

Reading for the Memorial of St Clare

11th August 2026

First reading

Ezekiel 2:8-3:4

‘He gave me this scroll to eat and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.’

Thus says the Lord: ‘You, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.’ And when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

And he said to me, ‘Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.’ So I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat. And he said to me, ‘Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it.’ Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.

And he said to me, ‘Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 119(118):14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131. R103a

How sweet is your promise to my tongue, O Lord.

I rejoice in the way of your precepts, as though all riches were mine.

See, your decrees are my delight; your statutes are my counsellors.

The law from your mouth means more to me than large quantities of silver and gold.

How sweet is your promise to my tongue, more than honey in the mouth.

Your decrees are my heritage for ever, the joy of my heart.

I have opened my mouth and I sigh, for I yearn for your commands.

Gospel Acclamation

Mt11:25

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children.

Alleluia!

Or:

Mt11:29

Alleluia, alleluia!

Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, says the Lord, for I am gentle and humble in heart.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14

‘See that you do not despise one of these little ones.’

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, ‘Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.

‘See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Sometimes the kinds of questions people ask reveal their values, their priorities, what they think is most important. The question that the disciples put to Jesus in today's gospel, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" suggests a certain interest on their part in status and standing. In response to their question, Jesus both did something and said something. He first of all called a child over and placed the child in front of them; he then informed them that they needed to become like that child just to enter the kingdom of heaven, never mind become the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus was teaching his disciples to become child-like not childish, child-like in the sense of a child-like trust in a loving Father, which awaits everything from God and grabs at nothing, including status and standing. Greatness comes to those who make themselves as dependent on God as children are dependent on adults for their existence and well-being. Jesus' response to the question of his disciples is a kind of a commentary on the first beatitude which he had spoken earlier in Matthew's gospel, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."