

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

31st October 2026

First reading

Philippians 1:18b-26

‘To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.’

Brothers and Sisters: In every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage, now as always, Christ will be honoured in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 42(41):2. 3. 5b-d. R3a

My soul is thirsting for the living God.

Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God.

My soul is thirsting for God, the living God; when can I enter and appear before the face of God?

For I would go to the place of your wondrous tent, all the way to the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving, the throng keeping joyful festival.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:29ab

Alleluia, alleluia.

Take my yoke upon you, says the Lord,
and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart.
Alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 14:1, 7-11

‘Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’

One Sabbath, when Jesus went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully.

Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honour, saying to them, ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honour, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, “Give your place to this person”, and then you, with shame, will take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher.” Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Unlike the evangelists Paul's writings can't record the words and deeds of Jesus. His message focussed on the risen Christ, living in the community. The church's actions and words become acts or statements of the "body of Christ." Paul was very glad when that message was passed on to others, by simply mentioning the name "Christ." Under this name all envy and suspicion should be banished from among the faithful.

Jesus warns against the common temptation to use money or status (i.e. pull rank) in order to be seated in the best seats. Knowing how even good people can feel drawn to this, he advises them to voluntarily go to the lower place. Then if the host so wishes you will be called forward, 'My friend, come up higher.' He seems to say, if you host yourself in high esteem, at least give others a chance to determine your place. Then he names the most controversial virtue of humility. The call to be humble is a challenge to us all, even if glory is promised as its reward.