

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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Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

05 JULY 2020

TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Today's Gospel records a moment of joyful intimacy between Jesus and his heavenly Father. Jesus rejoices because he senses that he has managed to share with his disciples something of his own knowledge of God.

The 'knowledge' of which Jesus speaks goes well beyond knowing a great deal *about* another person. He has in mind the Semitic sense of 'knowing' that flows from deep intimacy. Such knowledge is not gained by learning or study about God. It is a gift that comes to those who set aside any claim to expertise and adopt before God the simplicity of a child.

Jesus goes on to present himself as one who has come to lift humanity's burdens, including but not confined to the burden of sin. In contrast to the interpretations of the Mosaic law given by the scribes and Pharisees (cf. Matt 23:4), his yoke is 'easy' and his burden 'light'. The ease and lightness do not stem from a lowering of standards but from the fact that mercy and love, rather than precise legal perfection, have become the supreme criterion. Twice in Matthew's Gospel Jesus quotes the prophet Hosea to this effect: 'What I (God) want is mercy, not sacrifice' (Hos 6:6; see Matt 9:13; 12:7; also 23:23).

The heart of that ease and lightness is the knowledge of which he spoke earlier. To those who worship God as a distant and fearful potentate religious rules and requirements can indeed appear burdensome. This ought not be the case for those who truly know the God Jesus reveals.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

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.**