

Reading for the Memorial of St Monica

27th August 2026

First reading

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

‘In every way you were enriched in him.’

Paul, called by the will of God to be an Apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge — even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you — so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 145(144):2-3. 4-5. 6-7. R cf. 1b

I will bless your name for ever, O Lord.

I will bless you day after day, and praise your name for ever and ever.

The Lord is great and highly to be praised; his greatness cannot be measured.

Age to age shall proclaim your works, shall declare your mighty deeds.

They will tell of your great glory and splendour, and recount your wonderful works.

They will speak of your awesome deeds, recount your greatness and might.

They will recall your abundant goodness, and sing of your righteous deeds with joy.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 24:42a, 44

Alleluia, alleluia.

Stay awake and be ready,

for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 24:42-51

‘Be ready.’

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, Stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

‘Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, “My master is delayed”, and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

We have become very security-conscious in recent years. The house alarm has become almost essential and we are much more aware of the need to keep doors locked than we might have been in the past. This security consciousness is a sign of the times, in an age of rampant drug-abuse that erodes the addicts' respect for the property or even the lives of others. But thievery are not a new phenomenon. Jesus was fond of expressing his teaching in images drawn from the experience of the people he was talking to. In the first of the parables in today's gospel we find the image of the burglar breaking into someone's house. Clearly this was an experience his people could relate to.

He draws attention to the element of surprise in the burglar's tactics. The only way for the householder not to be surprised by the burglar is for him to stay awake all night. Staying awake all night becomes in Jesus' parable an image of the disciples remaining alert to the presence, to the coming, of the Lord. The Lord lives in constant awareness of us; we are called to live in constant awareness of him. We find it difficult to be aware of the Lord all the time, because so many other things fill our minds and hearts. Yet, that is what the Lord asks of us. We are to attend to, be aware of, his constant presence to us. This is what might be termed the contemplative attitude. There is a sense in which we are all called to become contemplatives — with a small c.