

Reading for the Memorial of St Augustine

28th August 2026

First reading

1 Corinthians 1:17-25

‘We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to men, but to those who are called, the wisdom of God.’

Brothers and Sisters: Christ did not send me to baptise but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.’

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 33(32):1-2. 4-5. 10-11. R5b

The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth.

Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; for praise is fitting from the upright.

Give thanks to the Lord upon the harp; with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs.

For the word of the Lord is upright, and all his works to be trusted.

The Lord loves justice and right, and his merciful love fills the earth.

The Lord frustrates the designs of the nations; he defeats the plans of the peoples.

The designs of the Lord stand for ever, the plans of his heart from age to age.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 21:36

Alleluia, alleluia.

Stay awake at all times,

praying that you may have strength to stand before the Son of Man.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 25:1-13

‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’

At that time: Jesus told his disciples this parable, ‘The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, “Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise answered, saying, “Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.” And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterwards the other virgins came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he answered, “Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.” Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

It is lovely to be met by someone when we get home from a journey. To be met by a friendly face is all the more gratifying if our arrival has been delayed. Recognizing the hoped-for presence in the crowd, despite our very late arrival, makes us all the more appreciative of their coming. They have been faithful, in spite of the inconvenience of the unexpected delay.

The bridegroom, in today's parable, who turned up late must have been equally pleased to find that at least some of the bridesmaids were there to meet him with torches lit and to escort him to the wedding banquet, in spite of his late arrival and their long wait.

Immediately after this parable, Jesus told his disciples, 'Stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour.' The Lord expected them to stay faithful, especially during those times when he seemed absent and their expectations of him were not coming to pass.

When the Lord calls us to be his followers, it is always for the long haul; he looks to us to keep our light burning right to the very end, through the good times and the bad times.

Earlier in Matthew's gospel Jesus had addressed his disciples as the light of the world and called on them to let their light shine so that people might see their good works and give glory to God for them.

Keeping our lamps burning, letting our light shine to the end, amounts to doing the good works the Lord calls on us to do, for as long as we are able to do them.