

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

31st August 2026

First reading

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

‘I proclaimed to you the mystery of Christ crucified.’

I, when I came to you, brothers and sisters, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 119(118):97-98. 99-100. 101-102. R97a

O Lord, how I love your law!

O Lord, how I love your law: my meditation all the day!

Your command makes me wiser than my foes, for it is with me always.

I have more insight than all who teach me, for I ponder your decrees.

I have gained more understanding than my elders, for I keep your precepts.

I keep my feet from every evil path, to obey your word.

I have not turned away from your decrees which you yourself have taught me.

Gospel Acclamation

Cf. Luke 4:18

Alleluia, alleluia.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;

he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 4:16-30

‘He has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.

No prophet is acceptable in his home town.’

At that time: Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll, and found the place where it was written,

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’

And he rolled up the scroll, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

And all spoke well of him and marvelled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, ‘Is not this Joseph’s son?’ And he said to them, ‘Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “ ‘Physician, heal yourself.’ What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your home town as well.” ’ And he said, ‘Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his home town. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.’

When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up, and drove him out of the town, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away.

Short reflection on the reading for today

When he read from the scroll of Isaiah and then sat down to comment on the reading, Jesus identified with the prophet who was sent to bring good news to the poor, to bring freedom to captives and sight to the blind, and set the downtrodden free. He identified himself with two famous prophets, Elijah and Elisha, both of whom ministered to people outside Israel. Jesus wants to work with people in greatest need, wherever they were.

Oddly, stating this broad scope for his mission made the villagers of Nazareth angry. Since he was one of their own they expected to get special treatment from him. But Jesus has come for all. His aims have not changed. If he has any favourites it is those who are most needy in body, mind, or spirit. He still reaches out to those who need him. All he asks is that we receive him on his own terms, which the Nazareth villagers could not do. The Lord is always close to all of us; it is our need, our suffering, whatever form it takes, which can bring us close to him.