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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 2026



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 1, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, July 1st, 2026

Reading 1, Amos 5:14-15, 21-24

14 Seek good and not evil so that you may survive, and Yahweh, God Sabaoth, be with you as you claim he is.

15 Hate evil, love good, let justice reign at the city gate: it may be that Yahweh, God Sabaoth, will take pity on the remnant of Joseph.

21 I hate, I scorn your festivals, I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies.

22 When you bring me burnt offerings . . . your oblations, I do not accept them and I do not look at your communion sacrifices of fat cattle.

23 Spare me the din of your chanting, let me hear none of your strumming on lyres,

24 but let justice flow like water, and uprightness like a never-failing stream!

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 50:7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 16-17

7 'Listen, my people, I am speaking, Israel, I am giving evidence against you, I, God, your God.

8 'It is not with your sacrifices that I find fault, those burnt offerings constantly before me;

9 I will not accept any bull from your homes, nor a single goat from your folds.

10 'For all forest creatures are mine already, the animals on the mountains in their thousands.

11 I know every bird in the air, whatever moves in the fields is mine.

12 'If I am hungry I shall not tell you, since the world and all it holds is mine.

13 Am I to eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?

16 But to the wicked, God says: 'What right have you to recite my statutes, to take my covenant on your lips,

17 when you detest my teaching, and thrust my words behind you?



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Gospel, Matthew 8:28-34

28 When he reached the territory of the Gadarenes on the other side, two demoniacs came towards him out of the tombs -- they were so dangerously violent that nobody could use that path.

29 Suddenly they shouted, 'What do you want with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before the time?'

30 Now some distance away there was a large herd of pigs feeding,

31 and the devils pleaded with Jesus, 'If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.'

32 And he said to them, 'Go then,' and they came out and made for the pigs; and at that the whole herd charged down the cliff into the lake and perished in the water.

33 The herdsman ran off and made for the city, where they told the whole story, including what had happened to the demoniacs.

34 Suddenly the whole city set out to meet Jesus; and as soon as they saw him they implored him to leave their neighbourhood.



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Questions for Reflection for July 1, 2026

1. In the fifth chapter of the Book of the Prophet Amos, from which our first reading for Holy Mass is taken, the Prophet laments over the sins which Israel has committed. To lament is to passionately mourn, to grieve. The Prophets revealed the heart and mind of the Lord who sent them. The behavior of Israel grieves the heart of God.

In the few verses selected, the way to respond to the Lamentation, the grieving, is clearly laid out "Seek good and not evil so that you may survive, and Yahweh, God Sabaoth, be with you as you claim he is."

"Hate evil, love good, let justice reign at the city gate: it may be that Yahweh, God Sabaoth, will take pity on the remnant of Joseph."

The Prophet then, speaking for the Lord, decries the formal worship of Israel because it is insincere. They have chosen to turn away from the Lord. Among the many proofs of this is that they trample on the poor.

These words from the Prophet Amos were not only for the Israel of old, they are for the New Israel of the Church of today. Sin is rampant in the very Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. We are invited, when we hear these powerful words of prophecy, to lament and mourn. To grieve. To repent and seek good and not evil.

2. Our Responsorial Psalm demonstrates the prophetic role that David played as well in the plan of salvation. This Psalm is a prophecy. The Lord is speaking through David, his servant, to the House of Israel

"Listen, my people, I am speaking, Israel, I am giving evidence against you, I, God, your God." Our Psalm response ends with a question: "What right have you to recite my statutes, to take my covenant on your lips, when you detest my teaching, and thrust my words behind you?" Are we living the Christian vocation with moral coherence? Are we "walking the talk"? If not, the Lord calls us to repent, and reform our lives.

3. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter eight, verses 28-34, we find the story of Jesus driving out the demons which plagued two men in the territory of the Gadarenes. These men were so depleted by the effects of evil that they chose to live in tombs. It is the Gospel passage for today's Holy Mass.

This powerful account is one of many similar accounts in the Gospels.

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Yet, how often do we hear sermons or teaching on the reality of evil and how to confront it - in our own lives and the lives of those around us? We have even heard some clergy saying the devil doesn't exist. Obviously, Jesus did not agree.

In his introduction to *The Screwtape Letters*, which is a brilliant work exposing the unseen spiritual warfare taking place around all of us, Lewis uses a series of letters between two demons - the older Screwtape, an instructor and the younger student Wormwood - the great apologist CS Lewis wrote these words:

"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight."

We are engaged in an intense spiritual war for the souls of men and women in this urgent hour. The devil is real. We face personal opposition from the devil in our own lives - and in the lives of those around us. We must always remember that the struggle we face, even though it works itself out on so many different fronts, is, at root, a spiritual one.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Ephesus:

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Eph. 6:12,13)

He also wrote these words to the Christians in Corinth: "For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (2 Cor. 10:4,5)

Let us engage in spiritual warfare against the devil and not be deluded by some in this age who deny the existence of the devil.

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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 2, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, July 2nd, 2026

Reading 1, Amos 7:10-17

10 Amaziah the priest of Bethel then sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel as follows, 'Amos is plotting against you in the heart of the House of Israel; the country cannot tolerate his speeches.

11 For this is what Amos says, "Jeroboam is going to die by the sword, and Israel will go into captivity far from its native land." '

12 To Amos himself Amaziah said, 'Go away, seer, take yourself off to Judah, earn your living there, and there you can prophesy!

13 But never again will you prophesy at Bethel, for this is a royal sanctuary, a national temple.'

14 'I am not a prophet,' Amos replied to Amaziah, 'nor do I belong to a prophetic brotherhood. I am merely a herdsman and dresser of sycamore-figs.

15 But Yahweh took me as I followed the flock, and Yahweh said to me, "Go and prophesy to my people Israel."

16 So now listen to what Yahweh says: "You say: Do not prophesy against Israel, do not foretell doom on the House of Isaac!"

17 Very well, this is what Yahweh says, "Your wife will become a prostitute in the streets, your sons and daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parcelled out by measuring line, and you yourself will die on polluted soil and Israel will go into captivity far from its own land!"

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 11

8 The precepts of Yahweh are honest, joy for the heart; the commandment of Yahweh is pure, light for the eyes.

9 The fear of Yahweh is pure, lasting for ever; the judgements of Yahweh are true, upright, every one,

10 more desirable than gold, even than the finest gold; his words are sweeter than honey, that drips from the comb.

11 Thus your servant is formed by them; observing them brings great reward.

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Gospel, Matthew 9:1-8

1 He got back in the boat, crossed the water and came to his home town.

2 And suddenly some people brought him a paralytic stretched out on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, 'Take comfort, my child, your sins are forgiven.'

3 And now some scribes said to themselves, 'This man is being blasphemous.'

4 Knowing what was in their minds Jesus said, 'Why do you have such wicked thoughts in your hearts?

5 Now, which of these is easier: to say, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Get up and walk"?

6 But to prove to you that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins,' -- then he said to the paralytic-'get up, pick up your bed and go off home.'

7 And the man got up and went home.

8 A feeling of awe came over the crowd when they saw this, and they praised God for having given such authority to human beings.



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Questions for Reflection for July 2, 2026

1. In our first reading we hear of the priest of Bethel named Amaziah warning Jeroboam, the then King of Israel, about the prophet Amos. In fact, Amaziah demanded that Amos leave and prophecy no longer. The fact is, prophecy is often unsettling, when it calls for repentance and change of life in particular. That is what the Prophets of Israel did, very often.

Then, in the early Church, the gift of prophecy functioned. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians in his first letter to them: "Do not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21)

Not only did the prophetic utterances of Amos come about, they prompted a time of repentance and warning. So too, any authentic prophecy in the Church, will always lead to repentance and conversion. That is why it must be "tested".

For example, the Catholic Church has a rigorous approach to what are called "private revelations" to insure they are authentic and do not contradict the Scripture or the Deposit of faith.

But the prophetic is real. Because the Lord always desires to speak to His people, to lead them close to Him. Do we believe in the presence of the gift of prophecy in the Church? If so, do we pay attention? Are we always open to hearing from the Lord and reforming our lives?

2. David the Psalmist leads us in our response "The precepts of Yahweh are honest, joy for the heart; the commandment of Yahweh is pure, light for the eyes. The fear of Yahweh is pure, lasting forever; the judgements of Yahweh are true, upright, everyone, more desirable than gold, even than the finest gold; his words are sweeter than honey, that drips from the comb. Thus, your servant is formed by them; observing them brings great reward."

Are we listening for the precepts and words of the Lord? Are we asking the Holy Spirit to work in our life and give us spiritual ears to hear the words of the Lord?

3. The Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass is the wonderful account of the healing of the paralytic. Notice these words "Some people brought him a paralytic stretched out on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, 'Take comfort, my child, your sins are forgiven.' Whose faith was Jesus referring to.

The people who brought the paralytic to Him. THEIR FAITH MOVED THE LORD.

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Again, not only was this a powerful physical miracle, which it was. And not only does it reveal the hardness of heart of some of the Scribes who, witnessing the very power of God at work, focused instead on trying to undermine the messianic mission of Jesus and missed the moment. But it has a spiritual message for each one of us.

In so many ways we are all that paralytic. Sin paralyzes us within. And we need one another to help us be healed and forgiven. Our prayer, our faith, offered for others, moves the heart and hand of the Lord in their lives. Do we believe this? Do we pray for one another. Do we bring one another to the Lord?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 3, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, July 3rd, 2026

Reading 1, Ephesians 2:19-22

19 So you are no longer aliens or foreign visitors; you are fellow-citizens with the holy people of God and part of God's household.

20 You are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone.

21 Every structure knit together in him grows into a holy temple in the Lord;

22 and you too, in him, are being built up into a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 117:1, 2

1 Alleluia! Praise Yahweh, all nations, extol him, all peoples,

2 for his faithful love is strong and his constancy never-ending.

Gospel, John 20:24-29

24 Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 So the other disciples said to him, 'We have seen the Lord,' but he answered, 'Unless I can see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.'

26 Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you,' he said.

27 Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving any more but believe.'

28 Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!'

29 Jesus said to him: You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.



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Questions for Reflection for July 3, 2026

1. Today is the Feast of Thomas the Apostle. Our first reading, from the Apostle Paul, is from his letter to the Ephesians. A beautiful passage which reminds us that we are members of the Body of Christ, being built into a spiritual house, a Holy Temple, a dwelling place for the Lord. Do we believe this? The Key to these words becoming a reality to us is developing a prayer life, growing in an intimate communion with the Lord. That is done by learning to live in the Church and allowing the Trinity to make a home within us.

In Catholic theology we teach -and we are called to practice - the truth that the early fathers, Saints and Councils throughout the ages have affirmed; to belong to Jesus is to belong to His Body. Our membership in the Church is a very real participation in the very life of God; what the Apostle Peter referred to as a "participation in the Divine nature". (2 Peter 1:4) This kind of real, tangible experience of life in the Church is meant to be the lived experience of every Baptized Christian. For that to happen, we need, above all else, to pray.

Prayer is the path to a fuller and fuller encounter with God. In that relationship, we change. We enter a new life - beginning here and now; a life that is a sign of the fullness of life that is to come.

2. The Psalms of David are a litany of continued prayers to God. David was far from a perfect man. But, because he was a man of prayer, he was always able to turn from his sin, repent and begin again. And he never stopped communicating with God. That is what prayer is, a continual conversation, a communion with God. Even when the Psalm response at Holy Mass is short, it is always a call to prayer and praise, like today:

"Alleluia! Praise Yahweh, all nations, extol him, all peoples, for his faithful love is strong and his constancy never-ending."

3. Today's Gospel is a portion of the encounter between Thomas and the Risen Jesus. Thomas was not present when the Risen Lord appeared to them. Because of his response, Thomas is often called "Doubting Thomas". Yet the Christian tradition tells us that this so called "doubting Thomas" died a martyr for his faith. He became a messenger of Mercy to India, a missionary who shed his own blood for the Master whom he encountered on that day. His insistence on touching the Holy Wounds presented the Disciple John another opportunity to explain for all of us the implications of the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Thomas's response in his beautiful encounter with the Risen Lord, "My Lord and My God" reveals the heart of prayer. It also speaks to the essence of faith.

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His proclamation is a call to adoration and a living communion with God. His response has become the exclamation for millions, me included, when faced with the Mystery of Mysteries, the Holy Eucharist at the elevation during every Mass.

I suggest that Thomas was not a doubter, rather he was a believer. And he is a model for all of us at every Eucharist which is always the Feast of Mercy. Pope St Gregory the Great who occupied the Chair of Peter between 590 and 604 preached a marvelous homily on this encounter between Thomas and the Risen Lord. In it he asked:

"What conclusion, dear brethren, do you come to? Surely it was not by chance that this chosen disciple was missing in the first place? Or that on his return he heard, that hearing he doubted, that doubting he touched, and that touching he believed? It was by divine dispensation and not by chance that things fell out. God's Mercy worked wonderfully, for when that doubting disciple touched his Master's wounded flesh he cured the wound of our disbelief. So, this doubting disciple, who actually touched, became a witness to the reality of the resurrection"

Thank God for 'Doubting Thomas'. His doubts healed the wounds of our own disbelief. They also open up for all who look with the eyes of faith a deeper understanding of the redemptive effect of the wounds of Jesus - and the role our own wounds can have in our continuing call to conversion as we join them to His.

Thomas the doubter became Thomas the model believer, an example for each one of us.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 4, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, July 4th, 2026

Reading 1, Amos 9:11-15

11 On that Day, I shall rebuild the tottering hut of David, make good the gaps in it, restore its ruins and rebuild it as it was in the days of old,

12 for them to be master of what is left of Edom and of all the nations once called mine -Yahweh declares, and he will perform it.

13 The days are coming- declares Yahweh- when the ploughman will tread on the heels of the reaper, and the treader of grapes on the heels of the sower of seed, and the mountains will run with new wine and the hills all flow with it.

14 I shall restore the fortunes of my people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, they will lay out gardens and eat their produce.

15 And I shall plant them in their own soil and they will never be uprooted again from the country which I have given them, declares Yahweh, your God.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 85:9, 11-12, 13-14

9 His saving help is near for those who fear him, his glory will dwell in our land.

11 Loyalty will spring up from the earth, and Justice will lean down from heaven.

12 Yahweh will himself give prosperity, and our soil will yield its harvest.

13 Justice will walk before him, treading out a path.

Gospel, Matthew 9:14-17

14 Then John's disciples came to him and said, 'Why is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not?'

15 Jesus replied, 'Surely the bridegroom's attendants cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is still with them? But the time will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.'



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16 No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth onto an old cloak, because the patch pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse.

17 Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, the wine runs out, and the skins are lost. No; they put new wine in fresh skins and both are preserved.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 4, 2026

1. In our first reading from the Prophet Amos, we hear good and joyful news from the Prophet for the Nation of Israel. This seems different than what we have been hearing. Over the days we have been hearing this Book proclaimed as the first reading at Holy Mass, the Lord is correcting His people through the words of this powerful Prophet.

This excerpt from chapter nine, the last chapter of this relatively short book of the Hebrew Scriptures, we hear the important connection between the discipline of the Lord and His loving plan. Listen to this beautiful promise, the last words of the Book of the Prophet Amos:

"I shall restore the fortunes of my people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, they will lay out gardens and eat their produce. And I shall plant them in their own soil, and they will never be uprooted again from the country which I have given them, declares Yahweh, your God."

This truth is also addressed in the New Testament letter to the Hebrews. In Chapter 12, after the writer reminds the early believers - and each one of us - that we need to look to Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith, he explains the connection between the Lord's correction and discipline with His loving plan of restoration:

"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves and chastises every son whom he receives."

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons".

The writer of this letter is quoting from Proverbs 3: 11 and 12.' The Lord's discipline in our own lives, His correction, is always because He loves us and wants us to be happy and free. Do we believe this?

2. And David the Psalmist, in our response reiterates this important truth: His saving help is near for those who fear him, his glory will dwell in our land. Loyalty will spring up from the earth, and Justice will lean down from heaven. Yahweh will himself give prosperity, and our soil will yield its harvest. Justice will walk before him, treading out a path.
3. In the Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass, Jesus answers a question as to why his disciples did not fast, like the disciples of John. He answers: 'Surely the bridegroom's attendants cannot fast while the bridegroom is still with them?'



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As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the time will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then, on that day, they will fast."

He, Jesus, is the bridegroom. The Church is the bride. While He was still with us in his earthly ministry, there was no need to fast. But and here is one of the first references from the Lord of his impending arrest, voluntary suffering and death, Resurrection, and ascension. he tells them that He will be taken away. And, in fact, all of this happened - and fasting became and still is - a part of the way of life of His Bride, the Church, until He returns.

