

Reading for Memorial of St Ignatius Loyola

31st July 2026

First reading

Jeremiah 26:1-9

‘All the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.’

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord: ‘Thus says the Lord: Stand in the court of the Lord’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the Lord all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word. It may be they will listen, and every one turn from his evil way, that I may relent of the disaster that I intend to do to them because of their evil deeds. You shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, and to listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently, though you have not listened, then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.” ’

The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, ‘You shall die! Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, “This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant”?’ And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 69(68):5. 8-10. 14. R14c

In your great mercy, answer me, O Lord.

More numerous than the hairs on my head are those who hate me without cause.

Mighty are those who attack me, enemies with lies.

What I have never stolen, how can I restore?

It is for you that I suffer taunts, that shame has covered my face.

To my own kin I have become an outcast, a stranger to the children of my mother.

Zeal for your house consumes me, and taunts against you fall on me.

But I pray to you, O Lord, at an acceptable time.

In your great mercy, answer me, O God, with your faithful salvation.

Gospel Acclamation

1 Peter 1:25

Alleluia, alleluia.

The word of the Lord remains for ever

and this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 13:54-58

‘Is not this the carpenter’s son? Where then did this man get all these things?’

At that time: Coming to his home town Jesus taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, ‘Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?’ And they took offence at him. But Jesus said to them, ‘A prophet is not without honour except in his home town and in his own household.’ And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

Short reflection on the reading for today

When people have been away from home for some time, coming home again is not always easy. The people at home may have changed in the meantime; those who come home may also have changed since leaving home. There can be an expectation that things will be as they have always been, and when that does not happen, it can lead to misunderstanding and frustration.

Jesus comes home to Nazareth after being away from his home town for some time. He had changed in the meantime. He left Nazareth the carpenter's son, in the words of the gospel. He returned a preacher of God's kingdom and a healer of the broken. The people of Nazareth could not accept this change. "This is the carpenter's son, surely?" they asked. "Where did the man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they wondered.

The people of Nazareth would not accept Jesus because he was not the person they once knew. We too can be slow to accept people who have moved on in some way or other; we only want them as we once knew them. When it comes to the person of Jesus, like the people of Nazareth, we can see him somewhat narrowly. We can be slow to allow our image of him to be broadened. Yet, more than any human being, Jesus is always beyond our full understanding. We never grasp him completely and we always have to be open to growing in our knowledge and love of him until that day when we see him face to face.