

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

Be my protector, O God,  
a mighty stronghold to save me.  
For you are my rock, my stronghold!  
Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your  
name.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

O God, who teach us that you abide  
in hearts that are just and true,  
grant that we may be so fashioned by your  
grace  
as to become a dwelling pleasing to you.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING** Ecclesiasticus 15:15-20

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus.  
If you wish, you can keep the  
commandments,  
to behave faithfully is within your power.  
He has set fire and water before you;  
put out your hand to whichever you prefer.  
Man has life and death before him;  
whichever a man likes better will be given  
him.  
For vast is the wisdom of the Lord;  
he is almighty and all-seeing.  
His eyes are on those who fear him,  
he notes every action of man.  
He never commanded anyone to be godless,  
he has given no one permission to sin.  
The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalms 118

Response:

They are happy who follow God's law!

1. They are happy whose life is blameless,  
who follow God's law!  
They are happy those who do his will,  
seeking him with all their hearts. (R.)
2. You have laid down your precepts  
to be obeyed with care.  
May my footsteps be firm  
to obey your statutes. (R.)
3. Bless your servant and I shall live  
and obey your word.

Open my eyes that I may consider  
the wonders of your law. (R.)

4. Teach me the demands of your statutes  
and I will keep them to the end.  
Train me to observe your law,  
to keep it with my heart. (R.)

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the  
Corinthians.

We have a wisdom to offer those who have  
reached maturity: not a philosophy of our  
age, it is true, still less of the masters of  
our age, which are coming to their end.  
The hidden wisdom of God which we teach  
in our mysteries is the wisdom that God  
predestined to be for our glory before the  
ages began. It is a wisdom that none of the  
masters of this age have ever known, or they  
would not have crucified the Lord of Glory;  
we teach what scripture calls: the things that  
no eye has seen and no ear has heard, things  
beyond the mind of man, all that God has  
prepared for those who love him.

These are the very things that God has  
revealed to us through the Spirit, for the  
Spirit reaches the depths of everything, even  
the depths of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:  
you have the message of eternal life.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Matthew 5:17-37

(For shorter form read between &gt; and &lt;)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
Matthew.

>Jesus said to his disciples:< "Do not imagine  
that I have come to abolish the Law or the  
Prophets. I have come not to abolish them  
but to complete them. I tell you solemnly, till  
heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, one  
little stroke, shall disappear from the Law until  
its purpose is achieved. Therefore, the man  
who infringes even one of the least of these  
commandments and teaches others to do  
the same will be considered the least in the  
kingdom of heaven; but the man who keeps  
them and teaches them will be considered  
great in the kingdom of heaven.

>(For) I tell you, if your virtue goes no  
deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees,  
you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

"You have learnt how it was said to our  
ancestors: You must not kill; and if anyone  
does kill he must answer for it before the  
court. But I say this to you: anyone who is  
angry with his brother will answer for it before  
the court; if a man calls his brother 'Fool' he  
will answer for it before the Sanhedrin; and if  
a man calls him 'Renegade' he will answer for  
it in hell fire. So then, if you are bringing your  
offering to the altar and there remember that  
your brother has something against you, leave  
your offering there before the altar, go and be  
reconciled with your brother first, and then  
come back and present your offering. Come to  
terms with your opponent in good time while  
you are still on the way to the court with him,  
or he may hand you over to the judge and the  
judge to the officer, and you will be thrown  
into prison. I tell you solemnly, you will not get  
out till you have paid the last penny.

>"You have learnt how it was said: You must  
not commit adultery. But I say this to you:  
if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has  
already committed adultery with her in his  
heart.< If your right eye should cause you to  
sin, tear it out and throw it away; for it will do  
you less harm to lose one part of you than to  
have your whole body thrown into hell. And  
if your right hand should cause you to sin, cut  
it off and throw it away; for it will do you less  
harm to lose one part of you than to have your  
whole body go to hell.

"It has also been said: Anyone who divorces  
his wife must give her a writ of dismissal. But  
I say this to you: everyone who divorces his  
wife, except for the case of fornication, makes  
her an adulteress; and anyone who marries a  
divorced woman commits adultery.

>"Again, you have learnt how it was said to  
our ancestors: You must not break your oath,  
but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I  
say this to you: do not swear at all,< either  
by heaven, since that is God's throne; or by  
the earth, since that is his footstool; or by  
Jerusalem, since that is the city of the great  
king. Do not swear by your own head either,  
since you cannot turn a single hair white or  
black.>All you need say is 'Yes' if you mean  
yes, 'No' if you mean no; anything more than  
this comes from the evil one."