Then he uses an image which his hearers would understand well, mending a cloak which needs a patch and the use of old and new wineskins. His message - in Him, new has come. With Him, the Old Covenant, while not abrogated, is to be fulfilled, so that the New Covenant can begin and welcome the whole world into its embrace.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 5, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, July 5th, 2026

Reading 1, Zechariah 9:9-10

9 Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion! Shout for joy, daughter of Jerusalem! Look, your king is approaching, he is vindicated and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

10 He will banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem; the bow of war will be banished. He will proclaim peace to the nations, his empire will stretch from sea to sea, from the River to the limits of the earth.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14

1 [Hymn of Praise Of David] I shall praise you to the heights, God my King, I shall bless your name for ever and ever.

2 Day after day I shall bless you, I shall praise your name for ever and ever.

8 Yahweh is tenderness and pity, slow to anger, full of faithful love.

9 Yahweh is generous to all, his tenderness embraces all his creatures.

10 All your creatures shall thank you, Yahweh, and your faithful shall bless you.

11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingship and tell of your might,

13 Your kingship is a kingship for ever, your reign lasts from age to age. Yahweh is trustworthy in all his words, and upright in all his deeds.

14 Yahweh supports all who stumble, lifts up those who are bowed down.

Reading 2, Romans 8:9, 11-13

9 You, however, live not by your natural inclinations, but by the Spirit, since the Spirit of God has made a home in you. Indeed, anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

11 and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead has made his home in you, then he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

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12 So then, my brothers, we have no obligation to human nature to be dominated by it.

13 If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the habits originating in the body, you will have life.

Gospel, Matthew 11:25-30

25 At that time Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children.

26 Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do.

27 Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

28 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.

29 Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 5, 2026

1. Next to the Prophet Isaiah, Zechariah is the Prophetic Book in the Hebrew Scriptures, what Christians call the Old Testament, which is the most Messianic. The Prophet tells of the deliverer who is to come, the King, the Messiah. He will deliver Israel from its enemies and establish a Kingdom. He will bring Joy and celebration. In fact, in the passage we heard, we are told "Look, your king is approaching, he is vindicated and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

As Christians, we should immediately recognize that Jesus Christ is that promised King. And the enemy He will vanquish is more than a conquering earthly power. It is the imprisonment which is the result of sin and the world of the devil. He has come, is coming, and will come again. And the kingdom He is establishing and will establish upon His return, His Second coming, will stretch throughout the whole world. He will establish a New Heaven and a New Earth. That is indeed a cause for rejoicing!

His Church, His Mystical Body, of which we are members, is a seed of that Kingdom, making it present as we continue His redemptive mission.

2. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Romans, chapter eight, a portion of which we heard in our second reading, is all about Living now "in the Holy Spirit". He is explaining the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit which should be going on in every Christian. We are filled with the same Spirit which raised Jesus from the dead.

That Spirit empowers us to turn away from sin and turn toward the Lord. To overcome disordered passions and grow in holiness. When we cooperate with grace, which is divine life given to us, we begin to experience the first fruits of redemption and the New Life promised to everyone who follows Jesus Christ.

How are we doing?

3. Every time I hear this wonderful excerpt from the 11th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew I smile. In fact, I imagine Jesus smiling as He proclaims out loud to His Father "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children." We are those children, or at least we can be, if we choose to make Him our Lord and Savior.

In the 18th Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew we read these words of Jesus:

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"And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt 18:2-4)

Are we willing to become children, the sons and daughters of God?

Jesus continues:

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light." (Mt. 11:28-30)

I need to hear these words regularly. Life can certainly become burdensome at times. We all know this is true. However, those of us who bear the name Christian know the One to whom we can always turn, the Lord Jesus. He says to each of us this morning, "Come to Me".

Throughout the biblical accounts of the earthly ministry and life of Jesus we can discover, in his Sacred Humanity, the path to finding true rest. He was regularly in prayer. He lived in a continual communion with the Father. He now gives us the grace we need to live in the same way.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection July 6, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, July 6th, 2026

Reading 1, Hosea 2:16, 17-18, 21-22

16 But look, I am going to seduce her and lead her into the desert and speak to her heart.

17 There I shall give her back her vineyards and make the Vale of Achor a gateway of hope. There she will respond as when she was young, as on the day when she came up from Egypt.

18 When that day comes- declares Yahweh- you will call me, 'My husband', no more will you call me, 'My Baal'.

21 I shall betroth you to myself for ever, I shall betroth you in uprightness and justice, and faithful love and tenderness.

22 Yes, I shall betroth you to myself in loyalty and in the knowledge of Yahweh.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

2 Day after day I shall bless you, I shall praise your name for ever and ever.

3 Great is Yahweh and worthy of all praise, his greatness beyond all reckoning.

4 Each age will praise your deeds to the next, proclaiming your mighty works.

5 Your renown is the splendour of your glory, I will ponder the story of your wonders.

6 They will speak of your awesome power, and I shall recount your greatness.

7 They will bring out the memory of your great generosity, and joyfully acclaim your saving justice.

8 Yahweh is tenderness and pity, slow to anger, full of faithful love.

9 Yahweh is generous to all, his tenderness embraces all his creatures.



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Gospel, Matthew 9:18-26

18 While he was speaking to them, suddenly one of the officials came up, who bowed low in front of him and said, 'My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her and her life will be saved.'

19 Jesus rose and, with his disciples, followed him.

20 Then suddenly from behind him came a woman, who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, and she touched the fringe of his cloak,

21 for she was thinking, 'If only I can touch his cloak I shall be saved.'

22 Jesus turned round and saw her; and he said to her, 'Courage, my daughter, your faith has saved you.' And from that moment the woman was saved.

23 When Jesus reached the official's house and saw the flute-players, with the crowd making a commotion, he said,

24 'Get out of here; the little girl is not dead; she is asleep.' And they ridiculed him.

25 But when the people had been turned out he went inside and took her by the hand; and she stood up.

26 And the news of this spread all round the countryside.



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Questions for Reflection for July 6, 2026

1. In the Book of the Prophet Hosea, the Prophets life becomes an analogy for Israel's relationship with the Lord. In so doing, it begins a theme which carries on in other Prophetic Books in the Hebrew Scriptures such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Isaiah, treating Israel's relationship with the Lord as a marriage bond and her infidelity as a sin against the marital covenant.

Of course, in the New Testament, this theme is carried through in the Church as the Bride of Christ. In the passages of today's reading the Lord speaks through the Prophet to His people, seeking to woo her back to Him and espouse her to Himself.

The Catholic Catechism explains this nuptial or marital relationship:

"The nuptial covenant between God and his people Israel had prepared the way for the new and everlasting covenant in which the Son of God, by becoming incarnate and giving his life, has united to himself in a certain way all mankind saved by him, thus preparing for "the wedding-feast of the Lamb". (CCC# 1612, citing Rev. 19:7,9)

The Bible, from beginning to the end, uses marriage as a metaphor, sign and symbol to reveal the plan of God for the whole human race. Marriage was God's plan from the beginning as we see in the first book of Genesis. Throughout the Old Testament, the Lord speaks through His messengers to remind Israel that the Lord has espoused her to Himself.

Then, in the fullness of time, God sent the Bridegroom, Jesus, his only Son, to initiate the New Israel, the Church - through His saving Incarnation, life and redemptive death. At the cross he espoused Himself to the Church, which is now His Bride. The wedding language informs the entirety of the New Testament culminating with the Wedding Feast of the Lamb which opens the portal of the mystery to reveal God's plan fulfilled in eternity.

2. In our responsorial Psalm we join with David the Psalmist in offering Praise to the Lord by recounting His greatness and His action in our lives. Do we do that? When was the last time we spent time in vocal prayer thanking the Lord for His Actions in our life? Let's do it today and every day. It not only brings joy to the heart of the Lord; it lifts us up and draws us closer to Him.
3. The Gospel for today presents us with two wonderful healings performed by Jesus, the raising of the official's daughter from the dead and the healing of the woman with the hemorrhage. Notice that both signs of the Kingdom, both miraculous healings, resulted from a sincere request, a prayer from the heart.



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The official knelt before the Lord and said, 'My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her and her life will be saved.'

The woman with the life-threatening flow of blood touched the fringe of his cloak, for she was thinking, 'If only I can touch his cloak I shall be saved.'

And we heard "Jesus turned round and saw her; and he said to her, 'Courage, my daughter, your faith has saved you.'

Miracles are constantly occurring. The real questions are do we see them? Do we have the eyes of living faith which recognize the hand of the Lord at work? Do we ask for them?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 7, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, July 7th, 2026

Reading 1, Hosea 8:4-7, 11-13

4 They have set up kings, but without my consent, and appointed princes, but without my knowledge. With their silver and gold, they have made themselves idols, but only to be destroyed.

5 I spurn your calf, Samaria! My anger blazes against them! How long will it be before they recover their innocence?

6 For it is the product of Israel- a craftsman made the thing, it is no god at all! The calf of Samaria will be broken to pieces!

7 Since they sow the wind, they will reap the whirlwind; stalk without ear, it will never yield flour- or if it does, foreigners will swallow it.

11 Ephraim keeps building altars for his sins, these very altars are themselves a sin.

12 However much of my Law I write for him, Ephraim regards it as alien to him.

13 They offer sacrifices to me and eat the meat, they do not win Yahweh's favour. On the contrary, he will remember their guilt and punish their sins; they will have to go back to Egypt.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 115:3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10

3 Our God is in heaven, he creates whatever he chooses.

4 They have idols of silver and gold, made by human hands.

5 These have mouths but say nothing, have eyes but see nothing,

6 have ears but hear nothing, have noses but smell nothing.

7 They have hands but cannot feel, have feet but cannot walk, no sound comes from their throats.

8 Their makers will end up like them, and all who rely on them.

9 House of Israel, rely on Yahweh; he is their help and their shield.

10 House of Aaron, rely on Yahweh; he is their help and their shield.

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Gospel, Matthew 9:32-38

32 They had only just left when suddenly a man was brought to him, a dumb demoniac.

33 And when the devil was driven out, the dumb man spoke and the people were amazed and said, 'Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.'

34 But the Pharisees said, 'It is through the prince of devils that he drives out devils.'

35 Jesus made a tour through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing all kinds of disease and all kinds of illness.

36 And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers to his harvest.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 7, 2026

1. In our first reading, the Lord speaks very strong words through the Prophet Hosea. Israel is in apostasy. She has given her heart, her worship and her loyalty to idols, false gods. Israel has made kings, but the Lord says, "not by my authority".

The Lord is angry, and rightly so. In the verse that follows the last verse of today's first reading, the Lord says through His Prophet "Israel has forgotten his maker".

So too, this "forgetting the Lord" happens to the New Israel, the Church. We live in an age where many, even some in leadership, have forgotten God and turned to new forms of idolatry. The Catholic Catechism says, "apostasy is the total repudiation of the Christian faith". (CCC #2089)

The Catechism also addresses idolatry in these words:

"Idolatry not only refers to false pagan worship. It remains a constant temptation to faith. Idolatry consists in divinizing what is not God. Man commits idolatry whenever he honors and reveres a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons (for example, satanism), power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money, etc. Jesus says, "You cannot serve God and mammon." Many martyrs died for not adoring "the Beast" refusing even to simulate such worship. Idolatry rejects the unique Lordship of God; it is therefore incompatible with communion with God." (CCC#2113)

Sadly, there are people falling away from the faith in our own day. While we pray for them and trust the Lord will watch over His Church, we need to regularly examine our own lives and ask for the grace to stay faithful.

2. The Psalm response for today also addresses idolatry "They have idols of silver and gold, made by human hands. These have mouths but say nothing, have eyes but see nothing, have ears but hear nothing, have noses but smell nothing. They have hands but cannot feel, have feet but cannot walk, no sound comes from their throats. Their makers will end up like them, and all who rely on them."

Now that we have heard the teaching of the Church on idolatry, if we have any area of our own life which has drawn us away from God, now is the time to renounce it and return to the True God.



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3. In this powerful Gospel for today's Mass, Jesus frees a man possessed by a demon. So strong was the hold this demon had on the man, that he could not even speak. So, as a clear sign that Jesus is the promised Messiah, Jesus delivers the man from the demon and his speech is restored. This great sign of the Kingdom is recorded in the ninth chapter of Matthews Gospel. It follows other miracles, like to resurrection of dead daughter of a ruler, the healing of two blind men...

But notice that some of the Pharisees, religious leaders of their day, said 'It is through the prince of devils that he drives out devils.' They were so blinded by their own self-centered attempts to hold on to power and prominence, a form of idolatry, that they attributed the power of God to the work of the devil.

The Catechism warns:

"There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss" (CCC # 1864). May the Lord help us to recognize his work in our own day.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection July 8, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, July 8th, 2026

Reading 1, Hosea 10:1-3, 7-8, 12

1 Israel was a luxuriant vine yielding plenty of fruit. The more his fruit increased, the more altars he built; the richer his land became, the richer he made the sacred pillars.

2 Theirs is a divided heart; now they will have to pay for it. He himself will hack down their altars and wreck their sacred pillars.

3 Then they will say, 'We have no king because we have not feared Yahweh, but what could the king do for us?'

7 Samaria has had her day. Her king is like a straw drifting on the water.

8 The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be destroyed; thorns and thistles will grow over their altars. Then they will say to the mountains, 'Cover us!' and to the hills, 'Fall on us!'

12 Sow saving justice for yourselves, reap a harvest of faithful love; break up your fallow ground: it is time to seek out Yahweh until he comes to rain saving justice down on you.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 105:2-3, 4-5, 6-7

2 Sing to him, make music for him, recount all his wonders!

3 Glory in his holy name, let the hearts that seek Yahweh rejoice!

4 Seek Yahweh and his strength, tirelessly seek his presence!

5 Remember the marvels he has done, his wonders, the judgements he has spoken.

6 Stock of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob whom he chose!

7 He is Yahweh our God, his judgements touch the whole world.

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Gospel, Matthew 10:1-7

1 He summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to drive them out and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of illness.

2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon who is known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John;

3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who was also his betrayer.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them as follows: 'Do not make your way to gentile territory, and do not enter any Samaritan town;

6 go instead to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.

7 And as you go, proclaim that the kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.



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Questions for Reflection for July 8, 2026

1. The Lord, speaking through His Prophet Hosea, addresses Israel's sins - and the captivity that resulted from it. But with the consequences, there is always the promise of mercy "it is time to seek out Yahweh until he comes to rain saving justice down on you.". The Lord does not want us to remain in our sins either. He wants us to be free. The path to that freedom is repentance and conversion. As it was with the Israel of old, so it is with the new Israel of the Church, and of each one of us, who are members of the mystical Body of Christ, the Church.

Citing the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans, the Catholic Catechism addresses sin as an abuse of freedom in these profound words:

"The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to "the slavery of sin."(CCC #1733, Romans 6: 17)

We have been created in the Image and likeness of God, that includes the capacity to choose. What we choose not only changes the world around us, it changes us. When we choose against God, against the true, the good and the beautiful, we end up in captivity. When we choose the Lord and His Ways, we grow in freedom.

What are we choosing?

2. When we choose the Lord and His ways, we also find the path to genuine joy. David the Psalmist certainly knew both the consequences of sin, he sinned greatly, but also, the freedom which comes from repentance and the amendment of life to which the Lord calls us. So, he calls to us in our responsorial Psalm "Sing to him, make music for him, recount all his wonders!

Glory in his holy name, let the hearts that seek Yahweh rejoice! Seek Yahweh and his strength, tirelessly seek his presence!"

Are we tirelessly seeking His Presence?

3. In the Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass, we have Matthew's account of the Great Commission. "He summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to drive them out and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of illness." Jesus gives them His Authority. The Church is God's plan for the whole world. And she exists to evangelize. Each one of us, by virtue of our Baptism, share in the redemptive mission the Lord entrusted to His Church.



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We all need to view ourselves as missionaries in this moment in history. We are here by Gods design. This mission is not reserved for a group of "professionals", whether they be clergy or the growing "professional" lay faithful whose numbers seem to be multiplying. Rather, it is the task incumbent on all of the Christian faithful. That includes you and me.

Do you see yourself as a missionary?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 9, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, July 9th, 2026

Reading 1, Hosea 11:1, 3-4, 8-9

1 When Israel was a child I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt.

3 I myself taught Ephraim to walk, I myself took them by the arm, but they did not know that I was the one caring for them,

4 that I was leading them with human ties, with leading-strings of love, that, with them, I was like someone lifting an infant to his cheek, and that I bent down to feed him.

