

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

25th August 2026

First reading

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a. 14-17

‘Hold to the traditions that you were taught.’

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit, or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way.

God called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 96(95):10. 11-13a. 13b-d. R13b

The Lord comes to judge the earth.

Say to the nations, ‘The Lord is king.’

The world he made firm in its place; he will judge the peoples in fairness.

Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad; let the sea and all within it thunder praise.

Let the field and all it bears exult.

Then will all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he comes.

He comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with justice, and the peoples with faithfulness.

Gospel Acclamation

Hebrews 4:12

Alleluia, alleluia.

The word of God is living and active,
discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 23:23-26

‘These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.’

At that time: Jesus said, ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!’

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Perhaps we don’t always think of Jesus as poking fun at mistaken attitudes. Yet, the imagery he uses in today’s gospel displays a wicked sense of humour. He accuses the Pharisees of straining out gnats and swallowing camels. A gnat or flea is almost invisible; a camel is big and imposing. The picture of someone

straining out a gnat so as not to swallow it while happily swallowing a whole camel is humorous in a zany kind of way. Clearly he uses that image to poke fun at those who make a big deal about what is not important while happily ignoring what is important, being scrupulous about paying tithes on herbs while ignoring justice, mercy and faith. Jesus is talking about getting our priorities right, keeping things in proportion.

We can all be prone to getting worked up about minor matters while not attending sufficiently to what really important. On this occasion, Jesus lists what is important as justice, mercy and faith. Justice and mercy concern our relationship with our neighbour; faith concerns our relationship with God. Jesus is saying, what really matters is getting those two relationships right; everything else is secondary. St Paul says something very similar in one of his letters, 'the only thing that matters is faith expressing itself in love.' We pray that this may always be our priority.