

Reading for Weekday in Ordinary Time

15th August 2026

First reading

Ezekiel 18:1-10, 13b, 30-32

‘I will judge you, every one according to his ways.’

The word of the Lord came to me: ‘What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? As I live, declares the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.

‘If a man is righteous and does what is just and right — if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbour’s wife or approach a woman in her time of menstrual impurity, does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, does not lend at interest or take any profit, withholds his hand from injustice, executes true justice between man and man, walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully — he is righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord God.

‘If he fathers a son who is violent, a shedder of blood, who does any of these things. He shall not live. He has done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon himself.

‘Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 51(50):12-13. 14-15. 18-19. R12a

Create a pure heart for me, O God.

Create a pure heart for me, O God; renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence; take not your holy spirit from me.

Restore in me the joy of your salvation; sustain in me a willing spirit.

I will teach transgressors your ways, that sinners may return to you.

For in sacrifice you take no delight; burnt offering from me would not please you.

My sacrifice to God, a broken spirit: a broken and humbled heart, you will not spurn, O God.

Gospel Acclamation

Cf. Matthew 11:25

Alleluia, alleluia.

I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

you have revealed the secrets of the kingdom to little children.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 19:13-15

‘Do not hinder the little children from coming to me, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.’

At that time: Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.’ And he laid his hands on them and went away.

Short reflection on the reading for today

Even though this Gospel story is brief and uncomplicated, it is not undemanding. Like the disciples, we too can easily miss the heart of the Lord and need correction from Him when it comes to our attitudes toward children. What this passage teaches us is so important because it is crucial for the advance of the kingdom of God. As a church, if we ignore the lessons of this passage, we do so at the cost of our church's future and at the risk of receiving the Lord's rebuke.

This is not the first time Jesus has spoken about little children. You may remember that in Matthew 18, when His disciples came to Him asking who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus took a small child to Himself, set him in their midst, and said,

Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. ([Matthew 18:3-5](#)).

Although these two passages are similar, there's an important difference between them. In Matthew 18, Jesus spoke about the "little ones" because the disciples were valuing themselves too highly—arguing over which of them was the greatest. But in Matthew 19, Jesus spoke about the "little ones" because the disciples were failing to value the children highly enough. Far from receiving or welcoming little children, in our text the disciples rebuke those who bring them and try to prevent their coming to Jesus. It seems that the disciples have not learned the lesson: they needed their attitudes changed. Do we need to have our attitudes changed to line up with Jesus' heart for the little children?