8 Ephraim, how could I part with you? Israel, how could I give you up? How could I make you like Admah or treat you like Zeboiim? My heart within me is overwhelmed, fever grips my inmost being.

9 I will not give rein to my fierce anger, I will not destroy Ephraim again, for I am God, not man, the Holy One in your midst, and I shall not come to you in anger.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 80:2, 3, 15-16

2 over Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh; rouse your valour and come to our help.

3 God, bring us back, let your face shine on us and we shall be safe.

15 protect what your own hand has planted.

16 They have thrown it on the fire like dung, the frown of your rebuke will destroy them.

Gospel, Matthew 10:7-15

7 And as you go, proclaim that the kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.

8 Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those suffering from virulent skin-diseases, drive out devils. You received without charge, give without charge.

9 Provide yourselves with no gold or silver, not even with coppers for your purses,

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10 with no haversack for the journey or spare tunic or footwear or a staff, for the labourer deserves his keep.

11 'Whatever town or village you go into, seek out someone worthy and stay with him until you leave.

12 As you enter his house, salute it,

13 and if the house deserves it, may your peace come upon it; if it does not, may your peace come back to you.

14 And if anyone does not welcome you or listen to what you have to say, as you walk out of the house or town shake the dust from your feet.

15 In truth I tell you, on the Day of Judgement it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.



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Questions for Reflection for July 9, 2026

1. In our first reading from the Prophet Hosea, we heard one of the most beautiful examples of God's tender love for Israel "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt. I myself taught Ephraim to walk, I myself took them by the arm, but they did not know that I was the one caring for them, that I was leading them with human ties, with leading-strings of love, that, with them, I was like someone lifting an infant to his cheek, and that I bent down to feed him."

Anyone who says that the Lord is only fierce or harsh in the Hebrew Scriptures, what Christians call the Old Testament, has not read the very Books they criticize. In fact, one of the earliest heresies of the Church, Marcionism, dismissed the God of the Old Testament. This beautiful tender description of the Lord runs throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. Sin deserves and merits judgement. But we are the ones who choose it. There are consequences to sin. But the Lord is always waiting for us, as a Father, to repent and return. His just punishment is always intended to bring us back to Him. And even after He had sent the Law and the Prophets to aid Israel in returning to Him, and they continued to sin, God never abandoned them.

In the fullness of time, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ. He, the innocent One, took upon Himself the consequences of our own sin and through His Passion, Death and Resurrection, has freed us from the consequences of sin. He has also freed us for a New Way of Living.

How are we doing?

2. The whole of Psalm 80, from which our response offers only verses 2, 3, 15 and 16, is a beautiful Prayer from David, asking the Lord to restore Israel. I encourage all who are viewing or listening to me today, to read the entire Psalm. We should offer it for the Church in this urgent hour. Restore your Church Oh Lord.
3. The Gospel text for today's Holy Mass continues the Great Commission. Jesus is sending out the twelve. He gives them the authority He has, to deliver people from demons, to heal the sick, to raise the dead. That authority is still present in the Church. The Bishops are the successors of the Apostles. But, sadly, in too many places, this authority, this power, is not being exercised or demonstrated. Perhaps for lack of belief. Or, perhaps because the enemy, and the devil is real, has crept even into the sanctuary.

We need a new evangelization of the Church so that she can rise up and lead a new missionary age.



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Pope St John Paul II coined the phrase "New Evangelization" in his 1990 encyclical letter entitled "Mission of the Redeemer." He wrote, "God is opening before the Church the horizons of a humanity more fully prepared for the sowing of the Gospel. I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission ad gentes. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples".

We need to hear his words once again. We need to remember that the Church offers Gods loving plan of salvation for the whole world. This New Evangelization invites each of us to live our baptismal vocation completely given over to the work of the Lord. It is meant to bring about an authentic renewal of the Church so that she can undertake a new missionary outreach to the whole world. Only a Church fully alive in the Lord and filled with His Spirit can carry out such an evangelical mission.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 10, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, July 10th, 2026

Reading 1, Hosea 14:2-10

2 Israel, come back to Yahweh your God your guilt was the cause of your downfall.

3 Provide yourself with words and come back to Yahweh. Say to him, 'Take all guilt away and give us what is good, instead of bulls we will dedicate to you our lips.

4 Assyria cannot save us, we will not ride horses any more, or say, "Our God!" to our own handiwork, for you are the one in whom orphans find compassion.'

5 I shall cure them of their disloyalty, I shall love them with all my heart, for my anger has turned away from them.

6 I shall fall like dew on Israel, he will bloom like the lily and thrust out roots like the cedar of Lebanon;

7 he will put out new shoots, he will have the beauty of the olive tree and the fragrance of Lebanon.

8 They will come back to live in my shade; they will grow wheat again, they will make the vine flourish, their wine will be as famous as Lebanon's.

9 What has Ephraim to do with idols any more when I hear him and watch over him? I am like an evergreen cypress, you owe your fruitfulness to me.

10 Let the wise understand these words, let the intelligent grasp their meaning, for Yahweh's ways are straight and the upright will walk in them, but sinners will stumble.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 51:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14, 17

3 For I am well aware of my offences, my sin is constantly in mind.

4 Against you, you alone, I have sinned, I have done what you see to be wrong, that you may show your saving justice when you pass sentence, and your victory may appear when you give judgement,

8 Let me hear the sound of joy and gladness, and the bones you have crushed will dance.

9 Turn away your face from my sins and wipe away all my guilt.

12 Give me back the joy of your salvation, sustain in me a generous spirit.

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13 I shall teach the wicked your paths, and sinners will return to you.

14 Deliver me from bloodshed, God, God of my salvation, and my tongue will acclaim your saving justice.

17 Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken, contrite heart you never scorn.

Gospel, Matthew 10:16-23

16 Look, I am sending you out like sheep among wolves; so be cunning as snakes and yet innocent as doves.

17 'Be prepared for people to hand you over to sanhedrins and scourge you in their synagogues.

18 You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as evidence to them and to the gentiles.

19 But when you are handed over, do not worry about how to speak or what to say; what you are to say will be given to you when the time comes,

20 because it is not you who will be speaking; the Spirit of your Father will be speaking in you.

21 'Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will come forward against their parents and have them put to death.

22 You will be universally hated on account of my name; but anyone who stands firm to the end will be saved.

23 If they persecute you in one town, take refuge in the next; and if they persecute you in that, take refuge in another. In truth I tell you, you will not have gone the round of the towns of Israel before the Son of man comes.



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Questions for Reflection for July 10, 2026

1. In our first reading we continue to hear the Lord's words being spoken to Israel through the Prophet Hosea. Strong, honest and rich in Mercy, "Israel, come back to Yahweh your God your guilt was the cause of your downfall. Provide yourself with words and come back to Yahweh. Say to him, 'Take all guilt away and give us what is good, instead of bulls we will dedicate to you, our lips.'" This honest acknowledgement of sin is absolutely essential to growing in the Christian life. We can't play the "blame game". When we sin, WE ARE THE ONES RESPONSIBLE. The Lord awaits our genuine repentance.

The Catholic Catechism in its treatment of sin, grace and conversion says: "As St. Paul affirms, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." But to do its work grace must uncover sin so as to convert our hearts and bestow on us "righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Like a physician who probes the wound before treating it, God, by his Word and by his Spirit, casts a living light on sin:"

Then the Catechism quotes Pope St John Paul II:

"Conversion requires convincing of sin; it includes the interior judgment of conscience, and this, being a proof of the action of the Spirit of truth in man's inmost being, becomes at the same time the start of a new grant of grace and love: "Receive the Holy Spirit." Thus, in this "convincing concerning sin" we discover a double gift: the gift of the truth of conscience and the gift of the certainty of redemption. The Spirit of truth is the Consoler." (CCC #1848)

In his first letter to the early Churches, the Beloved Disciple John writes: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:8-10)

Are we honest about our own sins, or do we excuse them, even blame others? That is not the path to freedom.

2. David the Psalmist, whose words we hear in our Responsorial Psalm, shows us how to be honest in confessing our sin, in order to be forgiven and find the freedom for which we long. Let us hear his words and let's make them our own "For I am well aware of my offences, my sin is constantly in mind. Against you, you alone, I have sinned, I have done what you see to be wrong, that you may show your saving justice when you pass sentence, and your victory may appear when you give judgement, let me hear the sound of joy and gladness, and the bones you have crushed will dance. Turn away your face from my sins and wipe away all my guilt."



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3. In the portion of the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, which is appointed for today's Holy Mass, Jesus is instructing the twelve before sending them out to announce that the Kingdom of God is nearby. He warns them that they will be treated as He is being treated. And they will face the same opposition. But He also tells them that the Spirit of the Father will be with them and speak through them.

Every word he spoke came about. In fact, the early Church Father and historian Tertullian wrote that "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church". We are Christians today because they heeded His words, and led by the Spirit, they went out and proclaimed the message of the Kingdom in both word and deed. These words of Jesus are for all of us today. We are living in an age where hostility to the Christian faith and the Church is growing at an alarming rate. Like them we are being sent out like sheep among wolves.

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves; so be cunning as snakes and yet innocent as doves." We must be vigilant, so we can recognize the wolves disguised as lambs and be able to distinguish the false from the true prophets in our own day. But we must remain simple and pure of heart, in the midst of this mission. The Holy Spirit will empower us to respond to this call of Jesus.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 11, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, July 11th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 6:1-8

1 In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne; his train filled the sanctuary.

2 Above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings: two to cover its face, two to cover its feet and two for flying;

3 and they were shouting these words to each other: Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh Sabaoth. His glory fills the whole earth.

4 The door-posts shook at the sound of their shouting, and the Temple was full of smoke.

5 Then I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh Sabaoth.'

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in its hand a live coal which it had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

7 With this it touched my mouth and said: 'Look, this has touched your lips, your guilt has been removed and your sin forgiven.'

8 I then heard the voice of the Lord saying: 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I, send me.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 93:1, 1-2, 5

1 Yahweh is king, robed in majesty, robed is Yahweh and girded with power.

2 The world is indeed set firm, it can never be shaken; your throne is set firm from of old, from all eternity you exist.

5 Your decrees stand firm, unshakeable, holiness is the beauty of your house, Yahweh, for all time to come.

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Gospel, Matthew 10:24-33

24 'Disciple is not superior to teacher, nor slave to master.

25 It is enough for disciple to grow to be like teacher, and slave like master. If they have called the master of the house "Beelzebul", how much more the members of his household?

26 'So do not be afraid of them. Everything now covered up will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear.

27 What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.

28 'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell.

29 Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing.

30 Why, every hair on your head has been counted.

31 So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

32 'So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of human beings, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven.

33 But the one who disowns me in the presence of human beings, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.



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Questions for Reflection for July 11, 2026

1. In our first reading we heard a wonderful passage from the 6th chapter of the Book of the great Hebrew, Messianic Prophet Isaiah. He had a vision in the temple in which he was able to see the Lord seated upon a throne and surrounded by the hosts of heaven. It is a powerful vision, and, in fact, it is recalled in the last Book of the New Testament, the Book of Revelation. The cry of the Angels in worship, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is filled with his glory..." has also been a part of the Liturgy of the Christian Church, the Holy Mass, from the earliest Christian centuries.

It is in this context of this vision that the Prophet receives His own calling to proclaim the Lord's word to Israel, - both the Israel of Old, and the Church, the New Israel -. The symbol of the burning coal on which incense was burned touching his mouth and purifying him for mission is very powerful. God's word purifies our thoughts, our lives, our words if we receive it. "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" says the Lord to the Prophet. "Here I am Lord, send me," said Isaiah.

Every one of us is called, from our Baptism forward, to participate in the threefold mission of the Church as living members of the mystical Body of Christ, the Church. We are called to participate in the continuing mission of the Lord, as Priest, Prophet, and King. Do we believe this? Have we asked the Lord to help us believe it? Have we said YES, Send me?

2. Our Responsorial Psalm, from Psalm 93, carries forth the theme. David was also a prophet. Yes, he had sinned, egregiously, but he always repented and returned. We should draw strength from his witness and his words. We repeat them daily in the Prayer of the Church.

Our Baptismal calling and vocation continue, even if we fail and fall. We must repent, get up and return. If our sin is mortal, we must avail ourselves of the grace of the Sacrament of Penance and begin again. Do we do this?

3. The wonderful words of Jesus given to us in today's Gospel should help us to stay faithful. Every hair of our head is numbered, He has "got us", as the expression goes. We need not fear anyone or anything.

Faith is what is required. "...there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 'So, if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of human beings, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of human beings, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

On this day, choose to follow Jesus Christ. Choose to allow Him to lead you. Choose to be His disciple. Be Not Afraid but believe and live your calling.

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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 12, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, July 12th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 55:10-11

10 For, as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not return before having watered the earth, fertilising it and making it germinate to provide seed for the sower and food to eat,

11 so it is with the word that goes from my mouth: it will not return to me unfulfilled or before having carried out my good pleasure and having achieved what it was sent to do.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14

10 you water its furrows abundantly, level its ridges, soften it with showers and bless its shoots.

11 You crown the year with your generosity, richness seeps from your tracks,

12 the pastures of the desert grow moist, the hillsides are wrapped in joy,

13 the meadows are covered with flocks, the valleys clothed with wheat; they shout and sing for joy.

Reading 2, Romans 8:18-23

18 In my estimation, all that we suffer in the present time is nothing in comparison with the glory which is destined to be disclosed for us,

19 for the whole creation is waiting with eagerness for the children of God to be revealed.

20 It was not for its own purposes that creation had frustration imposed on it, but for the purposes of him who imposed it-

21 with the intention that the whole creation itself might be freed from its slavery to corruption and brought into the same glorious freedom as the children of God.

22 We are well aware that the whole creation, until this time, has been groaning in labour pains.

23 And not only that: we too, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we are groaning inside ourselves, waiting with eagerness for our bodies to be set free.



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Gospel, Matthew 13:1-23

1 That same day, Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside,

2 but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the shore,

3 and he told them many things in parables. He said, 'Listen, a sower went out to sow.

4 As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

5 Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up at once, because there was no depth of earth;

6 but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away.

7 Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

8 Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

9 Anyone who has ears should listen!'

10 Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?'

11 In answer, he said, 'Because to you is granted to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not granted.

12 Anyone who has will be given more and will have more than enough; but anyone who has not will be deprived even of what he has.

13 The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding.

14 So in their case what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah is being fulfilled: Listen and listen, but never understand! Look and look, but never perceive!

15 This people's heart has grown coarse, their ears dulled, they have shut their eyes tight to avoid using their eyes to see, their ears to hear, their heart to understand, changing their ways and being healed by me.

16 'But blessed are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear!

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17 In truth I tell you, many prophets and upright people longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

18 'So pay attention to the parable of the sower.

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the Evil One comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the seed sown on the edge of the path.

20 The seed sown on patches of rock is someone who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy.

21 But such a person has no root deep down and does not last; should some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, at once he falls away.

22 The seed sown in thorns is someone who hears the word, but the worry of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so it produces nothing.

23 And the seed sown in rich soil is someone who hears the word and understands it; this is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 12, 2026

1. The beautiful words of the Lord, spoken through His Prophet Isaiah, remind us of the power of the Word of God. "...so, it is with the word that goes from my mouth: it will not return to me unfulfilled or before having carried out my good pleasure and having achieved what it was sent to do." Every time we read or hear the written Word of God, the Bible, the sacred scripture, the Lord is speaking to us. Do we believe that? It is true. As St Paul told Timothy, "all scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim. 3:16). The word in Greek literally means "breathed out". The Word of God contains the very breath of God.

How do we receive it?

2. We are to be the fertile ground upon which it falls. And, as our Psalm for today's Holy Mass explains, the Lord Himself will, "water its furrows abundantly, level its ridges, soften it with showers and bless its shoots."

In our second reading, the Apostle Paul is writing to the Christians in Rome, and to us. He gives then the eternal perspective. What is happening in every believer as we allow the Word to inform our lives, to renew our minds, to convert and transform us. And He tells them and us what is the long term goal of Gods action in our lives, by reminding us "all that we suffer in the present time is nothing in comparison with the glory which is destined to be disclosed for us, for the whole creation is waiting with eagerness for the children of God to be revealed." This is another invitation to all of us, to say YES to Gods Will in our lives and choose to follow Jesus Christ, the Living Word, with all of our heart, mind and strength.

Have we made that choice?

3. This beautiful teaching of Jesus which we heard in the Gospel of today's Holy Mass on the sower and the seed, is taken from Matthew's account. I love the parables of Jesus. He drew his examples from the lived experience of those who followed him during his public ministry. Those early disciples were used to the pattern of preparing the soil in the fields, planting the seed, and reaping the crops. It has taken me many years to even begin to grasp the meaning.

