

Reading for the Memorial of St Ignatius of Antioch

17th October 2025

First reading

Romans 4:1-8

‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.’

Brothers and Sisters: What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.’ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ‘Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 32(31):1-2. 5. 11. R7

You are a hiding place for me;

you surround me with cries of deliverance.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.

Blessed the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile.

To you I have acknowledged my sin;
my guilt I did not hide.

I said, ‘I will confess my transgression to the Lord.’

And you have forgiven the guilt of my sin.

Rejoice in the Lord, exult you just!

Ring out your joy, all you upright of heart!

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 33(32):22

Alleluia, alleluia.

May your merciful love be upon us,
as we hope in you, O Lord.

Alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 12:1-7

‘Even the hairs of your head are all numbered.’

At that time: When so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, Jesus began to say to his disciples first, ‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

‘I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

God is so involved with the details of creation that even the humble sparrow is not insignificant or forgotten. There is a temptation for those in authority that the more exalted their rank, the less in touch they are with ordinary life. Today's gospel says that this does not apply to God. The Maker of all creation is actively and personally involved with the details of that creation, says Jesus. He coins the memorable image, "not one sparrow is forgotten in God's sight."

Regarding our own lives too, "Every hair on your head has been counted; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows." If even a sparrow is not forgotten in God's sight, how much more is that true of us. Jesus reveals a God who is near to us and cares about our ups and downs, our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures. If this is true, we can speak to God about all our experiences, both in sorrow and joy. We can bring to God the details of our lives in prayer, knowing that he is deeply concerned about us. We can speak from the heart to God, as to our closest friend, sure of being understood.