

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

cf. Mt 11:25

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

**GOSPEL**

Mt 11:25-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

*I am gentle and humble of heart.*

Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**



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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

9 JULY 2023

## THE GOD OF SURPRISES

In a time of rapid change in the Church one of our community members lamented the fact that 'Just as I got it all worked out, they changed what it was!' Often the word of God has a way of turning our world and expectations upside down. After the exile, the hope for a king from the line of David was rekindled. Zechariah agrees with this hope but his vision of the kingdom that God will establish would have come as a surprise to his contemporaries. Peace will come, but not through the force of arms.

Jesus' own life and message were no less paradoxical. Those who would have been expected to understand were left floundering and confused by his message. On the other hand, those open to the surprising ways of God find in Jesus the one who will gently carry their burdens if they will take on the task of becoming disciples.

Much of Paul's energy was devoted to the formation of Christian communities and it was not uncommon for them to become discouraged when they failed to live up to the demands of the gospel. In the coming weeks, the readings taken from Romans 8 show how Paul both challenges and revitalises the Christian community of Rome. He calls them to live spiritual lives, while also making sure they hear his message of encouragement. There is a firm basis for hope since the Spirit is in us, empowering, enlivening, and transforming us.

## FIRST READING

Zech 9:9-10

A reading from the prophet Zechariah

*See how humbly your king comes to you!*

The Lord says this:

'Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion! Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem! See now, your king comes to you; he is victorious, he is triumphant, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem; the bow of war will be banished. He will proclaim peace for the nations. His empire shall stretch from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth.'

■ **The word of the Lord.**

## RESP PSALM

Ps 144:1-2, 8-11, 13-14. R. v. 1

**R.** I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. *(or Alleluia!)*

1. I will give you glory, O God my King, / I will bless your name for ever. / I will bless you day after day / and praise your name for ever. **R.**

2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion, / slow to anger, abounding in love. / How good is the Lord to all, / compassionate to all his creatures. **R.**

3. All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord, / and your friends shall repeat their blessing. / They shall speak of the glory of your reign / and declare your might, O God. **R.**

4. The Lord is faithful in all his words / and loving in all his deeds. / The Lord supports all who fall / and raises all who are bowed down. **R.**



## SECOND READING

Rom 8:9, 11-13

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*If by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*

Your interests are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him, and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

So then, my brothers, there is no necessity for us to obey our unspiritual selves or to live unspiritual lives. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body you will live.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

**Christopher Monaghan CP**