That is partly because I grew up in the inner City of Boston. However, I also called beautiful Southeastern Virginia home for much of my adult life. There were a lot of beautiful fields around the parish I last served before moving to Texas. Farming is still an integral part of the pattern of life for many and our local economies benefit greatly from their work. The meaning of the agrarian parables that Jesus used became increasingly clear as I watched those fields become green every Spring.



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Of course, preceding all of this, there are those barren looking fields, seemingly lifeless before the seed is even sown. Preparing the ground for the seed involves hard work, cooperative weather and the goodness of the God who created this beautiful and fruitful world. I have come to understand the work that is involved in cultivating the soil, selecting and sowing the seed and then praying for cooperative weather while caring for the nascent crops. This has happened to me vicariously; through the farmers I have come to serve and know in my years of ministry. My admiration for their work has grown immensely.

So too has my gratitude for the goodness and grace of the God the Creator and Father who loves us all so much that He sent His Son to save us and make us new. He has sown the seed of His Word and His Kingdom within each one of us. The results also invite our response, our free choice. Whether that seed will find ripe soil is certainly affected by our willing cooperation with His grace.

As we choose to respond to that grace, and surrender ourselves to his care, formation and assignment in the fields of the world, our life changes, and so do we.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection July 13, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, July 13th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 1:10-17

10 Hear what Yahweh says, you rulers of Sodom; listen to what our God teaches, you people of Gomorrah.

11 'What are your endless sacrifices to me?' says Yahweh. 'I am sick of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of calves. I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

12 When you come and present yourselves before me, who has asked you to trample through my courts?

13 Bring no more futile cereal offerings, the smoke from them fills me with disgust. New Moons, Sabbaths, assemblies -- I cannot endure solemnity combined with guilt.

14 Your New Moons and your meetings I utterly detest; to me they are a burden I am tired of bearing.

15 When you stretch out your hands I turn my eyes away. You may multiply your prayers, I shall not be listening. Your hands are covered in blood,

16 wash, make yourselves clean. Take your wrong-doing out of my sight. Cease doing evil.

17 Learn to do good, search for justice, discipline the violent, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23

8 'It is not with your sacrifices that I find fault, those burnt offerings constantly before me;

9 I will not accept any bull from your homes, nor a single goat from your folds.

16 But to the wicked, God says: 'What right have you to recite my statutes, to take my covenant on your lips,

17 when you detest my teaching, and thrust my words behind you?

21 You do this, and am I to say nothing? Do you think that I am really like you? I charge you, indict you to your face.

23 Honour to me is a sacrifice of thanksgiving; to the upright I will show God's salvation.'

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Gospel, Matthew 10:34--11:1

34 'Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth: it is not peace I have come to bring, but a sword.

35 For I have come to set son against father, daughter against mother, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law;

36 a person's enemies will be the members of his own household.

37 'No one who prefers father or mother to me is worthy of me. No one who prefers son or daughter to me is worthy of me.

38 Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me.

39 Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.

40 'Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

41 'Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes an upright person because he is upright will have the reward of an upright person.

42 'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then in truth I tell you, he will most certainly not go without his reward.'

1 When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples he moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns.



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Questions for Reflection for July 13, 2026

1. In our first reading, taken from the first chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, we are given the later part of the vision the Prophet had concerning Judah and Jerusalem. So corrupted had they become, he calls them Sodom and Gomorrah. This is also a warning of what will become of them if they do not turn away from their idolatry and wickedness. They, like Sodom and Gomorrah will bring on themselves the very judgement of God. The Lord, speaking through the Prophet decries their sacrifices because their behavior, in oppressing the poor and practicing wickedness, bloodies their hands.

But notice these consoling and promising words, found after that strong rebuke, "Cease doing evil. Learn to do good, search for justice, discipline the violent, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow." In our own practice and profession of the faith, our walk and our talk must reflect one another. We need to live a unity of life.

How are we doing? If we honestly confess our sin, He is quick to forgive us. Then, we can choose again, begin again to "Cease doing evil, learn to do good".

2. In our Responsorial Psalm, the same theme is spoken by the Lord, this time through the Prophet David. The Lord asks a question: "What right have you to recite my statutes, to take my covenant on your lips, when you detest my teaching, and thrust my words behind you? You do this, and am I to say nothing? Do you think that I am really like you?"

Once again, we are invited to examine ourselves. Are we living a unity of life? Are we being morally coherent? If not, let us all to mind the words of the beloved disciple John in his first letter to the early church "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:8-10)

3. In the Gospel for today's Mass, Jesus is teaching His apostles about the call to radical discipleship. The word "radical" is often used these days to speak of those who follow a political ideology to the extreme. But the root of the word actually means going back to the root. When we choose to follow Jesus Christ, that choice takes priority over every other plan or choice in our life.

It even reorders all of our relationships, including our family relationships. This is what it means to call Jesus Christ Lord. Remember Jesus also said, when we give up even our family for Him, we will receive them back a hundred-fold. Family is God's plan and gift. What is being stressed here is the primacy of loves. Love of God must be first. Then, it enhances, fulfills, and strengthens all other good loves. Is Jesus Christ our Lord?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 14, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, July 14th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 7:1-9

1 In the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah king of Judah, Razon king of Aram advanced on Jerusalem with Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, to attack it; but he was unable to attack it.

2 The House of David was informed: 'Aram has halted in Ephraimite territory.' At this, his heart and his people's hearts shook like forest trees shaking in the wind.

3 Yahweh then said to Isaiah, 'Go out with your son Shear-Jashub, and meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, on the road to the Fuller's Field,

4 and say to him, "Pay attention and keep calm. Do not be frightened or demoralised by these two smouldering sticks of firewood, by the fierce anger of Razon, Aram and the son of Remaliah,

5 or because Aram, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah have been plotting against you and saying:

6 Let us mount an attack on Judah, destroy it, force it onto our side and install the son of Tabeel there as king.

7 "Lord Yahweh says this: This will not happen, it will never occur,

8 for the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Razon; another sixty-five years, and Ephraim will cease to be a people.

9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you will not take your stand on me you will not stand firm." '

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 48:2-3, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

2 towering in beauty, the joy of the whole world: Mount Zion in the heart of the north, the settlement of the great king;

3 God himself among its palaces has proved himself its bulwark.

4 For look, kings made alliance, together they advanced;

5 without a second glance, when they saw, they panicked and fled away.

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6 Trembling seized them on the spot, pains like those of a woman in labour;

7 it was the east wind, that wrecker of ships from Tarshish.

8 What we had heard we saw for ourselves in the city of our God, in the city of Yahweh Sabaoth, which God has established for ever.

Gospel, Matthew 11:20-24

20 Then he began to reproach the towns in which most of his miracles had been worked, because they refused to repent.

21 'Alas for you, Chorazin! Alas for you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 Still, I tell you that it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on Judgement Day than for you.

23 And as for you, Capernaum, did you want to be raised as high as heaven? You shall be flung down to hell. For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have been standing yet.

24 Still, I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on Judgement Day than for you.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 14, 2026

1. In our first reading the Prophet Isaiah is reassuring the young King Ahaz, who, at the time, ruled Judah, that the Lord would protect him and Judah against the Syrians. In the verses which immediately follow the ones we heard, the Prophet tells the King that the Lord will give Israel a sign of his ultimate deliverance, that a Virgin would conceive and bear a son and call His name Immanuel, which means God is with us. (Isaiah 7:10-14).

The Lord fulfilled his promise, protecting Judah from Assyria. And, as Christians, we know that the prophecy of Isaiah of the Virgin conceiving a Son was fulfilled through the Eyes of Mary and the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. But sadly, Ahaz went on to become an evil King. However, the Lord remained faithful to His promises to His people and His plan of salvation.

When we hear these readings, we hear of the history of Gods plan of salvation. The Virgin did conceive and the Savior, not only of Israel, but of the whole world, was born. We also hear in these readings, if we listen, warnings about the dangers of our own response to God. The Lord has made promises to the Church, the New Israel, and to each one of us. How we respond matters.

2. In the 48th Psalm, David sings of the Glory and Strength of Zion. In the portion we chant as our Response he sings of Zion as "towering in beauty, the joy of the whole world: Mount Zion in the heart of the north, the settlement of the great king;" Who is that great King? The great King is Jesus, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords. He has come and established His Church as a seed of the Kingdom to come. He is in her midst. Do we believe that? If so, we should rejoice every day.
3. In the Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass, an excerpt from the 11th chapter of Matthews Gospel, Jesus upbraids two cities on the on the Northshore of Lake Gennesearet, not far from Caparneum, for their lack of faith. "Alas for you, Chorazin! Alas for you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Still, I tell you that it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on Judgement Day than for you. And as for you, Capernaum, did you want to be raised as high as heaven? You shall be flung down to hell. For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have been standing yet. Still, I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on Judgement Day than for you." They had witnessed so many miracles, yet they refused to repent, turn from their sin, and recognize Jesus for who He is, the promised Messiah. We have experienced so many graces and miracles in our own lives.

How are we responding? Who is Jesus to us?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 15, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, July 15th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 10:5-7, 13-16

5 Woe to Assyria, rod of my anger, the club in their hands is my fury!

6 I was sending him against a godless nation, commissioning him against the people who enraged me, to pillage and plunder at will and trample on them like the mud in the streets.

7 But this was not his intention nor did his heart plan it so, for he dreamed of putting an end to them, of liquidating nations without number!

13 For he thinks: 'By the strength of my own arm I have done this and by my own wisdom: how intelligent I have been! I have abolished the frontiers between peoples, I have plundered their treasures, like a hero, I have subjugated their inhabitants.

14 My hand has found, as though a bird's nest, the riches of the peoples. Like someone collecting deserted eggs, I have collected the whole world while no one has fluttered a wing or opened a beak to squawk.'

15 Does the axe claim more credit than the man who wields it, or the saw more strength than the man who handles it? As though a staff controlled those who raise it, or the club could raise what is not made of wood!

16 That is why Yahweh Sabaoth is going to inflict leanness on his stout men, and beneath his glory kindle a fever burning like a fire.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 94:5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 14-15

5 They crush your people, Yahweh, they oppress your heritage,

6 they murder the widow and the stranger, bring the orphan to a violent death.

7 They say, 'Yahweh is not looking, the God of Jacob is taking no notice.'

8 Take notice yourselves, you coarsest of people! Fools, when will you learn some sense?

9 Shall he who implanted the ear not hear, he who fashioned the eye not see?

10 Shall he who instructs nations not punish? Yahweh, the teacher of all people,

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14 Yahweh will not abandon his people, he will not desert his heritage;

15 for judgement will again become saving justice, and in its wake all upright hearts will follow.

Gospel, Matthew 11:25-27

25 At that time Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children.

26 Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do.

27 Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.



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Questions for Reflection for July 15, 2026

1. The passages we heard proclaimed in our first reading were excerpted from the 10th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. The Lord is imposing judgment on the oppressors of His people, who are actually found in the very midst of His people. Through these words of His Prophet, he revealed His plan. He used a pagan Nation, Assyria, to render judgement against the infidelity of Judah. Then, he promised to reap judgment upon Assyria.

One of the important things to realize as we read the history of Gods plan of salvation in the Hebrew Scriptures, is His plan of raising up one Nation, Israel, to reveal Himself to all the Nations, was in order to reach all the Nations through her. It was universal. All Nations belong to the Lord, and He always wanted all men and women to be freed from the consequences of sin, that is, separation from Him.

In the fullness of time, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, first to the lost sheep of the House of Israel - and then to the "gentiles", the Nations. In Jesus Christ, this universal plan of salvation is fulfilled, through the New Israel of the Church. In our own lives, the Lord has a plan for our salvation. Sometimes he even uses people we would never expect, to speak His words to us, to correct us and to adjust our lives. Having the eyes to see His hand in all of these circumstances requires the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. How we respond to such interventions is vitally important. Discerning them, and properly responding to them, requires that we pray and stay very close to the Lord.

How are we doing?

2. David the Psalmist, in our Responsorial Psalm for today's Mass, which consists of select verses taken from Psalm 94, keeps the theme of our first reading. God, he reminds us, is the avenger of the righteous. No matter how much they boast, the wicked will never prevail. The Psalmist writes "Yahweh will not abandon his people, he will not desert his heritage; for judgement will again become saving justice, and in its wake all upright hearts will follow." God is for us. God is for you. Do we really believe this? We should. We can.
3. In this beautiful but short Gospel reading from the 11th chapter of St. Matthew, Jesus is rejoicing before His Father and exclaims "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children." Whenever I read or hear these words, I smile, and I sense the joy in the Lord's heart. Jesus often refers to children in His efforts to help us grow in our trust and faith in the Lord's plan in our own lives. But, for us to see it and walk in it, we need to become childlike.



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The joy and trust of a child is evident, especially when they know the love of their Father and Mother. We are called to be children of God, no matter what our chronological age. We have a Father, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who always takes care of us. And Jesus also gave us His Mother on earth, Mary, who intercedes for us. And Jesus founded the Church, as Mother and Teacher, to guide us in His Way.

In the 18th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, we read of this exchange between Jesus and the disciples: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:1-4)

Do we understand that we are children of God? We are. Do we live as though we are?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 16, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, July 16th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 26:7-9, 12, 16-19

7 The path of the Upright One is honesty; you smooth the honest way of the upright.

8 Following the path of your judgements, Yahweh, we set our hopes in you, your name, your memory are all our soul desires.

9 At night my soul longs for you and my spirit within me seeks you out; for when your judgements appear on earth the inhabitants of the world learn what saving justice is.

12 Yahweh, you will grant us peace, having completed all our undertakings for us.

16 Yahweh, in distress they had recourse to you, they expended themselves in prayer, since your punishment was on them.

17 As a pregnant woman near her time of delivery writhes and cries out in her pangs, so have we been, Yahweh, in your eyes:

18 we have been pregnant, we have writhed, but we have given birth only to wind: we have not given salvation to the earth, no inhabitants for the world have been brought to birth.

19 Your dead will come back to life, your corpses will rise again. Wake up and sing, you dwellers in the dust, for your dew will be a radiant dew, but the earth will give birth to the shades.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 102:13-14, 15, 16-18, 19-21

13 Rise up, take pity on Zion! the time has come to have mercy on her, the moment has come;

14 for your servants love her very stones, are moved to pity by her dust.

15 Then will the nations revere the name of Yahweh, and all the kings of the earth your glory;

16 when Yahweh builds Zion anew, he will be seen in his glory;

17 he will turn to hear the prayer of the destitute, and will not treat their prayer with scorn.

18 This shall be put on record for a future generation, and a people yet to be born shall praise God:

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19 Yahweh has leaned down from the heights of his sanctuary, has looked down from heaven to earth,

20 to listen to the sighing of the captive, and set free those condemned to death,

21 to proclaim the name of Yahweh in Zion, his praise in Jerusalem;

Gospel, Matthew 11:28-30

28 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.

29 Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 16, 2026

1. Our first reading for today's Holy Mass is taken from the 26th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. It is a part of Judah's song of Praise to God and request for deliverance. A beautiful earnest prayer from a people who has repented and turned back to the Lord. The verses read to us from the ambo today are best understood in the context of the whole chapter which I highly recommend you read and pray over.

Here is the last portion:

"As a pregnant woman near her time of delivery writhes and cries out in her pangs, so have we been, Yahweh, in your eyes: we have been pregnant, we have writhed, but we have given birth only to wind: we have not given salvation to the earth, no inhabitants for the world have been brought to birth. Your dead will come back to life, your corpses will rise again. Wake up and sing, you dwellers in the dust, for your dew will be a radiant dew, but the earth will give birth to the shades."

This was the Lord's hope and reason for sending the Prophet to speak the words of warning. He wanted them to return to Him and find true freedom. This was why the Lord allowed Judah to experience the very consequences of their own choice to rebel and reject the ways of the Lord. When we sin, we make the wrong choice, and the consequences which follow are our own fault.

The way to freedom and flourishing is to honestly admit our sin, ask forgiveness and turn back to the Lord. As Catholics, we have the beautiful Sacrament of Confession, or penance, which offers us a new beginning.

How often do we avail ourselves of this wonderful gift?

2. The Psalmist David implores the Lord to have mercy on Zion in the portion of Psalm 102 which serves as our Responsorial Psalm for today's Mass. The entire Psalm is a prayer to God, the eternal King, for help. God always helps. He always "looks down from heaven". And He listens for our prayer. As David proclaims, "he will turn to hear the prayer of the destitute and will not treat their prayer with scorn."

