

MONDAY 24 MAY

Ecclesiasticus 17:24-29
or James 3:13-end
Psalm 32:1-8
or 19:7-end
Mark 10:17-27

TUESDAY 25 MAY

Ecclesiasticus 35:1-12
or James 4:1-10
Psalm 50:1-6
or 55:7-9. 24
Mark 10:28-31

WEDNESDAY 26 MAY

Ecclesiasticus 36:1-2. 4-5. 10-17 **or**
James 4:13-end
Psalm 79:8-9. 12. 14
or 49:1-2. 5-10
Mark 10:32-45

THURSDAY 27 MAY

Ecclesiasticus 42:15-end **or James 5:1-6**
Psalm 33:1-9
or 49:12-20
Mark 10:46-end

FRIDAY 28 MAY

Ecclesiasticus 44:1. 9-13 **or James 5:9-12**
Psalm 149:1-5
or 103:1-4. 8-13
Mark 11:11-26

SATURDAY 29 MAY

Ecclesiasticus 51:12b-20a
or James 5:13-end
Psalm 19:7-end
or 141:1-4
Mark 11:27-end

REFLECTION

There are important lessons to be learned from this week's Gospel readings.

To belong in God's eternal life we have to be prepared to leave behind us all the things we cling on to. It might be wealth: a big house and an expensive car, a well-filled bank account and high-earning investments. Or perhaps some people and relationships are holding us back from a whole-hearted commitment to following Jesus.

Perhaps we long for grateful recognition for all we do for God and the Church and for a high status among the powerful and influential ecclesiastical leaders.

If these things matter to us we probably won't want to court danger by causing chaos in the Temple and enraging the religious authorities. We'd probably prefer not to stand up to those authorities when they challenge us.

But if we do genuinely want to enter into God's kingdom we will, with humility, serve our brothers and sisters, putting them before ourselves. We will kneel before Jesus and ask him to help us see clearly the way ahead. We will forgive even the person who has wronged us the most but we will stand up to bullies and tricksters and believe that God can move mountains.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, in your compassion and mercy, reveal to us whatever holds us back from a deeper understanding of what it means to be your disciple and how to live in your eternal kingdom, where perfect love reigns.



CHURCH MUSIC

PART IV – MUSIC IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Love plainchant. For me, its greatest virtue is its malleability. It drapes over the words and moulds to their shape, free from a metrical framework, and it has a character which, perhaps because of its association with the early Church, seems appropriate and dignified for liturgy.

But the way we communicate the Gospel has always got to be relevant for its cultural context. In Isaiah 55:11, God says, "so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it." This will surely happen only if the people hear it in the first place. The Gospel has to be inculturated – brought within the culture – in order to take root there. If we speak a language that nobody understands, or use references and images nobody has heard of or can relate to, what we are saying can become swallowed up in cultural differences. The Incarnation itself was God becoming inculturated, you might say. Coming to earth to live as one of us was the only way in which we were going to hear the good news.

In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of the Bible, he renders John 1:14 as: "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood." The same is true for our liturgy and our music. It needs to be of our neighbourhood. Is this style of music natural for people of this demographic – this age, this nationality, this region – to sing or play? How do we source most of our music? Are we using only one hymn book, perhaps the same one we were using twenty years ago? If so, are we avoiding a conversation between our faith and the world today? Being connected and anchored in our past is important culturally, spiritually and theologically. But if we only ever sing music which was written in a different time or culture, we risk becoming a liturgical and musical museum rather than a living, breathing Church.



LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by Caroline Hodgson and Heather Smith

Pentecost

Monday 24 May to Saturday 29 May 2021

WEEK