The Gospel of the Lord.&lt;

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

(all bow during the next two lines)

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the  
Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living  
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

May this oblation, O Lord, we pray,  
cleanse and renew us  
and may it become for those who do your will  
the source of eternal reward.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

They ate and had their fill,  
and what they craved the Lord gave them;  
they were not disappointed in what they  
craved.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Having fed upon these heavenly delights,  
we pray, O Lord,  
that we may always long  
for that food by which we truly live.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



# Sunday Message

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

**THE WORD**

Year A • 12 February 2023 • Psalter Week 2



Today's Gospel is part of the Sermon on the Mount, which we have been  
reading over the past two Sundays.

The Sermon on the Mount takes up three whole chapters of Matthew's Gospel (chapters 5-7) and contains the main teaching of Jesus. But it would be wrong to think of it as a single event that took place one sunny afternoon on a mountainside when Jesus was in excellent preaching form. The 105 verses of the Sermon on the Mount are a collection of different pronouncements and sayings of Jesus that Matthew gathered and stitched together into one unit. They are a crash course in Christianity, one powerful statement of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. ■

**REFLECT**

You probably know the joke about  
the chicken and the pig. A chicken  
and a pig are discussing breakfast.  
The chicken says, "Let's have bacon and  
eggs." The pig replies, "That's fine for  
you. You're just making a contribution, but  
I have to be fully committed."

The poor pig would have to give  
up everything to provide a good fry  
for breakfast. He'd have to be fully  
committed. In a real sense, that's what  
today's Gospel from the Sermon on the  
Mount is about too. It's about being fully  
committed.

There's a big difference between Jesus'  
teaching and the old Jewish law.

The Pharisees and Jewish religious  
leaders of the time were focused on  
keeping the letter of the law. Observe the  
law, and you were upright in the eyes of  
God. But Jesus goes beyond that. He says  
keeping the law is more than just slavishly  
sticking to rules and regulations – it's  
about what goes on in our hearts.

You could say that while the Pharisees'  
view of the law was like that of the  
chicken, Jesus' view of the law is like that  
of the pig – it demands total commitment.  
We see that contrast played out in today's  
Gospel. Jesus says: "You have learnt how  
it was said to our ancestors: You must not  
kill... But I say this to you: Anyone who  
is angry with his brother will answer for it  
before the court..."

"You have learnt how it was said: You  
must not commit adultery. But I say this  
to you..."

"You have learnt how it was said: You  
must not break your oath... but I say this  
to you..."

Jesus is going beyond the old law. He  
puts a new interpretation on it and takes  
it a step further. He is demanding greater  
commitment from his followers than  
merely keeping the letter of the law.

It's safe to assume that nobody reading  
this newsletter has killed anyone, and  
so, legally speaking, we can say we have  
kept the letter of the law. We have kept

**PRAY**

Being a disciple of Jesus is not fashionable.  
Pray for the strength to follow Jesus faithfully.  
Pray for our church leaders that they will  
proclaim the Gospel with conviction.

**SAY**

Lord, help me to follow you with  
a full heart and eyes wide open.  
Help me to integrate my faith  
into every aspect of my life.

**LEARN**

Following Jesus involves far more than  
"keeping" rules and regulations. It is about  
conversion of mind and heart.

Conversion is something that happens every  
day.

**DO**

Think about how you "keep the faith". What  
does it mean for you to follow Jesus? Is it  
just about going to Mass and the sacraments  
regularly, or does it mean much more than  
that?

the fifth commandment. But see how  
Jesus interprets that law to include much  
broader things like anger. He takes one  
of the commandments and gives it a far  
more challenging application.

And it is challenging. Take what he says  
about being angry with your brother or  
sister. Now think of some of the social  
and moral debates we have been having  
in this country. There is so much anger,  
venom, and sneering contempt directed  
at individuals and groups. Social media is  
full of it.

Jesus knows it is possible to keep the law  
– to avoid committing murder, adultery  
or false witness – and yet to sin against  
those commandments by breaking them  
in spirit. For him, what matters is not  
external observance but what goes on  
inside the human heart – our thoughts,  
our values, our attitudes, our motivations,  
what guides our whole approach to life.  
Following Jesus means internalising  
our faith, making it part of the very air  
we breathe. It means trying to live the  
Sermon on the Mount. It means always  
having an attitude of love. ■