

Reading for the Memorial of St Charles Borromeo

4th November 2025

First reading

Romans 12:5-16a

‘We are members one of another.’

Brothers and Sisters: We, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honour. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 131(130):1. 2. 3.

Keep my soul in peace before you, O Lord.

O Lord, my heart is not proud,
nor haughty my eyes.

I have not gone after things too great,
nor marvels beyond me.

Truly, I have set my soul
in tranquillity and silence.

Like a weaned child on its mother,
as a weaned child is my soul within me.

O Israel, hope in the Lord,
both now and for ever.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:28

Alleluia, alleluia.

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, says the Lord,
and I will give you rest.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 14:15-24

‘Go out to the highways and hedgerows and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.’

At that time: One of those who reclined at table with Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!’ But he said to him, ‘A man once gave a great banquet and invited many.

And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, “Come, for everything is now ready.” But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, “I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.” And another said, “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please excuse me.” And another said, “I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.” So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house

became angry and said to his servant, “Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.” And the servant said, “Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.” And the master said to the servant, “Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.” ’

Short reflection on the reading for today

In Luke’s gospel, Jesus is often shown talking with other guests at a meal. Today he is hosted by a leading Pharisee and other Pharisees and Jewish lawyers were present. One of the guests makes an enthusiastic outburst of faith in the form of a beatitude, “Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” In reply, our Lord tells a parable comparing God’s kingdom to a great feast. But whereas the other guest’s outburst looked forward to a great feast in the future, in the parable the invitations to the feast have already gone out in the present. Jesus draws people’s attention back from the future to the here and now.

If the invitations have already gone out, what is to be our response to God’s invitation? Ominously, we learn that some people who initially said “yes” to the invitation turned it down at the last minute, when the meal was ready to be served. They let themselves be distracted by various interests, which are all good in themselves but are not the primary good. The excuses they made are not unlike what we ourselves might make. But as a result of their refusal, their places are given to the kinds of people who normally get invited to nothing. These poor people had no other engagements and were delighted to accept. It’s a reminder to say yes to the Lord’s invitation in the present moment and not to let minor matters take all of our time, so that we are no longer free to say yes when God calls.