

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

16th July 2026

First reading

Isaiah 26:7-9, 12, 16-19

‘You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy!’

The path of the righteous is level; you make level the way of the righteous.

In the path of your judgements, O Lord, we wait for you;

your name and remembrance are the desire of our soul.

My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you.

For when your judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

O Lord, you will ordain peace for us, for you have indeed done for us all our works.

O Lord, in distress they sought you; they poured out a whispered prayer

when your discipline was upon them.

Like a pregnant woman who writhes and cries out in her pangs when she is near to giving birth,

so were we because of you, O Lord;

we were pregnant, we writhed, but we have given birth to wind.

We have accomplished no deliverance in the earth, and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen.

Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise.

You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light,

and the earth will give birth to the dead.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 102(101):13-14ab, 15. 16-18. 19-21. R20b

The Lord looked down from heaven to the earth.

You, O Lord, are enthroned for ever,

and your renown is from age to age.

You will arise and take pity on Sion, for this is the time to have mercy.

Behold, your servants love her very stones, are moved to pity for her dust.

The nations shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the earth's kings your glory.

When the Lord shall build up Sion, he will appear in all his glory.

Then he will turn to the prayers of the helpless; he will not despise their prayers.

Let this be written for ages to come, that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord;

The Lord looked down from his holy place on high, looked down from heaven to the earth,

to hear the groans of the prisoners, and free those condemned to die.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:28

Alleluia, alleluia.

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, says the Lord,

and I will give you rest.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 11:28-30

‘Come to me, all who labour.’

At that time: Jesus declared, ‘Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Jesus blamed the religion of his day for burdening people, imposing on them unnecessary demands, and making the Law harder to observe than it should be. He reaches out to people who feel burdened and excluded by all sorts of harsh teaching, and he promises them peace of mind.

Instead of burdening their conscience, he calls them to a personal union with himself, ‘Come to me... learn from me’, he says. Rather than giving them more laws, he offers a life-giving relationship. The core of Christian faith is not a detailed, demanding moral code but the person of Jesus Christ who is our *Emmanuel*, God-with-us.

We are called to come to him, as he has come to us, to relate to him in love, as he has given himself for us in love. In coming to him we discover him to be, not an impersonal taskmaster, but rather, someone who is gentle and humble in heart. The living out of our relationship with him will be demanding; walking in his way often requires saying ‘no’ to other, seemingly more attractive, ways. However, his demands are the demands of love; the path he puts before us is life-giving rather than oppressive and overburdening. His loving relationship with us and ours with him empowers us to take that path, to walk in his way.