

## Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

July 1<sup>st</sup> 2026

### First reading

**Amos 5:14-15, 21-24**

**‘Take away from me the noise of your songs; but let righteousness be like an ever-flowing stream.’**

Seek good, and not evil, that you may live;

and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said.

Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate;

it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

‘I hate, I despise your feasts’, says the Lord,

‘and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them;

and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them.

Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen.

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.’

### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 50(49):7. 8-9. 10-11. 12-13. 16b-17. R23b**

*To one whose way is blameless, I will show the salvation of God.*

Listen, my people, I will speak;

Israel, I will testify against you,

for I am God, your God.

I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices;

your offerings are always before me.

I do not take more bullocks from your farms,

nor goats from among your herds.

For I own all the beasts of the forest,

beasts in their thousands on my hills.

I know all the birds on the mountains;

all that moves in the field belongs to me.

Were I hungry, I would not tell you,

for the world and its fullness is mine.

Do I eat the flesh of bulls,

or drink the blood of goats?

How can you recite my commandments,

and take my covenant on your lips,

you who despise correction,

and cast my words behind you?

### Gospel Acclamation

**James 1:18**

Alleluia, alleluia.

Of his own will the Father brought us forth by the word of truth,

that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

Alleluia.

## **Gospel**

### **Matthew 8:28-34**

#### **'Have you come here to torment demons before the time?'**

At that time: When Jesus came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, 'What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?'

Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, saying, 'If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.' And he said to them, 'Go.' So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

#### **Short reflection on the reading for today**

Today we hear how Jesus brings two demoniacs to a greater fullness of life. It is striking that after doing this, the people of the region implored him to leave the neighbourhood. It might have been expected that they would have wanted Jesus, this man who could bring freedom to the enslaved, to stay among them for some time. Surely there were others in this region who could benefit from the presence of God's power at work in Jesus. Perhaps the people were nervous of such power for good, fearing that it might make demands on them.

We too can be tempted to ask Jesus to leave our neighbourhood, to leave our lives. We sometimes want to keep him at a distance. We sense that his nearness might be very demanding. He might call us to go out towards those who live on the edge of the community, as he himself went out towards the two demoniacs who lived among the tombs. Yet, if we welcome the Lord into our lives, rather than keeping him at a distance, we will discover that he gives us the strength to respond to the challenging call of his presence and in responding to that call we too will find a greater fullness of life.