

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 14)

ANTIPHON: The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

RESPONSE: The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

LECTOR: Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain? He who walks without fault; he who acts with justice and speaks the truth from his heart; he who does not slander with his tongue. **R.**

LECTOR: He who does no wrong to his brother, who casts no slur on his neighbour, who holds the godless in disdain, but honours those who fear the Lord. **R.**

LECTOR: He who keeps his pledge, come what may; who takes no interest on a loan and accepts no bribes against the innocent. Such a man will stand firm for ever. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Happy are they who have kept the word with a generous heart and yield a harvest through perseverance. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

Or

Behold, I stand at the door and knock, says the Lord. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door to me, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me.

TODAY'S READINGS Genesis 18:1-10; Colossians 1:24-28; Luke 10:38-42

NEXT WEEK (17th Sunday of Year C) Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 137; Colossians 2:12-14; Luke 11:1-13

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Living in God's presence



20 July 2025 16th Sunday Year C

The Responsorial Psalm begins with an important question; "Lord, who shall dwell on your holy mountain?" One of the main themes of the Old Testament was determining how human beings, separated from God's holiness due to sin, can once again "live in the presence of the Lord."

In the Second Reading, we have the answer. In the words of St Paul, "The mystery is Christ among you, your hope of glory." By this, Paul means the risen Jesus, the one true God in the flesh, is alive in every believer. As a result, what is true of Jesus also applies to all of us. Jesus' relationship with the Father, one in which they are constantly present to each other, is true also for us.

In this week's readings, we learn more about what it means to live in God's presence and commune with him.

The First Reading describes how "The Lord appeared to Abraham" with the arrival of three men. Ancient Christian tradition identified these three strangers, sometimes described as one person and sometimes as three, as a manifestation of the Trinity. When the men arrive, Abraham recognises his God's presence right away and welcomes them with an immense showing of hospitality.

But the gospel account of Jesus' visit to the home of Martha and Mary takes this understanding of what it means to dwell in God's presence to a whole new level. To be clear, Jesus does not criticise Martha for her working and serving. Indeed, Martha follows the Old Testament example of hospitality

demonstrated in the First Reading by Abraham and Sarah. Martha's kind of service is what we call a 'corporal work of mercy', where we demonstrate the love of God through serving another's physical needs. However, as St Augustine explains in his commentary on the gospel, "Our Lord does not then forbid hospitality, but the troubling about many things, that is to say, hurry and anxiety."

Jesus, in the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:14), cautions that worries, much like thorns, might stifle a person's responsiveness to his word. Even though Martha was trying to serve God through her labours, being so concerned about serving him was actually a barrier to communing and being in the presence of the one she loved. Mary, instead, seizes this unique moment and places herself in God's presence to take in everything that Jesus wants to give her.

While we live on this earth, we have a duty to attend to the physical and care for others. But we should never let our worries and anxieties take our focus away from the more important, that is, the eternal things that will 'not be taken from us.'

Union with God through prayer is vital for every Christian. The love, peace and wisdom that we receive from spending time with Jesus overflows into all of our activities so that we become the kind of person, described in the Responsorial Psalm, who dwells in the presence of God.

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