

Reading for the Feast of St Lawrence

10th August 2026

First reading

2 Corinthians 9:6-10

‘God loves a cheerful giver.’

Brothers and Sisters: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, ‘He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.’

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 112(111):1-2. 5-6. 7-8. 9. R5a

It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends.

Blessed the man who fears the Lord, who takes great delight in his commandments.

His descendants shall be powerful on earth; the generation of the upright will be blest.

It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends, who conducts his affairs with justice.

He will never be moved; for ever shall the upright be remembered.

He has no fear of evil news; with a firm heart, he trusts in the Lord.

With a steadfast heart he will not fear; he will see the downfall of his foes.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor; his justice stands firm for ever.

His might shall be exalted in glory.

Gospel Acclamation

John 8:12bc

Alleluia, alleluia.

Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness,

but will have the light of life, says the Lord.

Alleluia.

Gospel

John 12:24-26

‘If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him.’

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

St Lawrence was one of the seven deacons of the Church of Rome and was martyred under the Emperor Valerian on the 10th of August 258, four days after Pope Sixtus II and his companions. Little is known of the life of Saint Lawrence. What is clear is that he was immensely popular with the Christians of Rome. A basilica was built over St Lawrence’s tomb in the field of Varano near the Via Tiburtina fifty years after his death, by the Emperor Constantine, and the anniversary of his martyrdom was kept in Rome as a solemn feast. By the sixth century, the Feast of Saint Lawrence was one of the most important feasts

throughout much of western Christendom. His name occurs in the Roman Canon of the Mass (Eucharistic Prayer 1).

Life has many paradoxes. The example of the grain of wheat dying, as Jesus did, to bring forth new life, provides a rich message. May we have the ability to let go, so that we have more freedom to receive the true gift.

Being possessive and accumulating much has its hazards. We know that we cannot bring any of the material riches of this world with us when we die. Lord, help us to know what our genuine treasure is, (you!), so that we do not settle for anything less.

Serving Jesus involves a certain losing of our ambitions and wishes. Someone once said to St Ignatius - 'Isn't Francis Xavier very ambitious.' Ignatius replied, 'Yes, but he is not ambitious enough.' Saints, such as St Lawrence converted much ordinary ambition for success, love, health into ambitions for proclaiming and living out the values of the gospel and of the kingdom of God. When anything in us dies in the service of God, something better is born.