

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 116)

ANTIPHON: Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

RESPONSE: Go out to all the world and tell the Good News.

Or **Alleluia!**

LECTOR: O praise the Lord, all you nations, acclaim him all you peoples! **R.**

LECTOR: Strong is his love for us; he is faithful for ever. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, except through me. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) The earth is replete with the fruits of your work, O Lord; you bring forth bread from the earth and wine to cheer the heart.

Or

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, says the Lord, and I will raise him up on the last day.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 66:18-21; Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13; Luke 13:22-30

NEXT WEEK (22nd Sunday, Year C) Sirach 3:17-20, 28-29; Ps 67; Heb 12:18-19, 22-24; Luke 14:1, 7-14

Starting a family

Becoming a Parent

If you have a friend or relative who is thinking of starting a family, why not send them our pregnancy magazine *Becoming Parents – A Spiritual Journey*. The four issues include articles, prayers and meditations, written by leaders in the parenting world. The four issues are titled: A New Beginning, A Growing Awareness, The Home Stretch And a New Journey Begins. To order copies go to **Becoming Parents A Spiritual Journey – Majellan Media/** or call 03 9592 2777.



majellan

Entering the narrow gate



24 August 2025 21st Sunday Year C

This has been a momentous year for the Christian, and particularly the Catholic community, with the death of Pope Francis and the election of Pope Leo XIV. From the start Pope Leo has stressed that his role as successor of Saint Peter is not to lord it over the Church or the world, but to be at everyone's service.

Pope Leo XIV's focus might prove a helpful backdrop as we strive to understand the teaching of Jesus in this week's gospel. There was a time, not that long ago, when many Catholics tended to feel very superior about their faith and their interpretation of the teaching that "outside the Church there is no salvation". The old joke suggested that Catholics had to be confined to a particular corner of heaven because they believed they were the only ones there!

A similar mentality existed among God's Chosen People in the Old Testament, but note how the Prophet Isaiah in today's first reading warns them not to be presumptuous. The Lord would reach out to everyone: "I am coming to gather the nations of every language." Jesus squarely confronts the same issue, warning those who are tempted to compromise their integrity by turning to evil, thereby failing to respond to his invitation to love and serve his Father. He reminds them that it is no use appealing to claim allegiance because he had once dined with them and he had taught in their streets.

Likewise, it is not enough for us to claim that we are Christians and then live contrary to the example Jesus has set before us.

The letter to the Hebrews reminds us that following Christ will demand a lot from us and be painful, but those experiences can teach us a lot and ultimately enable us to imitate Christ, who even as he died on the cross, prayed: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

As in the days of Isaiah and Jesus, in the 21st century we are still confronted with the consequences of real evil in the world. Human beings continue to compromise the truth in the belief that they can control the world, not accepting that the world is not theirs, but belongs to God. They remain unmoved by the sufferings of others, their minds closed to the message that God knows no boundaries, but is calling out to men and women of every nation under heaven.

At the same time, we are seeing that forces for good – love and compassion, reconciliation and peace – can still challenge the evil and that those willing to suffer for the truth and enter by the narrow gate can occasionally move mountains. As to how many will eventually enter by the narrow gate?

I suggest we leave that to God, while striving with all our hearts to live our own lives without compromise and squeeze in!

Timothy J Buckley CSSR

© Majellan Media 2025