

## Reading for the Memorial of St Barnabas

June 11th 2026

### First reading

**Acts 11:21b-26; 13:1-3**

**‘He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.’**

In those days: a great number who believed turned to the Lord. The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 98(97):1. 2-3b. 3c-4. 5-6. R3cd**

*The Lord has shown his deliverance to the nations.*

O sing a new song to the Lord,

for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm

have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known his salvation,

has shown his deliverance to the nations.

He has remembered his merciful love

and his truth for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen

the salvation of our God.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth;

break forth into joyous song,

and sing out your praise.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,

with the harp and the sound of song.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn,

raise a shout before the King, the Lord.

### Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

A new commandment I give to you, says the Lord,  
that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

Alleluia.

**John 13:34**

## Gospel

## Matthew 5:20-26

### **‘Go first, be reconciled to your brother.’**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: ‘I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. You have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgement.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.’

### **Short reflection on the reading for today**

The kindly Cypriot, Barnabas, was admired for his gift of animating others. His given name was Josef, but *Barnabas* was added as a nickname which means “son of encouragement.” We see him engaged in that ministry in today’s text from the Acts. Something powerful and new was stirring within the Christian community in Antioch. In that city the gospel had for the first time been preached to *pagans* as well as Jews and therefore a new kind of church was emerging there, a group that included members of Jewish and non-Jewish background.

When Barnabas was sent to Antioch by the apostles to assess what was happening there, he immediately recognised it as the work of the Lord and sided with this new development. He turned out to be absolutely right; it was indeed the work of the Lord. God is always at work in new and creative ways among us and it is a great gift to be able to recognise divine inspiration wherever it is to be found, and to celebrate and encourage its effects. Barnabas had this gift of noticing where the Lord was a work because, as the narrator says, he was *a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith (Acts 11:24)*. We need to be open to the Spirit, in order to recognise the work of the Spirit. As Saint Paul says in one of his letters, *spiritual things are discerned spiritually (1 Cor 2:14)*.