

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) The Lord became my protector. He brought me out to a place of freedom; he saved me because he delighted in me.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 91)

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 90)

ANTIPHON: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

RESPONSE: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

LECTOR: It is good to give thanks to the Lord to make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your truth in the watches of the night. **R.**

LECTOR: The just will flourish like the palm-tree and grow like a Lebanon cedar. **R.**

LECTOR: Planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God, still bearing fruit when they are old, still full of sap, still green, to proclaim that the Lord is just. In him, my rock, there is no wrong. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Shine on the world like bright stars; you are offering it the word of life. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me, sing psalms to the name of the Lord Most High.

Or

Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, says the Lord.

TODAY'S READINGS Sir 27: 4-7; 1 Cor 15: 54-58; Luke 6:39-45

NEXT WEEK (1st Sunday of Lent Year C) Dt 26: 4-10; Ps 90; Rom 10; 8-13; Luke 4:1-13

*Brighten up
your day with
The Majellan*

Sacramental Resources

Majellan Media has a range of sacramental books on offer. Your Wedding, Your Baby's Baptism, Your Child's First Confession, Your Child's First Communion and Getting Confirmed. For details go to: majellan.media/sacramental-books-list/



majellan

The spotlight on our own hearts



2 March 2025 8th Sunday, Year C

This week's first reading offers the kind of pithy advice that would have been common in the ancient world. In this case, the author of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus as also called, encourages the reader to test the words and actions of others. This way, we avoid looking foolish for endorsing someone with egregious character flaws.

This is good advice and, at first glance, in the gospel reading it seems that Jesus is encouraging his disciples to do the same. He even uses the same visual metaphors of examining the fruit (words and actions) to determine the true quality of a tree (the inner character of a person).

Jesus agrees that a person reveals their inner spiritual state through their words and actions. However, he spins this advice around towards the people he is addressing. Instead of measuring the character of others by interrogating their thoughts and actions, Jesus is pointing us towards our own capacity for self-deception.

Jesus immediately turns the spotlight on our own hearts. He exposes how our attempts to justify our own selfish desires as morally good do as much good as trying to pick grapes from brambles.

However, because it requires us to thoroughly examine and change our own hearts and minds, we often try to look for other ways to make ourselves seem and feel good. When we do this, we demonstrate in the way that we live

that we follow a teacher other than Christ. But, as Jesus explains, there is only one teacher who has conclusively proved, by the fruits of his words and actions, the goodness of his character and teaching. This is why St Paul exhorts us in the second reading to remember that Jesus has won the victory that will make us capable of living God's way.

God works through our humble hearts when we acknowledge how much we need the truth and love that Christ alone brings, and labour to change ourselves accordingly. In this way, we become like the "fully trained disciple" Jesus describes who can fully emulate "his teacher."

What we experience in the day-to-day journey of following Jesus, with the thousands of little corrections that we need to make to stay on course, is God transforming us into the image of his Son.

This work of transformation in this life will be completed in the life to come. St Paul, in the second reading, shows us a glimpse of the kind of people that we will be when our "perishable natures" will "put on imperishability" and our "mortal nature" will "put on immortality".

St Paul exhorts us to keep going with the spiritual introspection and labour that will turn us from brambles into fruitful trees where, in the words of the Psalm, we will "flourish in the courts of our God".

Joseph Doyle
© Majellan Media 2025