

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

27th July 2026

First reading

Jeremiah 13:1-11

‘The people shall be like this loincloth, which is good for nothing.’

Thus says the Lord to me, ‘Go and buy a linen loincloth and put it round your waist, and do not dip it in water.’ So I bought a loincloth according to the word of the Lord, and put it round my waist. And the word of the Lord came to me a second time, ‘Take the loincloth that you have bought, which is round your waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a cleft of the rock.’ So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as the Lord commanded me. And after many days the Lord said to me, ‘Arise, go to the Euphrates, and take from there the loincloth that I commanded you to hide there.’ Then I went to the Euphrates, and dug, and I took the loincloth from the place where I had hidden it. And behold, the loincloth was spoiled; it was good for nothing.

Then the word of the Lord came to me: ‘Thus says the Lord: Even so will I spoil the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own heart and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be like this loincloth, which is good for nothing. For as the loincloth clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, declares the Lord, that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen.’

Responsorial Psalm

Deuteronomy 32:18-19. 20. 21. R cf. 18a

You neglected the God who begot you.

You neglected the Rock that begot you, you forgot the God who gave you birth.

The Lord observed it and was jealous; he spurned his sons and daughters.

And he said, ‘I will hide my face from them; I will see how their end will fare.

For they are a rebellious race, children with no faithfulness in them.’

‘They stirred me to jealousy with what is no-god; incited me with their idols.

I will arouse their jealousy who are no-people; I will provoke them with a nation of fools.’

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 13:31-35

‘The mustard seed becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’

At that time: Jesus put another parable before the crowd, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’

He told them another parable. ‘The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.’

All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet: ‘I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

The two parables in today's gospel are an image of Jesus' own ministry. His work in Galilee is like the mustard seed and the leaven; it is very small scale and to outsiders would have looked somewhat unpromising. Jesus has not been sweeping all before him. He has been going about his work quietly without fanfare. Yet, the parables suggest that these small beginnings are the promise of something wonderful to come, just as the mustard seed becomes a tree where the birds of the air build their nests and the tiny leaven has a huge impact on three measures of flour. Humble beginnings can have an extraordinary outcome when the work in question is God's work. There is an encouragement to us all to keep doing the little bit of good we are able to do. It may not seem much in our own eyes or in the eyes of others, yet God can work powerfully through whatever little good we do, in ways that will surprise us. We can all plant the equivalent of the mustard seed; we can all be the equivalent of the leaven. The little initiative, the small gesture, the offer of help, can all bear fruit in ways that we could never have imagined at the time. The Lord can work powerfully through our smallest efforts if they are done out of love for him. Our calling is often to plant some good seed and to trust that the Lord will do the rest.