

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

7th August 2026

First reading

Nahum 1:15; 2:2; 3:1-3, 6-7

‘Woe to the city of blood.’

Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace!

Keep your feasts, O Judah; fulfil your vows,

for never again shall the worthless pass through you; he is utterly cut off.

For the Lord is restoring the majesty of Jacob as the majesty of Israel,

for plunderers have plundered them and ruined their branches.

Woe to the city of blood, all full of lies and plunder — no end to the prey!

The crack of the whip, and rumble of the wheel, galloping horse and bounding chariot!

Horsemen charging, flashing sword and glittering spear,

hosts of slain, heaps of corpses, dead bodies without end — they stumble over the bodies!

I will throw filth at you and treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle.

And all who look at you will shrink from you and say,

‘Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her?’ Where shall I seek comforters for you?

Responsorial Psalm

Deuteronomy 32:35b-36a. 39. 41. R 39c

I deal death and I impart life.

The day of their ruin is at hand; and their doom befalls them swiftly.

Indeed, the Lord will vindicate his people; and he will have compassion on his servants.

See now that I, yes I, am he; there is no other god besides me.

I deal death and I impart life; I have wounded and now I heal.

When I have sharpened my gleaming sword and my hand takes hold for judgement,

I will inflict vengeance on my foes, and will deal with those who hate me.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 5:10

Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 16:24-28

‘What shall a man give in return for his soul?’

At that time: Jesus told his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.’ Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Jesus often speaks in the language of paradox. One of the most striking paradoxes occurs in today’s gospel, when Jesus says, “anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.” Another way of expressing that is to say, “if we seek ourselves only, we will lose ourselves, whereas if we reach beyond ourselves towards God and towards his Son Jesus we will find our

true selves.” If we look to ourselves alone and our own needs and preferences, we risk losing ourselves, whereas if we look towards the Lord, which will always mean looking towards others, we will find life in this world and eternal life in the next. Jesus expressed this fundamental paradox of his teaching in another way when he said, “give and it will be given to you.” In other words, it is in giving that we receive. Our own experience of life teaches us the truth contained in this paradox. It is when we look beyond ourselves to others, to the Lord present in others, that we experience the Lord’s own joy, the Lord’s own life, which is a foretaste of the joy and life of the kingdom of heaven.