Do we believe this? Do we pray frequently? We should. The Lord has created us for Himself, as St Augustine reminded us, "and "our hearts are restless until they rest in Him".

3. The Gospel for today's Holy Mass is a continuation of the words of Jesus at the end of the 11th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel account. They immediately follow after yesterday's short

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Gospel passage where Jesus rejoices that the Father has revealed Himself, not to those who think they are learned and wise, but to children. In preaching a homily on this passage, St Augustine tells the faithful that the burden of which Jesus speaks, the burden He gives us after we surrender our own heavy burden to Him, is light. He says, "This burden is not a weight at all, it is wings to fly with".

God gives us only good. Even if it seems to come dressed in pain or struggle. The author of the New Testament letter to the Hebrews wrote "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin." (Hebrews 14:15)

When we cast our cares on the Lord, He gives us the grace, the divine life, we need. Saint Jose Maria Escrivá once wrote "The great Christian revolution has been to convert pain into fruitful suffering and to turn a bad thing into something good. We have deprived the devil of this weapon; and with it we can conquer eternity."

But, as Jesus said, we must Come to Him. Not just at Mass on the weekends, but every day. Every hour. We must live our life in Him and ask Him to live His life through us.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 17, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, July 17th, 2026

Reading 1, Isaiah 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8

1 About then, Hezekiah fell ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came and said to him, 'Yahweh says this, "Put your affairs in order, for you are going to die, you will not live." '

2 Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and addressed this prayer to Yahweh,

3 'Ah, Yahweh, remember, I beg you, that I have behaved faithfully and with sincerity of heart in your presence and done what you regard as right.' And Hezekiah shed many tears.

4 Then the word of Yahweh came to Isaiah,

5 'Go and say to Hezekiah, "Yahweh, the God of your ancestor David, says this: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I shall cure you: in three days' time you will go up to the Temple of Yahweh. I shall add fifteen years to your life.

6 I shall save you and this city from the king of Assyria's clutches and defend this city for my sake and my servant David's sake." '

7 'Here', Isaiah replied, 'is the sign from Yahweh that he will do what he has said.

8 Look, I shall make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the steps -- the steps to Ahaz's roof-room-go back ten steps.' And the sun went back the ten steps by which it had declined.

21 'Bring a fig poultice,' Isaiah said, 'apply it to the ulcer and he will recover.'

22 Hezekiah said, 'What is the sign to tell me that I shall be going up to the Temple of Yahweh?'

Responsorial Psalm, Isaiah 38:10, 11, 12, 16

10 I thought: In the noon of my life I am to depart. At the gates of Sheol I shall be held for the rest of my days.

11 I thought: I shall never see Yahweh again in the land of the living, I shall never see again a single one of those who live on earth.

12 My home has been pulled up, and thrown away like a shepherd's tent; like a weaver, I have rolled up my life, he has cut me from the loom. From dawn to dark, you have been making an end of me;

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16 The Lord is over them; they live, and everything in them lives by his spirit. You will cure me. Restore me to life.

Gospel, Matthew 12:1-8

1 At that time Jesus went through the cornfields one Sabbath day. His disciples were hungry and began to pick ears of corn and eat them.

2 The Pharisees noticed it and said to him, 'Look, your disciples are doing something that is forbidden on the Sabbath.'

3 But he said to them, 'Have you not read what David did when he and his followers were hungry-

4 how he went into the house of God and they ate the loaves of the offering although neither he nor his followers were permitted to eat them, but only the priests?

5 Or again, have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbath day the Temple priests break the Sabbath without committing any fault?

6 Now here, I tell you, is something greater than the Temple.

7 And if you had understood the meaning of the words: Mercy is what pleases me, not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the blameless.

8 For the Son of man is master of the Sabbath.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 17, 2026

1. Our Hezekiah, the King of Judah was seriously ill. In our first reading we have a portion of the full story which is found in the 38th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. As is sometimes the case, our readings from the Hebrew Scriptures, what Christians call the Old Testament, are sometimes only portions of the text. Also, they are sometimes set in a different sequence than they are in the text. Partly, that is to assist us in understanding the applicable spiritual application for our own lives. But I strongly recommend to those listening and viewing, take the time to read the entire chapter. That will give you the literal interpretation of the passage, from which all interpretations should flow, according to Catholic teaching.

The Catholic Catechism speaks of the "senses" of Scripture in Paragraphs 115 - 119. Read it this week. It is truly helpful. We will consider what the Church teaching calls the "spiritual sense" of these passages.

The Prophet Isaiah told the King he was going to die and to put his affairs in order. WOW. How would we respond to such a word from a messenger of the Lord?

Listen to how Hezekiah responded:

"Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and addressed this prayer to Yahweh, 'Ah, Yahweh, remember, I beg you, that I have behaved faithfully and with sincerity of heart in your presence and done what you regard as right.' And Hezekiah shed many tears. "The tenderness of the King's heart led him to sincere prayer.

This is the lesson we can learn from the "spiritual sense" of these passages. When we face difficult news, even life and death news, turn to the Lord, in earnest and heartfelt prayer. He always hears us. In this instance, he even extended the life of the King. What a wonderful God we serve.

2. The Responsorial Psalm continues the theme. David reflects on his own mortality. He is in a tough place. He even feels, perhaps, abandoned by the Lord. But he does not give in to his feelings. Rather, he rebounds by appealing to the Lord and acting in faith. Hear the final words as he reflects on his trials and oppositions.

"The Lord is over them; they live, and everything in them lives by his spirit. You will cure me. Restore me to life."

How do we respond to serious struggle? Faith is the victory!

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3. The Gospel for today's Holy Mass is a continuation of the words of Jesus at the end of the 11th chapter of St Matthews Gospel account. They immediately follow after yesterday's short Gospel passage where Jesus rejoices that the Father has revealed Himself, not to those who think they are learned and wise, but to children. In preaching a homily on this passage, St Augustine tells the faithful that the burden of which Jesus speaks, the burden He gives us after we surrender our own heavy burden to Him, is light. He says, "This burden is not a weight at all, it is wings to fly with".

God gives us only good. Even if it seems to come dressed in pain or struggle. The author of the New Testament letter to the Hebrews wrote "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin." (Hebrews 14:15)

When we cast our cares on the Lord, He gives us the grace, the divine life, we need. Saint Jose Maria Escrava once wrote "The great Christian revolution has been to convert pain into fruitful suffering and to turn a bad thing into something good. We have deprived the devil of this weapon; and with it we can conquer eternity."

But, as Jesus said, we must Come to Him. Not just at Mass on the weekends, but every day. Every hour. We must live our life in Him and ask Him to live His life through us.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 18, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, July 18th, 2026

Reading 1, Micah 2:1-5

1 Disaster for those who plot evil, who lie in bed planning mischief! No sooner is it dawn than they do it, since they have the power to do so.

2 Seizing the fields that they covet, they take over houses as well, owner and house they seize alike, the man himself as well as his inheritance.

3 So Yahweh says this: Look, I am now plotting a disaster for this breed from which you will not extricate your necks; you will not hold your heads up then, for the times will be disastrous indeed.

4 That day they will make a satire on you, they will strike up a dirge and say, 'We have been stripped of everything; my people's land has been divided up, no one else can restore it to them, our fields have been awarded to our despoiler.'

5 Because of this, you will have no one to measure out a share in Yahweh's community.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 10:1-2, 3-4, 7-8, 14

1 Why, Yahweh, do you keep so distant, stay hidden in times of trouble?

2 In his pride the wicked hunts down the weak, who is caught in the schemes he devises.

3 The wicked is proud of his inmost desires, by his blasphemies the grasping spurns Yahweh,

4 the wicked in his arrogance does not look very far; 'There is no God,' is his only thought.

7 he wishes it on others. His speech is full of lies and browbeating, under his tongue lurk spite and wickedness.

8 In the undergrowth he lies in ambush, in his hiding-place he murders the innocent. He watches intently for the downtrodden,

14 You have seen for yourself the trouble and vexation, you watch so as to take it in hand. The oppressed relies on you; you are the only recourse of the orphan.



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Gospel, Matthew 12:14-21

14 At this the Pharisees went out and began to plot against him, discussing how to destroy him.

15 Jesus knew this and withdrew from the district. Many followed him and he cured them all

16 but warned them not to make him known.

17 This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

18 Look! My servant whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul delights, I will send my Spirit upon him, and he will present judgement to the nations;

19 he will not brawl or cry out, his voice is not heard in the streets,

20 he will not break the crushed reed, or snuff the faltering wick,

21 until he has made judgement victorious; in him the nations will put their hope.



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Questions for Reflection for July 18, 2026

1. Our first reading is taken from the Book of the Prophet Micah. The Book is the sixth of the twelve "minor" prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures. He was a contemporary of Isaiah, Amos and Hosea. Again, the adjective "minor" does not refer to the importance of the book. Rather, to the relatively shortness of its content. There are only seven chapters. Micah also engaged in his prophetic ministry during the reign of Hezekiah. Like the others, he called the people of Judah to repentance.

In the second chapter, from which our excerpt is derived, the Lord, through Micah, is denouncing the evil acts which the people had committed, yet also promising to gather a remnant from among them whom He will lead.

As we face the current crisis in the Church, which is the New Israel, we can learn from these accounts of the Lords dealing with Israel several important lessons. One, that the falling away of Gods people, and His leaders, is not a new story. Sadly, sin corrupts. Second, that the Lord will Never abandon His Church, as He never abandoned Israel. And, perhaps most importantly, we are called to stay faithful.

How are we doing?

2. The verses which make up our Responsorial Psalm are taken from Psalm ten. In this Psalm, David is praying for deliverance from his enemies. Yet, to Him, it seems as though the Lord is far off, as if He is not hearing him. Sound familiar? We often experience the same thing. But here is a lesson to be learned. If we simply read down a few verses we would hear David's words in verse 17 "O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear..."

God ALWAYS hears our prayer, whether we feel like he does or not. Living faith perseveres. The very next Psalm, Psalm 11, is a Song of Trust in God.

3. In the Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass, we continue from yesterday's reading, but skip over verses 9-13. Remember, the Pharisees were so hardhearted, they had lost the very meaning of the Sabbath. Jesus responds by telling them He is Lord of the Sabbath. Then, in verses 9-13, he heals a man with a withered hand.

How do these hard-hearted observers respond to this miracle? Listen to the words of the Bible "At this the Pharisees went out and began to plot against him, discussing how to destroy him."



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So, Jesus withdraws from the district, but continues to heal and to manifest the Kingdom of God. And this fulfills a portion of the Prophecy of Isaiah. He is the servant Messiah whom the Nations will put their hope in.

Have we placed our hope in Jesus Christ?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 19, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, July 19th, 2026

Reading 1, Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

13 For there is no god, other than you, who cares for every one, to whom you have to prove that your sentences have been just.

16 For your strength is the basis of your saving justice, and your sovereignty over all makes you lenient to all.

17 You show your strength when people will not believe in your absolute power, and you confound any insolence in those who do know it.

18 But you, controlling your strength, are mild in judgement, and govern us with great lenience, for you have only to will, and your power is there.

19 By acting thus, you have taught your people that the upright must be kindly to his fellows, and you have given your children the good hope that after sins you will grant repentance.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16

5 Lord, you are kind and forgiving, rich in faithful love for all who call upon you.

6 Yahweh, hear my prayer, listen to the sound of my pleading.

9 All nations will come and adore you, Lord, and give glory to your name.

10 For you are great and do marvellous deeds, you, God, and none other.

15 But you, Lord, God of tenderness and mercy, slow to anger, rich in faithful love and loyalty,

16 turn to me and pity me. Give to your servant your strength, to the child of your servant your saving help,

Reading 2, Romans 8:26-27

26 And as well as this, the Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness, for, when we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words;

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27 and he who can see into all hearts knows what the Spirit means because the prayers that the Spirit makes for God's holy people are always in accordance with the mind of God.

Gospel, Matthew 13:24-43

24 He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

25 While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off.

26 When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, then the darnel appeared as well.

27 The owner's labourers went to him and said, "Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?"

28 He said to them, "Some enemy has done this." And the labourers said, "Do you want us to go and weed it out?"

29 But he said, "No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it.

30 Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn." '

31 He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field.

32 It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air can come and shelter in its branches.'

33 He told them another parable, 'The kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.'

34 In all this Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables; indeed, he would never speak to them except in parables.

35 This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet: I will speak to you in parables, unfold what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.



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36 Then, leaving the crowds, he went to the house; and his disciples came to him and said, 'Explain to us the parable about the darnel in the field.'

37 He said in reply, 'The sower of the good seed is the Son of man.

38 The field is the world; the good seed is the subjects of the kingdom; the darnel, the subjects of the Evil One;

39 the enemy who sowed it, the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels.

40 Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time.

41 The Son of man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of falling and all who do evil,

42 and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

43 Then the upright will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Anyone who has ears should listen!



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Questions for Reflection for July 19, 2026

1. In our first reading for this sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, our first reading contains four verses from the Book of Wisdom, also called the Wisdom of Solomon. The term "wisdom Books" includes this beautiful collection of wisdom insights, as well as the Books of Job, Proverbs, and Sirach, also called "Ecclesiasticus". It was probably compiled about fifty years before the Birth of Jesus and is appropriately named. It offers inspired and wise insights into who the Lord is.

Our reading today is an example. The Lord is both strong and merciful. Though He judges, he is "mild in judgement" as this translation states. He always gives His children "the good hope that after sins you will grant repentance." We are His children. Do we really believe this? Do we live our lives as though we do?

2. The Psalms are also considered a part of the wisdom literature, and our Response today is from Psalm 86 underscores this beautiful message with words from David which we should make our own "Lord, God of tenderness and mercy, slow to anger, rich in faithful love and loyalty, turn to me and pity me. Give to your servant your strength, to the child of your servant your saving help.

Our second reading is from the Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Romans. Short in length but profound in message. The Apostle tells the Christians in Rome, and he tells us, that the Spirit of God, who dwells within us, prays through us. We need the Holy Spirit. The Third Person of the Blessed Trinity is a gift from the Father and the Son. Not only does the Spirit come to help us in our weakness, the Spirit gives us power from on high to live our life differently.

If you have not done so lately, today, invite the Holy Spirit to come into your heart, your life and your family. Watch what happens.

3. In the Gospel for today's holy Mass Jesus uses another agrarian parable to teach a truly important lesson about the Mercy of God. However, in this one, He likens the Kingdom of God not to the seed but to the sower who sowed the good seed. Jesus Himself is that sower.

The world is the field and Jesus sows the seed of His grace in it. In order to redeem us, He became like us and, He himself became the grain of wheat that was sown for us and bite the fruit of the Kingdom. But notice who has sown the darnel or, as some translations say, the cockle. In those days, it was not unusual for an enemy to sow such seed in a field of wheat to destroy the crop as a form of revenge against an enemy or adversary. It is hard to tell the two plants apart until the stalks begin to emerge.



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It is the evil one who sows the darnel or cockle. The early Church Fathers wrote of the Cockle as a metaphor for false doctrine. The great Bishop John Chrysostum notes that the devil often mixes false doctrine with truth to deceive the elect. Yet, in His Mercy, the Lord allows all of this, until the end of time.

We are called to seek to convert the cockle, by smothering it with the good seed of truth, both in ourselves and in others. It is ESSENTIAL that we study the scriptures and the teaching of the Church so that we are not deceived by the enemy and so that we can help as many men and women as we can to turn to Jesus and be converted by the good seed of true doctrine. In this age of a great falling away, even within the Church, this parable, and its message is VITAL to hear and understand.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 20, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, July 20th, 2026

Reading 1, Micah 6:1-4, 6-8

1 Now listen to what Yahweh says: 'Stand up, state your case to the mountains and let the hills hear what you have to say!'

2 Listen, mountains, to the case as Yahweh puts it, give ear, you foundations of the earth, for Yahweh has a case against his people and he will argue it with Israel.

3 'My people, what have I done to you, how have I made you tired of me? Answer me!

4 For I brought you up from Egypt, I ransomed you from the place of slave-labour and sent Moses, Aaron and Miriam to lead you.

6 'With what shall I enter Yahweh's presence and bow down before God All-high? Shall I enter with burnt offerings, with calves one year old?

7 Will he be pleased with rams by the thousand, with ten thousand streams of oil? Shall I offer my eldest son for my wrong-doing, the child of my own body for my sin?

8 'You have already been told what is right and what Yahweh wants of you. Only this, to do what is right, to love loyalty and to walk humbly with your God.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 50:5-6, 8-9, 16-17, 21, 23

5 'Gather to me my faithful, who sealed my covenant by sacrifice.'

