

# Sunday Message

27<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 2 October 2022 • Psalter Week 3



## DUTY CALLS

LUKE 17:5-10

Doing our duty is a central theme of today's Gospel. Jesus tells a parable about what is expected of servants.

The situation he describes would have been familiar to his audience, a medium-sized farmer who can afford to employ a single worker as a jack-of-all-trades. The job spec would have been agreed upon when the servant was taken on and included working in the fields and helping around the house.

It would be unthinkable for the employer of such a servant to prepare the servant's dinner and wait on the servant at table. It would always be the other way around.

Jesus applies the parable directly to the disciples. They are servants of the kingdom of God; therefore, they shouldn't expect to be thanked simply for doing what is required of them. They have no right to expect special treatment for doing what they are supposed to do anyway. ■

## REFLECT

Today's Gospel reminds us of the importance of duty in our lives and the need to honour it. Duty is a dull word. It speaks of routine, obligation, reliability, monotony, having to do something. You are "on duty" or "duty calls". It doesn't sound very exciting. It's not what you dream about when you're in school, and you're asked what your ambitions are for the future. You're unlikely to say, "I just want to be dutiful."

And yet there's a beautiful nobility about being dutiful. Family life and society could not function if people were not dutiful, if they did not fulfil the monotonous everyday tasks expected of them – cook dinner, do the shopping, take the children to the creche or school, iron clothes, put out the rubbish, help with homework, head out to work every morning whatever the weather.

There are other even more heroic examples of duty. Think of those who put their career on hold to look after an elderly parent or sick child. Those who go to a

nursing home or a hospital every day to spend time with a loved one; those who have raised children by years of putting themselves in second place or who held a marriage together through significant challenges because "it was their duty".

I know a woman who, in her old age, looked after four grandchildren after their mother had walked out on them. She should have been enjoying her old age, but she had to start mothering all over again, which she did with devotion and love. An awful lot for a woman in her seventies to take on, but she would insist that she was only doing her duty.

And that, at its heart, is what duty is all about – it is a practical expression of love in action. There are countless people who think of themselves as ordinary and do mundane but heroic, loving things every day. We all know people who fall into that category.

Today's Gospel also reminds us of another form of duty: that of witnessing to our

## SAY

Repeat the words of the apostles in today's Gospel. Say slowly and prayerfully: "Lord, increase our faith."

## LEARN

Real faith is not just assent to a list of teachings. Genuine faith is belief in a person. It is a deep relationship with God who reveals himself to us in Jesus.

The gift of faith is the greatest treasure one can possess.

To live the Gospel is to do our duty.

## PRAY

God gives faith to all who ask for it. Pray for the light of faith and for the strength to live out its implications.

## DO

Speak to people this week about your faith. Tell them why it is so important to you.

Christian faith and handing it on. To live the faith as best we can is to do our duty. It is returning the love that God has shown us.

That means not only the routine things like going to Mass that can often seem boring, mundane and unexciting, but more heroic things, too, like standing up for the Gospel in a culture that is increasingly anti-religious and sacrificing your time and money out of love for neighbour or in service to those who are poor. As people of faith, doing all of this is doing no more than our duty.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples they should never expect a pat on the back for doing what they are called to do anyway as disciples. He is saying the same to us too. We should not expect to be congratulated for witnessing to our baptismal calling. We do it out of love. We do it out of gratitude for what God has done for us. And we know that when our hour of judgement comes, it will be sufficient reward. ■



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

Within your will, O Lord, all things are established,  
and there is none that can resist your will.  
For you have made all things, the heaven and the earth,  
and all that is held within the circle of heaven;  
you are the Lord of all.

**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**

Almighty ever-living God,  
who in the abundance of your kindness  
surpass the merits and the desires of those  
who entreat you,  
pour out your mercy upon us  
to pardon what conscience dreads  
and to give what prayer does not dare to ask.  
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** Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

A reading from the prophet Habakkuk.

How long, Lord, am I to cry for help  
while you will not listen;  
to cry "Oppression!" in your ear  
and you will not save?  
Why do you set injustice before me,  
why do you look on where there is tyranny?  
Outrage and violence, this is all I see,  
all is contention, and discord flourishes.  
Then the Lord answered and said,  
"Write the vision down,  
inscribe it on tablets  
to be easily read,  
since this vision is for its own time only:  
eager for its own fulfilment, it does not  
deceive;  
if it comes slowly, wait,  
for come it will, without fail.  
See how he flags, he whose soul is not at  
rights,  
but the upright man will live by his  
faithfulness."

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 94

Response:

**O that today you would listen to his voice!  
Harden not your hearts.**

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;  
hail the rock who saves us.  
Let us come before him, giving thanks,  
with songs let us hail the Lord. (R.)
2. Come in; let us bow and bend low;  
let us kneel before the God who made us  
for he is our God and we  
the people who belong to his pasture,  
the flock that is led by his hand. (R.)
3. O that today you would listen to his voice!  
"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as on that day at Massah in the desert  
when your fathers put me to the test;  
when they tried me, though they saw my  
work." (R.)

**SECOND READING** 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy.

I am reminding you to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the spirit of power, and love, and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but with me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God.

Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. You have been trusted to look after something precious; guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

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**

Luke 17:5-10

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." The Lord replied, "Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

"Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, 'Come and have your meal immediately?' Would he not be more likely to say, 'Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards?' Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty.'"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

*(all bow during the next three lines)*

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, we pray,  
the sacrifices instituted by your commands  
and, through the sacred mysteries,  
which we celebrate with dutiful service,  
graciously complete the sanctifying work  
by which you are pleased to redeem us.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**The Lord is good to those who hope in him,  
to the soul that seeks him.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant us, almighty God,  
that we may be refreshed and nourished  
by the Sacrament which we have received,  
so as to be transformed into what we  
consume.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.