

## 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time 2026

[Isaiah 55:6-9; Psalm 145; Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a; Matthew 20:1-16]

When I was preparing for this reflection/homily, I really enjoyed reading the scriptures for this Sunday. I can see a great deal of hope for all of us in these readings.

Straight away in the first reading we see that if we change our ways, God will have compassion on us. This fills me with hope as I can see that God doesn't change, but **we must change** and **follow God's ways**.

Next, I read the Psalm and the response we all have is "*The Lord is close to all who call him*", whether we are close to God or not everyone at some time; even non-believers; will call out for God if we are in trouble. I once heard a Humanist celebrant at a funeral call upon God. But the message here is that it is not just believers who can call God to be closer to them, the psalm tells us that God is close to **all** who call him.

In St Paul's letter to the Philippians the hope is maybe not as obvious, but it is there. St Paul is telling us to trust in God, accept from God the mission He has for us and follow him. If you like, its like going back to the psalm and to call upon God, stay close to God allowing Him to stay close to us by praying.

Unsurprisingly, the main source for hope comes in the Gospel, since Jesus walked on the earth we have become a *people of hope*. This parable tells us that if we respond positively to the call of the Lord when we hear the call, then we will receive the promised reward.

At our Baptism when we are freed from original sin we are all given the hope of being resurrected with Christ. In baptism we go down into the grave with Christ and rise up again as He is resurrected. As new creations, we will be judged on the life we live following our Baptism

This Gospel is telling us that we have all been given the same promise, whether we joined at the beginning of our life or at the eleventh hour of our life. This means that none of us are better Christians than any other Christian; it is not based on how long we have been part of the Church. I have heard on more than one occasion of someone who has gone through RCIA saying that they will never be as good as someone who is a 'cradle Catholic'. I usually say this is nonsense, and point out to them that I, as a cradle Catholic received most of my Faith formation at primary school, I then received some more formation through Marriage preparation and then during my formation for the Diaconate. But the majority of my formation actually stopped at around 8 years old. If I hadn't sought out further development, my formation would have remained that of a child. However, those who have chosen to come into the Church as an adult, can apply more mature understanding to the knowledge they are given, so in some ways they have an advantage over people like me.

This is one of the reasons I am delighted that we have so many ways of increasing our knowledge of the Faith available to us within our Pastoral Area. There are RCIA

classes available at all of our churches, there are Alpha sessions at St Joseph's and St Bede's, I think people can still sign up for them. These are for people who would like to learn about the Catholic Church and for those who would like to learn more, to top up the formation we had when we were younger.

If we truly want to build up our Church; as Christ has asked us to do; we need to make sure that we are as informed as we possibly can be, before we start to call others to join. These sessions are what we all need; *we need to evangelise ourselves before we can evangelise others.*

If you think that evangelising is not my job, or it is only for the priests and the deacons; then you are mistaken. Every single person, who has been Baptised is called to share the Good News with those they meet. We do this first of all, by how we live our life; loving God and our neighbour, sharing the news of Jesus Christ by what we do and what we say. Like it or not, we are role models; I'll leave you to judge if you have a positive or negative impact on others., as Christians we are set apart, *we do not belong to the world, we belong to Jesus.* We are the '*salt of the earth*' and the '*light of the world*', we need to let our light shine so that we attract other people to Jesus and build the Church brick by brick.

So, cradle catholic or an 11th hour catholic, we ALL have the same opportunity to be saved and to live an eternal life with God, our Father; what a wonderful and reassuring thought. I wish you a holy and evangelising week ahead.

### **Further Reading**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

CCC 210-211: God of mercy and piety

CCC 588-589: Jesus identifies his compassion to sinners with God's<sup>1</sup>

### **Please accompany in your prayers**

- All those who are sick, either at home or in hospital, especially those who have very few or no visitors.
- Those who have died and those who grieve for them.
- The success of the Pastoral Area Mission Plan.
- The success of the forthcoming Alpha course which will take place in our Pastoral Area.
- The success of the Sycamore Programme which starts this Autumn in St Michael's.
- All those preparing to go on pilgrimage.

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<sup>1</sup> [Homiletic Directory, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments](#)

- The young people who started their Confirmation programme this week.

Deacon Tony

19<sup>th</sup> September 2026