6 The heavens proclaim his saving justice, 'God himself is judge.

8 'It is not with your sacrifices that I find fault, those burnt offerings constantly before me;

9 I will not accept any bull from your homes, nor a single goat from your folds.

16 But to the wicked, God says: 'What right have you to recite my statutes, to take my covenant on your lips,

17 when you detest my teaching, and thrust my words behind you?



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21 You do this, and am I to say nothing? Do you think that I am really like you? I charge you, indict you to your face.

23 Honour to me is a sacrifice of thanksgiving; to the upright I will show God's salvation.'

Gospel, Matthew 12:38-42

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees spoke up. 'Master,' they said, 'we should like to see a sign from you.'

39 He replied, 'It is an evil and unfaithful generation that asks for a sign! The only sign it will be given is the sign of the prophet Jonah.

40 For as Jonah remained in the belly of the sea-monster for three days and three nights, so will the Son of man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

41 On Judgement Day the men of Nineveh will appear against this generation and they will be its condemnation, because when Jonah preached they repented; and look, there is something greater than Jonah here.

42 On Judgement Day the Queen of the South will appear against this generation and be its condemnation, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and look, there is something greater than Solomon here.



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Questions for Reflection for July 20, 2026

1. In our first reading we have another passage from the Prophet Micah, an excerpt from the sixth chapter of this beautiful book. The whole sixth chapter is a message from the Lord, through His Prophet, on what the Lord requires from His people. The Lord is "wearied" by their behavior. He speaks of having a "case against His People". He reminds them of all He has done in delivering them from Egypt, revealing Himself to them, and how they have not responded. Again, he looks not to their external sacrifices but to the condition of their hearts and their behavior.

Then the first reading ends with the most often quoted words from Micah:

"You have already been told what is right and what Yahweh wants of you. Only this, to do what is right, to love loyalty and to walk humbly with your God." These are words which we need to hear - and respond to. How are we living? Are we doing what we know is right? Are we loyal to the Lord and His Church? Do we walk humbly? We should memorize this beautiful verse and use it often as an examination of conscience.

2. David the Psalmist, also writes of an interchange with the Lord. The Lord is not pleased with the wickedness, the behavior of His people. They offer sacrifices yet live in a manner which rejects the Lord's instructions.

Here is the question he asks:

"What right have you to recite my statutes, to take my covenant on your lips, when you detest my teaching, and thrust my words behind you? You do this, and am I to say nothing? Do you think that I am really like you? I charge you, indict you to your face. Honor to me is a sacrifice of thanksgiving; to the upright I will show God's salvation." Let us ask the Lord for the grace to be numbered among the upright and not the wicked. And let us decide TODAY to repent and return to the Lord.

3. In the Gospel for today's Mass, certain of the religious leaders, the Scribes and the Pharisees seek a sign, they ask the Lord Jesus to work a miracle to prove to them that He is the promised Messiah. Instead of responding to this demand for a show, He makes a reference to Jonah in the belly of the whale, pointing to the fact that proof of His Role as Messiah and Son of God would come in His Resurrection. He goes further, telling them that something greater than Jonah and greater Solomon was standing before them. But they failed to see. So, it would be with many others, including Pilate. So, it is today.

Living faith is like getting new glasses, everything looks different. We were given the grace to be freed from original Sin and incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ at our Baptism. That grace is enhanced in the reception of the Holy Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Confirmation.



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For those who are married, grace is given. For the ordained, grace is given. But we are continually invited to respond, to cooperate with grace. When we do, our eyes are opened, and we see the Lord for who He truly is.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 21, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, July 21st, 2026

Reading 1, Micah 7:14-15, 18-20

14 With shepherd's crook lead your people to pasture, the flock that is your heritage, living confined in a forest with meadow land all round. Let them graze in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old!

15 As in the days when you came out of Egypt, grant us to see wonders!

18 What god can compare with you for pardoning guilt and for overlooking crime? He does not harbour anger for ever, since he delights in showing faithful love.

19 Once more have pity on us, tread down our faults; throw all our sins to the bottom of the sea.

20 Grant Jacob your faithfulness, and Abraham your faithful love, as you swore to our ancestors from the days of long ago.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 85:2-4, 5-6, 7-8

2 you take away the guilt of your people, you blot out all their sin.

3 You retract all your anger, you renounce the heat of your fury.

4 Bring us back, God our Saviour, appease your indignation against us!

5 Will you be angry with us for ever? Will you prolong your wrath age after age?

6 Will you not give us life again, for your people to rejoice in you?

7 Show us, Lord, your faithful love, grant us your saving help.

8 I am listening. What is God's message? Yahweh's message is peace for his people, for his faithful, if only they renounce their folly.

Gospel, Matthew 12:46-50

46 He was still speaking to the crowds when suddenly his mother and his brothers were standing outside and were anxious to have a word with him.

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47 Someone said to him: Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to speak to you.

48 But to the man who told him this Jesus replied, 'Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?'

49 And stretching out his hand towards his disciples he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers.

50 Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 21, 2026

1. In our first reading from the Prophet Micah we are reminded of the wonderful mercy and goodness of God. Here these words of the Prophet "What god can compare with you for pardoning guilt and for overlooking crime? He does not harbor anger forever, since he delights in showing faithful love. Once more have pity on us, tread down our faults; throw all our sins to the bottom of the sea."

The Lord does not want us to be bound up by sin. He wants us to be free from sin. As Christians, we know that the most profound demonstration of His Mercy was the fact that He sent His Son Jesus, to pay the penalty for our sin and free us from death. Free us for a new life.

2. The Psalmist David continues this message of mercy, inviting us to join in his song. "you take away the guilt of your people, you blot out all their sin. You retract all your anger; you renounce the heat of your fury. Bring us back, God our Savior, appease your indignation against us!"
3. As one who teaches and preaches in the Catholic Church and the broader Christian community, I am often asked about whether Jesus had brothers and sisters. If by that question is meant natural or blood relatives, the text and the unbroken Christian tradition make the answer clear - No. Failure to consider the original language of the text has led to a mistaken notion of the possibility of Jesus having brothers in his natural family. The reality is that the word used for extended family, a vital part of the Jewish understanding of family, is not accurately translated. But the passage we hear from Matthews Gospel today has a much deeper meaning.

I stand with the ancient Christian tradition, rooted in what is called the Patristic literature (writings of the early Church fathers) as to what is being revealed through these words - and in this encounter. Understood in this light, this passage reveals a framework for an authentically human and relational spirituality, a spirituality of communion. We are made members of the very family of God through Jesus Christ and His saving Incarnation. We are his mothers, brothers and sisters, as we live His Word and walk in His Way.

Through our Baptism, we are all invited into the very family of God. When we choose to be obedient to the will and the Word of God; we enter into an eternal relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We actually become a part of the "family" of God; we become "mother" sister" and "brother" to the Lord Jesus. We enter into "communion" with the Trinitarian God, through Him.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 22, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, July 22nd, 2026

Reading 1, Second Corinthians 5:14-17

14 For the love of Christ overwhelms us when we consider that if one man died for all, then all have died;

15 his purpose in dying for all humanity was that those who live should live not any more for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life.

16 From now onwards, then, we will not consider anyone by human standards: even if we were once familiar with Christ according to human standards, we do not know him in that way any longer.

17 So for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old order is gone and a new being is there to see.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9

2 Thus I have gazed on you in the sanctuary, seeing your power and your glory.

3 Better your faithful love than life itself; my lips will praise you.

4 Thus I will bless you all my life, in your name lift up my hands.

5 All my longings fulfilled as with fat and rich foods, a song of joy on my lips and praise in my mouth.

6 On my bed when I think of you, I muse on you in the watches of the night,

8 my heart clings to you, your right hand supports me.

9 May those who are hounding me to death go down to the depths of the earth,

Gospel, John 20:1-2, 11-18

1 It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb

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2 and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,' she said, 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

11 But Mary was standing outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, as she wept, she stooped to look inside,

12 and saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet.

13 They said, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' 'They have taken my Lord away,' she replied, 'and I don't know where they have put him.'

14 As she said this she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not realise that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and remove him.'

16 Jesus said, 'Mary!' She turned round then and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbuni!' -- which means Master.

17 Jesus said to her, 'Do not cling to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to the brothers, and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'

18 So Mary of Magdala told the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,' and that he had said these things to her.



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Questions for Reflection for July 22, 2026

1. Today, in the Liturgical Calendar of the Roman Catholic Church, we remember St. Mary Magdalene. What a wonderful example of the promise the Apostle Paul reminds us of in our first reading. He tells the Corinthians, and he tells us, that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old order has past, behold all things become new." What does it mean to be "in Christ". Jesus promised that He would come and live within us. In Johns Gospel, chapter fifteen He says, "Abide in me, and I in you" and in the first letter of the same apostle to the early Churches, he reminds us "God is love, and He who lives in love, lives in God."(1 John 4:16)

We were incorporated into the Body of Christ through our Baptism, and we grow in understanding and living that that "abiding" through prayer, scripture reading and participation in the Sacraments of the Church, most especially the Most Holy Eucharist, where the Lord comes and takes up residence with us. Do we regularly pray? Do we regularly invite the Lord to come and live within us? Do we regularly participate in Holy Mass and receive the Holy Eucharist?

Like Mary Magdalene, we are all invited to become new creations in Christ. But the invitation calls for a constant response of living faith.

2. David understood what it means to abide, to live, in the Lord. His prayer and praise, the Psalms, are a manual of prayer. This is why they are such a vital part of the Liturgical life of the Church. Repeat these wonderful words of praise with me "...my lips will praise you. Thus, I will bless you all my life, in your name lift up my hands. All my longings fulfilled as with fat and rich foods, a song of joy on my lips and praise in my mouth."

Now, even more importantly, make them your own. Lift up your hands and your hearts in prayer and praises daily. Do so out loud. OK, when no-one is around. But even if they are. We have so much to be grateful for. Begin each day in praise and thanksgiving. End each night, the same way. David writes: "On my bed when I think of you, I muse on you in the watches of the night, my heart clings to you, your right hand supports me." Is that how we end our day? It can be. It will change everything!

3. In our Gospel text on this day, when we remember Mary Magdalene, we see that she is a witness to the Resurrection. She finds the empty tomb. She is one of the first to find the empty tomb - and to believe in the Resurrection. One of the first disciples and witnesses to the Resurrection in the Last Gospel, the Gospel of St. John.



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She also encounters Jesus, even though at first, she does not recognize Him. It is only when the Risen Jesus calls her name that she recognizes Him as "Rabboni", Teacher. Every one of us is called to encounter Jesus. And, not just once, but continually. After all, that is the heart of the Gospel message. Christianity is about encountering a Divine Person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior, our Savior. And, in that encounter, we are changed. That change is to continue and lead to a life, a lifestyle, of ongoing encounter and ongoing conversion.

How are we doing? Are we coming to know Jesus? Or do we know "about" Jesus?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 23, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, July 23rd, 2026

Reading 1, Jeremiah 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13

1 The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

2 'Go and shout this in Jerusalem's ears: 'Yahweh says this: "I remember your faithful love, the affection of your bridal days, when you followed me through the desert, through a land unsown.

3 Israel was sacred to Yahweh; the first-fruits of his harvest; all who ate this incurred guilt, disaster befell them, Yahweh declares." '

7 I brought you to a country of plenty, to enjoy its produce and good things; but when you entered you defiled my country and made my heritage loathsome.

8 The priests never asked, "Where is Yahweh?" Those skilled in the Law did not know me, the shepherds too rebelled against me and the prophets prophesied by Baal and followed the Useless Ones.

12 You heavens, stand aghast at this, horrified, utterly appalled, Yahweh declares.

13 For my people have committed two crimes: they have abandoned me, the fountain of living water, and dug water-tanks for themselves, cracked water-tanks that hold no water.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 36:6-7, 8-9, 10-11

6 your saving justice is like towering mountains, your judgements like the mighty deep. Yahweh, you support both man and beast;

7 how precious, God, is your faithful love. So the children of Adam take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

8 They feast on the bounty of your house, you let them drink from your delicious streams;

9 in you is the source of life, by your light we see the light.

10 Maintain your faithful love to those who acknowledge you, and your saving justice to the honest of heart.

11 Do not let the foot of the arrogant overtake me or wicked hands drive me away.

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Gospel, Matthew 13:10-17

10 Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?'

11 In answer, he said, 'Because to you is granted to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not granted.'

12 Anyone who has will be given more and will have more than enough; but anyone who has not will be deprived even of what he has.

13 The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding.

14 So in their case what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah is being fulfilled: Listen and listen, but never understand! Look and look, but never perceive!

15 This people's heart has grown coarse, their ears dulled, they have shut their eyes tight to avoid using their eyes to see, their ears to hear, their heart to understand, changing their ways and being healed by me.

16 'But blessed are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear!

17 In truth I tell you, many prophets and upright people longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.



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Questions for Reflection for July 23, 2026

1. Jeremiah lived and ministered during the time in which Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the people of Israel were taken captive. It was a terrible time. His prophetic mission, which he accepted somewhat reluctantly, was to tell Israel that this was due to her apostasy, her turning away from the Lord. In our first reading, the Prophet reminds Israel of her love for the Lord when she was young.

Hear these tender words, again reflecting the spousal language so common in this Prophet and others:

"I remember your faithful love, the affection of your bridal days, when you followed me through the desert, through a land unsown. Israel was sacred to Yahweh; the first-fruits of his harvest; all who ate this incurred guilt, disaster befell them, Yahweh declares. I brought you to a country of plenty, to enjoy its produce and good things; but when you entered you defiled my country and made my heritage loathsome." Israel turned to idols, to the false Baals and brought down judgement upon themselves. The Lord accuses in and given the gift of sanctifying grace. Them of two crimes- "For my people have committed two crimes: they have abandoned me, the fountain of living water, and dug water-tanks for themselves, cracked water-tanks that hold no water."

In our own lives, every sinful act involves a separation from God. Yet, deceived by sin we think we can hold water in broken water tanks. We can't. The only remedy for sin is repentance, confession and seeking the Mercy of God.

The Sacrament of Confession is a great gift. But it has to be used. Is it time for you?

2. In our Responsorial Psalm we hear these familiar words "in you is the source of life, by your light we see the light." For Catholics we will recall that these words made it into the Words of the Mass and are repeated often in the Liturgy of the Hours. Jesus is the Light of the World. We need a relationship with the Lord to see clearly in a world which is steeped in the darkness of sin. The Lord is that source of light. We only need to turn to Him throughout every day. That "turning to Him" is what prayer is.
3. In the Gospel for today's Holy Mass, taken from St. Matthew, the disciples ask Jesus why He speaks to the crowd in parables, but, to them, He speaks more clearly. He responds, "to you is granted to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not granted." We are disciples of Jesus. He has claimed us for Himself. But we must CHOOSE to allow Him to speak to us, learn to listen be taught. That requires our free and continual cooperation. That is the life of discipleship. To be a student of Jesus Christ.



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Most of us were baptized as infants. Thank the Lord that our parents, and godparents, said Yes to the Lord on our behalf. And grace was given. We were freed from original sin and given sanctifying grace. Because, as Jesus said, "You did not choose me but I chose you". (John 15:16)

But that was not the end, it was only the beginning. We need to become what I call "Catholic by Choice". We need to choose the Lord. Everyday. Yesterday's choice is not sufficient for today. Did you choose to follow Jesus Christ today?



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 24, 2026



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Daily Reading for Friday, July 24th, 2026

Reading 1, Jeremiah 3:14-17

14 "Come back, disloyal children, Yahweh declares, for I alone am your Master, and I will take you, one from a town, two from a family, and bring you to Zion.

15 I shall give you shepherds after my own heart, who will pasture you wisely and discreetly.

16 Then, when you have increased and grown numerous in the country, Yahweh declares, no one will ever again say: The ark of the covenant of Yahweh! It will not enter their minds, they will not remember it or miss it, nor will another one be made.

17 When that time comes, Jerusalem will be called: The Throne of Yahweh, and all the nations will converge on her, on Yahweh's name, on Jerusalem, and will no longer follow their own stubborn and wicked inclinations.

Responsorial Psalm, Jeremiah 31:10, 11-12, 13

10 For my life is worn out with sorrow, and my years with sighs. My strength gives way under my misery, and my bones are all wasted away.

11 The sheer number of my enemies makes me contemptible, loathsome to my neighbours, and my friends shrink from me in horror. When people see me in the street they take to their heels.

12 I have no more place in their hearts than a corpse, or something lost.

13 All I hear is slander -- terror wherever I turn -- as they plot together against me, scheming to take my life.

Gospel, Matthew 13:18-23

18 'So pay attention to the parable of the sower.

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the Evil One comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the seed sown on the edge of the path.

