, heaven will keep bound; and whatever you unbind on earth, heaven will keep unbound.

"In like manner, I say to you: if on earth two of you are united in asking for anything, it will be granted to you by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered in my Name, I am there among them."

## Commentary

*The Lord promises His presence wherever two or three are gathered in His name. There is great power in this promise, for it affirms the truth that we are called to follow Jesus not in isolation from one another but in solidarity. The bonds that hold believers together in the Body of Christ are substantial and profound, and have eternal consequences.*

*The Church is the Lord's gift to us, the very embodiment of His presence in our world today. May we always treasure our communion within the Body of Christ.*

## To think about

*Do you feel you belong to a community? In what ways?*

## Acknowledgments

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