

Reading for the Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows

15th September 2026

First reading

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 27-31a

‘You are the body of Christ and individually members of it.’

Brothers and Sisters: Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptised into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the Church first Apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all Apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 100(99):1-2. 3. 5. R2b

We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing for joy. Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us; we belong to him. We are his people, the sheep of his flock. Indeed, how good is the Lord, eternal his merciful love. He is faithful from age to age.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Joyful is the Virgin Mary,

who, without dying, won the palm of martyrdom

beneath the Cross of the Lord.

Alleluia.

The following reading is proper to the memorial, and must be used even if you have otherwise chosen to use the ferial readings.

Gospel

John 19:25-27

‘Behold, your son! Behold, your mother!’

At that time: Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son!' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

These are the readings for the memorial

First reading

Hebrews 5:7-9

‘He learned obedience and became the source of eternal salvation.’

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 31(30):2-3a. 3b-4. 5-6. 15-16. 20. R17b

Save me, Lord, in your merciful love.

In you, O Lord, I take refuge. Let me never be put to shame.

In your justice, set me free; incline your ear to me, and speedily rescue me.

Be a rock of refuge for me, a mighty stronghold to save me.

For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

But as for me, I trust in you, O Lord;

I say, 'You are my God. There in your hands is my lot, from the hands of my enemies deliver me, and from those who pursue me.'

How great is the goodness, Lord, that you keep for those who fear you,
that you show to those who trust you in the sight of the children of Adam.

Sequence Stabat Mater

At the cross her station keeping stood the mournful Mother weeping, close to Jesus to the last;
through her heart, his sorrow sharing, all his bitter anguish bearing, now at length the sword had passed.

Oh, how sad and sore distressed was that Mother highly blessed of the sole begotten One!
Christ above in torment hangs; she beneath beholds the pangs of her dying glorious Son.

Is there one who would not weep, whelmed in miseries so deep, Christ's dear Mother to behold?
Can the human heart refrain from partaking in her pain, in that Mother's pain untold?

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled, she beheld her tender child all with bloody scourges rent;
for the sins of his own nation saw him hang in desolation, till his spirit forth he sent.

O you Mother, fount of love! Touch my spirit from above, make my heart with yours accord:
make me feel as you have felt; make my soul to glow and melt with the love of Christ our Lord.

Holy Mother, pierce me through; in my heart each wound renew of my Saviour crucified.
Let me share with you his pain who for all our sins was slain, who for me in torments died.

Let me mingle tears with you, mourning him who mourned for me all the days that I may live:
by the cross with you to stay, there with you to weep and pray, is all I ask of you to give.

Virgin of all virgins best, listen to my fond request: let me share your grief divine;
let me to my latest breath, in my body bear the death of that dying Son of yours.

Wounded with his every wound, steep my soul till it has swooned in his very blood away;
be to me, O Virgin, nigh, lest in flames I burn and die in his awful judgement day.

Christ, when you shall call me hence, be your Mother my defence, be your cross my victory.
While my body here decays, may my soul your goodness praise, safe in paradise with you.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

Joyful is the Virgin Mary,

who, without dying, won the palm of martyrdom
beneath the Cross of the Lord.

Alleluia.

See above for the Gospel reading.

Short reflection on the reading for today

When someone we love suffers, we suffer along with them. The more we love someone, the more we suffer when they suffer. This is especially true of parents when their children suffer. When a son or daughter is suffering physically or emotionally or mentally, the mother and father is suffering just as much as their child is suffering, and sometimes even more so. You give your heart in love to someone and, invariably, it will be broken. There is no love without suffering. The only way to avoid that kind of suffering is to lock our heart up. The temptation can be to refuse to give our heart to anything or anyone, so that it is kept intact and never gets broken, but to do that is only to be half alive. The only way to live is to love and to accept the suffering that love inevitably brings.

Today we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. She gave her heart to her Son and when her Son's body was broken, Mary's heart was broken. Michelangelo's Pieta captures that very powerfully. Simeon in today's gospel makes that connection between Jesus' suffering and that of his mother. Jesus is 'destined to be a sign that is rejected' and, as for Mary, 'a sword will pierce your own soul too.' When our own heart breaks because of love we can look to Our Lady of Sorrows as our inspiration and our support.