20 The seed sown on patches of rock is someone who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy.

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21 But such a person has no root deep down and does not last; should some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, at once he falls away.

22 The seed sown in thorns is someone who hears the word, but the worry of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so it produces nothing.

23 And the seed sown in rich soil is someone who hears the word and understands it; this is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 24, 2026

2. In our first reading, the Lord tells Israel, through the Prophet Jeremiah, that He will bring them back from Zion. That He will give them shepherds after His own heart. And, He did. Even though they had been unfaithful.

This is a message we need to hear today. The Church is the New Israel. And, sadly, she has wandered far from her first love. She needs to hear the call of the Lord to return to Him. She needs Shepherds after His own heart. And we, her sons and daughters, need to pray for this return, pray for these shepherds, and then live our lives, as best we can, in living faith having hope that the same God who made this promise through Jeremiah will hear our prayer today.

2. The words of the Responsorial Psalm follow the same theme. After all, David was also a Prophet. 'He who scattered Israel is gathering him, will guard him as a shepherd guarding his flock.' Let us take seriously the call given to us, over and over again, to pray for the genuine renewal and restoration of the Church. May the Lord bring the New Israel, the Church of His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, back to full fidelity and dynamic, orthodox, Catholic faith.
3. Jesus drew examples from the experience of those who followed him during his public ministry. His disciples understood preparing the soil in the fields, planting the seed, and reaping the crops. Preparing the ground to receive the seed involves hard work, cooperative weather, and the goodness of God. The image of seed sown in a field has implications for how we live our daily lives. The Living Word has been sown within each one of us. We must cultivate the ground of our hearts to be transformed by grace and reflect the Image and Likeness of God.

We are seed, placed in the Holy, blood stained Hands of Jesus, to be spread into the world. Jesus lives His Life in and through us, to be revealed to a world waiting to be born again. God still loves the world he created and still sends His Son. He does so through the Church, the Body of Christ, of which we are all members. (John 3:16, 1 Cor. 12:27) Together, as Church, we are a seed and sign of the kingdom to come - when the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ, returns.

This world was created through the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the spoken Word of the Father. This world is being re-created through the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, who continues His redemptive mission through His Body. As we allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify and empower us, we become living seeds of His Kingdom, spread in the garden of the world, a part of a marvelous loving plan. In one of his sermons, Jose Maria Escriva, reflected.



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“Jesus is the sower, and he goes about his task by means of us Christians. Christ presses the grain in his wounded hands, soaks it in his blood, cleans it, purifies it, and throws it into the furrows, into the world. He plants the seeds one by one so that each Christian in his own setting can bear witness to the fruitfulness of the death and resurrection of the Lord.”

He continued, “If we are in Christ's hands, we should absorb his saving blood and let ourselves be cast on the wind. We should accept our life as God wants it. And we should be convinced that the seed must be buried and die if it is to be fruitful.” We are soil and seed in the hands of Jesus.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 25, 2026



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Daily Reading for Saturday, July 25th, 2026

Reading 1, Second Corinthians 4:7-15

7 But we hold this treasure in pots of earthenware, so that the immensity of the power is God's and not our own.

8 We are subjected to every kind of hardship, but never distressed; we see no way out but we never despair;

9 we are pursued but never cut off; knocked down, but still have some life in us;

10 always we carry with us in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus, too, may be visible in our body.

11 Indeed, while we are still alive, we are continually being handed over to death, for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus, too, may be visible in our mortal flesh.

12 In us, then, death is at work; in you, life.

13 But as we have the same spirit of faith as is described in scripture -- I believed and therefore I spoke - we, too, believe and therefore we, too, speak,

14 realising that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up with Jesus in our turn, and bring us to himself -- and you as well.

15 You see, everything is for your benefit, so that as grace spreads, so, to the glory of God, thanksgiving may also overflow among more and more people.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6

1 [Song of Ascents] When Yahweh brought back Zion's captives we lived in a dream;

2 then our mouths filled with laughter, and our lips with song. Then the nations kept saying, 'What great deeds Yahweh has done for them!'

3 Yes, Yahweh did great deeds for us, and we were overjoyed.

4 Bring back, Yahweh, our people from captivity like torrents in the Negeb!

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5 Those who sow in tears sing as they reap.

6 He went off, went off weeping, carrying the seed. He comes back, comes back singing, bringing in his sheaves.

Gospel, Matthew 20:20-28

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came with her sons to make a request of him, and bowed low;

21 and he said to her, 'What is it you want?' She said to him, 'Promise that these two sons of mine may sit one at your right hand and the other at your left in your kingdom.'

22 Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?' They replied, 'We can.'

23 He said to them, 'Very well; you shall drink my cup, but as for seats at my right hand and my left, these are not mine to grant; they belong to those to whom they have been allotted by my Father.'

24 When the other ten heard this they were indignant with the two brothers.

25 But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that among the gentiles the rulers lord it over them, and great men make their authority felt.

26 Among you this is not to happen. No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant,

27 and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave,

28 just as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 25, 2026

1. July 25th is the Feast of St. James in the liturgical calendar of the Roman Catholic Church. All of our readings point us to the truth concerning our own human frailty and the Divine call given to us through Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul reminds the Christians in Corinth, and all of us who hear his words proclaimed today, that we all hold the treasure of faith, the presence of the Lord, in our own weak, "earthen vessels".

I have discovered that the older I get the less I know and the more imperfections I discover in myself. As a younger man, I labored under a misconception that living the Christian life would somehow get easier as I - figured it all out. Well, nothing could be further from the truth.

There is, in fact, a reverse reality at work. I am more and more aware of my own weaknesses as I age and have only just begun to understand the honest admission of St. Paul to the young disciple Timothy that he was "the chief among sinners"(1 Tim. 1:15). This honest admission of Paul did not reflect some kind of poor self-image.

To the contrary, it revealed the mature self-awareness and humility of a Christian man who had come to understand why we call God's redemptive work in our lives amazing grace. Classical Christian theology speaks of the ongoing struggle we will face as we try to live a faithful Christian life. We constantly need a Savior precisely because we are Earthen Vessels.

Yet, the Lord in His infinite mercy and love has made our own weakness and frailties become the path to a deepening relationship with Him. They are the door to our own progress in our baptismal call to holiness. This process of being emptied of self and filled with His life happens by grace. However, that wonderful free gift invites our continual response, our cooperation, with His loving plan.

St. Francis DeSales (1567-1610) was a great pastor of souls. He once wrote in a letter to one of the many who sought his holy counsel "God wants your misery to be the throne of His mercy. He desires that your powerlessness be the seat of His omnipotence."

2. Like the captives of Zion whom the Psalmist sings about in the Response for today's Liturgy, we have been chosen by the Lord. Yes, even in our weakness. We have been delivered from the captivity of sin, and given the joy of the Lord, the kind of joy that comes from knowing that God loves us and is making us new creations, in and through His Son Jesus Christ.

Just as the Apostle Paul reminded us in our first reading, the reality of our frail human nature is that we are weak; the struggles we face in our daily lives do not necessarily lessen as we age. We fall and fail.



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The Good News is that the Lord is always there, ready to forgive, to heal and to help us to get back up and, with the help of His grace, begin again and again and again. In another letter to a pilgrim seeking his spiritual counsel, Francis DeSales wrote:

"Be patient with the whole world, but, above all with yourself. I want to tell you not to lose your serenity because of your imperfections, and always to have the zest to raise yourself up. It gives me joy to see each day you begin again. There is no better way to finish life well than to return to the starting point always and not ever to think that we have done enough".

This is sage advice for all of who are coming to understand the truth that we hold this treasure of God's life within us, in earthen vessels.

3. The Gospel appointed for the Feast of St. James is the account found in Saint Matthew. The Saints put legs on the faith. They show us that ordinary people, just like you and I, can become extraordinary, when we cooperate with grace and allow the Holy Spirit to change us.

James was the son of Zebedee and brother of John. From faithful stock, we see in this encounter that some forms of zeal may be genetic. In fact, this zeal in both of these brothers caused the Lord to name them the Sons of Thunder. (Mk 3:14-17) However, human zeal is not sufficient to be a disciple of the Master. Like all human virtues, it must be baptized and transformed. And so it would be in James.

He followed the Lord on the way which would later be called Christianity for the first time in Antioch. (Acts 11:26) He was one of three to witness the transfiguration. He fell asleep during the great instruction which Jesus gave them in that Garden called Gethsemane.

The tradition tells us that after the Resurrection, James preached the Gospel in Spain. To this day, the pilgrimage path which bears his name is affecting conversion in the lives of many. He returned to Palestine in 44 AD and drank that chalice. He was the first Apostle to be martyred by order of the tyrant Herod Agrippa. The word martyr means witness. In both his life and his death, James was such a witness. In imitation of his life, we are also invited to follow the path of Jesus' struggle, the way of His rejection.

We too are invited to climb the mountain of His great saving act of unmerited selfless Divine love. James, indeed, all the martyrs, show us the way, the pattern, the lifestyle of surrendered love for God. They invite us to walk this way with Jesus, who, in His Sacred humanity, teaches us the path to our own transformation.

James may have missed the lesson of Gethsemane the first time around due to falling asleep, (Mt. 26) but he certainly learned to live it out in a life of discipleship The agony in that garden called Gethsemane shows us a very human Jesus and instructs each one of us.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 26, 2026



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Daily Reading for Sunday, July 26th, 2026

Reading 1, First Kings 3:5, 7-12

5 At Gibeon Yahweh appeared to Solomon in a dream during the night. God said, 'Ask what you would like me to give you.'

7 Now, Yahweh my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father. But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership.

8 And here is your servant, surrounded with your people whom you have chosen, a people so numerous that its number cannot be counted or reckoned.

9 So give your servant a heart to understand how to govern your people, how to discern between good and evil, for how could one otherwise govern such a great people as yours?'

10 It pleased Yahweh that Solomon should have asked for this.

11 'Since you have asked for this,' God said, 'and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself,

12 here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as no one has had before and no one will have after you.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130

57 My task, I have said, Yahweh, is to keep your word.

72 The Law you have uttered is more precious to me than all the wealth in the world.

76 Your faithful love must be my consolation, as you have promised your servant.

77 Treat me with tenderness and I shall live, for your Law is my delight.

127 So I love your commandments more than gold, purest gold.

128 So I rule my life by your precepts, I hate all deceptive paths.

129 Wonderful are your instructions, so I observe them.



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130 As your word unfolds it gives light, and even the simple understand.

Reading 2, Romans 8:28-30

28 We are well aware that God works with those who love him, those who have been called in accordance with his purpose, and turns everything to their good.

29 He decided beforehand who were the ones destined to be moulded to the pattern of his Son, so that he should be the eldest of many brothers;

30 it was those so destined that he called; those that he called, he justified, and those that he has justified he has brought into glory.

Gospel, Matthew 13:44-52

44 'The kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off in his joy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

45 'Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls;

46 when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

47 'Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet that is cast in the sea and brings in a haul of all kinds of fish.

48 When it is full, the fishermen bring it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in baskets and throw away those that are no use.

49 This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the upright,

50 to throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

51 'Have you understood all these?' They said, 'Yes.'

52 And he said to them, 'Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom new things as well as old.'

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Questions for Reflection for July 26, 2026

1. In our first reading for this, the Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we hear a prophetic dream where the Lord speaks to a very young King Solomon. The young King, succeeding David his Father to the throne, lacks confidence in his ability to lead. The Lord says "'Ask what you would like me to give you."

And, Solomon asks for an understanding heart. Hear his words of prayer: "So give your servant a heart to understand how to govern your people, how to discern between good and evil, for how could one otherwise govern such a great people as yours?"

This pleases the Lord greatly. Because it reveals the greatest qualification for true leadership in the Lord. The Lord responds "'Since you have asked for this,' God said, 'and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself, here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as no one has had before and no one will have after you."

What would we ask for if the Lord posed such a question to us? Honestly answering such a question can help us move forward in our own call to follow the Lord.

2. In our second reading, we have an excerpt from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome, a powerful, and theologically profound letter which we should read, often, and ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand and incorporate in our own Christian walk. In the eighth chapter of this letter, the Apostle is explaining what it means to live in the Spirit. Two points he makes in this short excerpt. First, the Lord turns everything to "good" for those who love Him and follow Him. But we should remember, it is His good. Now, ultimately, that also means our good. But sometimes, it may not feel or seem that way. That is why we need the eyes of living faith to see.

Secondly, he instructs them and us, that the work of the Holy Spirit is to conform us to Jesus Christ, in this translation, to mold us in the pattern of His Son. WE are called to become "sons, and daughters, in the Son". We are called to continual conversion. How are we doing?

3. In the Gospel appointed for today's Holy Mass, we continue on in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus is teaching the crowd from the boat, the symbol of the Church, and uses several parables to help explain the Kingdom of Heaven which he came to inaugurate. The hidden treasure in the field, the merchant searching for pearls, the and the great net thrown into the sea, catching all kinds of fish, some good and some bad. The net, according to the early Church Fathers, is an image of the Church. In her are found saints as well as sinners.



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But the Church herself is indefectible, because she is the Mystical Body of Christ, and she is the Lords plan for the whole world. That indefectibility does not depend on the holiness of her members, including her clergy, but the holiness of Jesus Christ, her head. WE are all caught into the net and brought into the boat. There, we are to be purified and made Holy, becoming more and more like Jesus as we cooperate with grace.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 27, 2026



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Daily Reading for Monday, July 27th, 2026

Reading 1, Jeremiah 13:1-11

1 Yahweh said this to me, 'Go and buy a linen waistcloth and put it round your waist. But do not dip it in water.'

2 And so, as Yahweh had ordered, I bought a waistcloth and put it round my waist.

3 A second time the word of Yahweh came to me,

4 'Take the waistcloth that you have bought and are wearing round your waist. Up, go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a hole in the rock.'

5 So I went and hid it by the Euphrates as Yahweh had ordered me.

6 A long time later, Yahweh said to me, 'Up, go to the Euphrates and fetch the waistcloth I ordered you to hide there.'

7 So I went to the Euphrates, and I searched, and I took the waistcloth from the place where I had hidden it. And there was the waistcloth ruined, no use for anything.

8 Then the word of Yahweh was addressed to me as follows,

9 'Yahweh says this, "In the same way I shall ruin the pride of Judah, the immense pride of Jerusalem.

10 This evil people, these people who refuse to listen to my words, who follow their own stubborn inclinations and run after other gods, serving and worshipping them -- this people will become like this waistcloth, no good for anything.

11 For just as a waistcloth clings to a man's waist, so I made the whole House of Israel and the whole House of Judah cling to me, Yahweh declares, to be my people, my glory, my honour and my pride. But they have not listened."

Responsorial Psalm, Deuteronomy 32:18-19, 20, 21

18 (You forget the Rock who fathered you, the God who made you, you no longer remember.)

19 Yahweh saw it and, in anger, he spurned his sons and daughters.



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20 'I shall hide my face from them,' he said, 'and see what will become of them. For they are a deceitful brood, children with no loyalty in them.'

21 They have roused me to jealousy with a non-god, they have exasperated me with their idols. In my turn I shall rouse them to jealousy with a non-people, I shall exasperate them with a stupid nation.

Gospel, Matthew 13:31-35

31 He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field.'

32 It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air can come and shelter in its branches.'

33 He told them another parable, 'The kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.'

34 In all this Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables; indeed, he would never speak to them except in parables.

35 This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet: I will speak to you in parables, unfold what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.



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Questions for Reflection for July 27, 2026

1. In our first reading, the Lord has His Prophet Jeremiah engage in a symbolic action, a prophetic action, to underscore the message he was to deliver to Israel. This kind of prophetic action is especially present in Jeremiah's ministry but was also associated with other Prophets sent to Israel and recorded in the Prophetic books of the Hebrew scriptures.

Linen was used for priestly garments in Israel, and the linen waistcloth was a form of undergarment worn very close to the body. The symbolic meaning, the closeness of the relationship which the Lord once had with His people Israel. But, as the linen waistcloth was spoiled by the moisture by the waters of the river where he hid it, so sin has ruined Israel's relationship with the Lord.

So, it is with us. Sin separates us from God. Sin separates us within, Body, Soul and Spirit. Sin separates us from one another. It is grace which heals us and bridges all of those separations. The Lord calls us to repent and turn away from sin. He wants us to cling to Him again. He wants an intimate communion with us. As Christians, we know that He has sent His Son to make that possible.

2. Our response consists of a few verses from the 32d chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy. The entire chapter is called the Song of Moses in the Biblical text. Moses recounts for Israel that the Lord is faithful, but they have been unfaithful. He was a rock, a solid and reliable source of strength. But they turned away and succumbed to idolatry. They forgot the Rock that begot them and have suffered the consequences.

This powerful chapter of the Book has the last messages of God's Servant Moses. Its purpose, as with all of his words and deeds, was to call Israel back to the Lord. That was ultimately the purpose of all the Law and the Prophets. But the power of sin and death could not be defeated without a Savior. So, the Father sent such a Savior, His beloved Son, Jesus the Christ.

3. In the Gospel passage for today's Mass, taken from Matthew Chapter 13, Jesus continues to use parables to try to convey to the people the message and mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven. The first one is the mustard seed and the second is leaven or yeast in a loaf of bread. When I was a young layman, I was involved in what would become the Steubenville miracle. I followed Fr Michael Scanlan, TOR, to the College of Steubenville in Steubenville Ohio before it became the gem in the crown of renewed Catholic Collegiate life now called the Franciscan University of Steubenville. I transferred to the College when it was morally bankrupt and on the verge of fiscal bankruptcy.

I became the leader of one of the first student faith households on campus, named after the Heart of Jesus. The households became a vital part of the vision the Holy Spirit gave to Fr Mike, a plan for renewing the campus by fostering a dynamic Christian Way of Life.



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I also served as a leader in the lay community which formed around this wonderful Franciscan friar as he responded to the Lord's call to him to rebuild the Church. He embraced a Catholic College, falling down in ruins because it had lost its soul, and with living faith helped to forge it into something new.

During those years I spoke about having mustard seed faith. I used to try to emphasize the point of the parable by bringing a box of mustard seeds along with me. I would hold one up while I encouraged the listeners to respond to the words of Jesus in their own lives and watch how the power of the Kingdom of God broke forth.

At the end of my talks on mustard seed faith, people would regularly come up to me because they could not see the seed which I had held up. I would place a mustard seed in their hand. They could barely see it then as well. After all, it is but a spec. That was the point. That is still the point. Jesus is asking for our response to His invitation. The power comes from Him. It is amazing what the Lord does when we simply offer the little, we have!

The late Pope Saint John XXIII wrote, "Every believer, in this, our world, must be a spark of light, a center of love, a vivifying ferment in the dough: He will be so to the degree that, in his innermost being, he lives in communion with God. In fact, there can be no peace among men if there is no peace in each one of them."

The Gospel asks each one of us to live a New Way of Life. We can become light and leaven, salt and seed for a world in need of God's grace. We are to be a spark of light, a center of love, a vivifying ferment in the dough. We are mustard seeds in a world waiting to be reborn - in and through Jesus Christ.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 28, 2026



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Daily Reading for Tuesday, July 28th, 2026

Reading 1, Jeremiah 14:17-22

17 'So say this word to them: May my eyes shed tears night and day, unceasingly, since the daughter of my people has sustained a fearsome wound, a crippling injury.

18 If I go into the countryside, there lie those killed by the sword; if I go into the city, I see people tortured with hunger; even prophets and priests roam the country at their wits' end.'

19 Have you rejected Judah altogether? Does your very soul revolt at Zion? Why have you struck us down without hope of cure? We were hoping for peace -- no good came of it! For the moment of cure -- nothing but terror!

20 Yahweh, we acknowledge our wickedness and our ancestors' guilt: we have indeed sinned against you.

21 For your name's sake do not reject us, do not dishonour the throne of your glory. Remember us; do not break your covenant with us.

22 Can any of the nations' Futile Ones make it rain? Can the heavens of their own accord give showers? Are you not the one, Yahweh our God? In you is our hope, since you make all these things.

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 79:8, 9, 11, 13

8 Do not count against us the guilt of former generations, in your tenderness come quickly to meet us, for we are utterly weakened;

9 help us, God our Saviour, for the glory of your name; Yahweh, wipe away our sins, rescue us for the sake of your name.

11 May the groans of the captive reach you, by your great strength save those who are condemned to death!

13 And we, your people, the flock that you pasture, will thank you for ever, will recite your praises from age to age.



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Gospel, Matthew 13:35-43

35 This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet: I will speak to you in parables, unfold what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.

36 Then, leaving the crowds, he went to the house; and his disciples came to him and said, 'Explain to us the parable about the darnel in the field.'

37 He said in reply, 'The sower of the good seed is the Son of man.

38 The field is the world; the good seed is the subjects of the kingdom; the darnel, the subjects of the Evil One;

39 the enemy who sowed it, the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels.

40 Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time.

41 The Son of man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of falling and all who do evil,

42 and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

43 Then the upright will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Anyone who has ears should listen!



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Questions for Reflection for July 28, 2026

1. In our first reading we heard a portion of the 14th Chapter of the Prophet Jeremiah proclaimed. It is important to listen to this reading in its fuller context. Judah has turned from the Lord and is experiencing the consequences of their wrong choices. That is what sin is, a rejection of God, a misuse of freedom, making the wrong choices. One of the consequences is a great drought. But, even in the midst of such travail, the people do not turn and repent, they listen to false prophets who tell them they will not be consumed by all of this but be "assured peace".

The Lord sends the Prophet Jeremiah to denounce the false prophets. It is Jeremiah's words following this denunciation from which that this portion, our first reading at Holy Mass, is taken.

The line before our first verse is the Lord saying to Jeremiah " You shall say to them this wording" for in a response from them: And, in the last half of the reading the Prophet tells the people what the Lord is looking for in a response from them: "Yahweh, we acknowledge our wickedness and our ancestors' guilt: we have indeed sinned against you. For your name's sake do not reject us, do not dishonor the throne of your glory. Remember us; do not break your covenant with us. Can any of the nations' Futile Ones make it rain? Can the heavens of their own accord give showers? Are you not the one, Yahweh our God? In you is our hope since you make all these things."

There are still false prophets in the midst of Gods people, in our own day. Some who would tell us that the time of struggle which the Church - and the Nations - are undergoing is not as a result of a rejection of God and His Law and Loving plan. Some who would encourage us to seek a kind of separate peace and turn away from the true God to new forms of idolatry. We must not listen to them. Then, as now, we must repent and beg the Lords Mercy and intervention.

2. The words of David in our Responsorial Psalm, taken from Psalm 79 continue to teach us how to repent and find our way back: "Do not count against us the guilt of former generations, in your tenderness come quickly to meet us, for we are utterly weakened; help us, God our Savior, for the glory of your name; Yahweh, wipe away our sins, rescue us for the sake of your name. May the groans of the captive reach you, by your great strength save those who are condemned to death! And we, your people, the flock that you pasture, will thank you for ever, will recite your praises from age to age."

We need to live our lives for the Lord, quick to repent when we sin, and always ready to praise.

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3. In the Gospel passage for today's Mass, taken from the 13th chapter of St Matthew, Jesus has dismissed the crowd and is explaining the parable of the weeds in the field and the seed. We are his contemporary disciples. The images of seed which is sown in a field speaks to every one of us and the way we live our daily lives. St. Jose Maria Escriva reflected on this fact in a profound homily which he concluded with this hopeful insight:

"May Our Lord be able to use us so that, placed as we are at all the cross-roads of the world - and at the same time placed in God - we become salt, leaven and light. Yes, you are to be in God, to enlighten, to give flavor, to produce growth and new life. But don't forget that we are not the source of this light: we only reflect it." (St. Jose Maria Escriva, Friends of God, 250) We are both the soil and the seed in these agrarian parables.

The Living Word has been sown within us, so we must cultivate the ground of our hearts in order to be transformed by grace and more fully reflect the Image and Likeness of God. We are called to grow in holiness and reflect the risen life of Jesus Christ to a world waiting to be born again. Then we are the seed, placed in His Holy, blood-stained Hands, being spread into the world which He still loves so much that He sends His Son, through the Church, the Body of Christ, of which we are members. (John 3:16, 1 Cor. 12:27)

The world which was created through the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word of the Father, is now being re-created in and through the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. We are living seeds of His Kingdom being spread in the garden of the world.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 29, 2026



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Daily Reading for Wednesday, July 29th, 2026

Reading 1, Jeremiah 15:10, 16-21

10 A disaster for me, mother, that you bore me to be a man of strife and dissension for the whole country. I neither lend nor borrow, yet all of them curse me.

16 When your words came, I devoured them: your word was my delight and the joy of my heart; for I was called by your Name, Yahweh, God Sabaoth.

17 I never sat in the company of scoffers amusing myself; with your hands on me I held myself aloof, since you had filled me with indignation.

18 Why is my suffering continual, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Truly, for me you are a deceptive stream with uncertain waters!

19 To which Yahweh replied, 'If you repent, I shall restore you to plead before me. If you distinguish between the precious and the base, you shall be as my own mouth. They will come back to you, but you must not go back to them.

20 As far as these people are concerned, I shall make you a fortified wall of bronze. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, because I am with you to save you and rescue you, Yahweh declares.

21 I shall rescue you from the clutches of the wicked and redeem you from the grasp of the violent.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 59:2-3, 4, 10-11, 17, 18

2 rescue me from evil-doers, from men of violence save me.

3 Look at them, lurking to ambush me, violent men are attacking me, for no fault, no sin of mine, Yahweh,

4 for no guilt, they come running to take up position. Wake up, stand by me and keep watch,

10 the God who loves me faithfully is coming to meet me, God will let me feast my eyes on those who lie in wait for me.

11 Do not annihilate them, or my people may forget; shake them in your power, bring them low, Lord, our shield.



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17 My strength, I will make music for you, for my stronghold is God, the God who loves me faithfully.

Gospel, John 11:19-27

19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house.

21 Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died,

22 but even now I know that God will grant whatever you ask of him.'

23 Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

24 Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.'

25 Jesus said: I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live,

26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?

27 'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'



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Questions for Reflection for July 29, 2026

1. In our first reading we are again given the opportunity to hear from the great Hebrew Prophet Jeremiah. He was a Prophet called to correct Judah, on behalf of the Lord, during the Babylonian exile - to call the Lord's people turn away from idolatry and back to the true God.

To help them understand that their exile was a consequence of their sin and an invitation to repentance. Jeremiah was also a messianic prophet called to proclaim the coming of a New Covenant. In today's selections from Chapter 15, Jeremiah is speaking to the Lord, and, in a sense, complaining about his calling. His was not an easy message to deliver. Nor was it often well received.

The Lord listens but then responds. He says "If you repent, I shall restore you to plead before me. If you distinguish between the precious and the base, you shall be as my own mouth. They will come back to you, but you must not go back to them. As far as these people are concerned, I shall make you a fortified wall of bronze. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, because I am with you to save you and rescue you," Yahweh declares. "I shall rescue you from the clutches of the wicked and redeem you from the grasp of the violent."

Jeremiah's honest relationship with the Lord, as evident in this prayer, is a model for each one of us. The Lord knows our hearts. We need to be honest with Him in prayer. But the response from the Lord to Jeremiah is also instructive. We need to learn to listen to the Lord. He speaks as well. And, if we learn to listen, we have begun to really understand prayer as a conversation with God.

2. David the Psalmist also teaches us this lesson about prayer. He was intensely honest in his prayer. And he learned to listen. Today's Psalm is an example. He cries out to the Lord "rescue me from evildoers, from men of violence save me. Look at them, lurking to ambush me, violent men are attacking me, for no fault, no sin of mine, Yahweh, for no guilt, they come running to take up position. Wake up, stand by me and keep watch" And the Lord responds. Do we have conversations with the Lord? We can. We should. he waits for such a dialogue.
3. In the Liturgical calendar, today is the Memorial of St Martha. Our Gospel for today's Holy Mass records the conversation between Martha and Jesus, right before Jesus raised her brother Lazarus from the dead. Too often, Martha's activism is set in opposition to her sister Mary's contemplation. There is a need for both. We are called to both. This dialogue between Martha and Jesus teaches us much about intercession.

"Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said: I am the resurrection.



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Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? 'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Do we really believe that Jesus is the Christ? Do we believe that we will be raised by Him on the last day? We confess that every time we recite the Creed at Holy Mass.
and Paul. We need to ask for their prayers as well. St. Peter and St. Paul pray for us!



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 30, 2026



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Daily Reading for Thursday, July 30th, 2026

Reading 1, Jeremiah 18:1-6

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh as follows,

2 'Get up and make your way down to the potter's house, and there I shall tell you what I have to say.'

3 So I went down to the potter's house; and there he was, working at the wheel.

4 But the vessel he was making came out wrong, as may happen with clay when a potter is at work. So he began again and shaped it into another vessel, as he thought fit.

5 Then the word of Yahweh came to me as follows,

6 'House of Israel, can I not do to you what this potter does? Yahweh demands. Yes, like clay in the potter's hand, so you are in mine, House of Israel.'

Responsorial Psalm, Psalms 146:1-2, 2-4, 5-6

1 Alleluia! Praise Yahweh, my soul!

2 I will praise Yahweh all my life, I will make music to my God as long as I live.

3 Do not put your trust in princes, in any child of Adam, who has no power to save.

4 When his spirit goes forth he returns to the earth, on that very day all his plans come to nothing.

5 How blessed is he who has Jacob's God to help him, his hope is in Yahweh his God,

6 who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them. He keeps faith for ever,

Gospel, Matthew 13:47-53

47 'Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet that is cast in the sea and brings in a haul of all kinds of fish.

48 When it is full, the fishermen bring it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in baskets and throw away those that are no use.



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49 This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the upright,

50 to throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

51 'Have you understood all these?' They said, 'Yes.'

52 And he said to them, 'Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom new things as well as old.'

53 When Jesus had finished these parables he left the district;



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Questions for Reflection for July 30, 2026

1. In our first reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah the Lord uses a beautiful metaphor in speaking to the Prophet about Israel, His chosen people. That of the potter and the clay. The Lord says "House of Israel, can I not do to you what this potter does? Yahweh demands. Yes, like clay in the potter's hand, so you are in mine, House of Israel."

Yet, we know, Israel resisted and went off in her idolatrous ways. When we hear these powerful words, we should ask ourselves, "Are we allowing ourselves, like clay, to be fashioned by the hands of the Lord?" The great second century Bishop of Lyons, Irenaeus, spoke of the Son and the Holy Spirit as the hands of the father. That image is powerful. The Lord wants to reshape us, into His Image and likeness. Are we open to Him doing that? Are we clay in the hands of the Divine Potter?

2. David the Psalmist in the Responsorial Psalm for today's Mass reminds us "Do not put your trust in princes, in any child of Adam, who has no power to save.". Rather, we should place all of our trust in the Lord. That is the key to being a Christian. The Lord has revealed Himself to us, in His fullness, in Jesus Christ.

Have we placed our complete trust in Jesus Christ? The Apostle Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians writes "For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." I invite everyone hearing my voice today, choose to place yourself in the hands of the Lord.

3. In the Gospel of today's Holy Mass, Jesus uses the image of a dragnet for the explaining the kingdom. A dragnet is weighted. It is pulled along the floor of the water to catch all kinds of fish. So, it is with the Gospel Message. It goes out into the whole world. Its purpose is to catch men and women and haul them into the Church where they can be cleaned and transformed by grace.

That is, if they respond to the working of grace and choose to freely give themselves over to the Lord. Remember, Jesus said to his followers "I will make you fishers of men". We are His followers in this day and age. Do we understand that our mission is share the Gospel, to lower the dragnet? It is. The Church exists to evangelize, and we are members of that Church.



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Daily Reading and Questions for Reflection

July 31, 2026



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14 Rescue me from the mire before I sink in; so I shall be saved from those who hate me, from the watery depths.

Gospel, Matthew 13:54-58

54 and, coming to his home town, he taught the people in their synagogue in such a way that they were astonished and said, 'Where did the man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

55 This is the carpenter's son, surely? Is not his mother the woman called Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Jude?

56 His sisters, too, are they not all here with us? So where did the man get it all?'

57 And they would not accept him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is despised only in his own country and in his own house,'

58 and he did not work many miracles there because of their lack of faith.



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Questions for Reflection for July 31, 2026

1. In our first reading, the Lord gives another difficult message to the Prophet Jeremiah to deliver to cities of Judah. It is clear, once again, the Lord wants His people to repent, to turn back to Him, because He loves them. Through Jeremiah the Lord warns them of the consequences of their failure to hear His call and over and over invites them to respond. Sadly, the priests and the false prophets who heard Jeremiah speak not only did not listen to the warning, they seized him and threatened him with death.

Not only is this account an historic account, which it is, but it has a message which we need to hear. The Lord has spoken to us. He sent Jesus Christ, His only Son, through whom He revealed His plan for us. Are we responding to what Jesus taught? Do we know what He taught? Do we read the Bible? Do we understand the Catholic faith into which we were Baptized? Now is the time. The saints give us examples of men and women, just like us, who heard the Lord and responded.

2. David invites us to sing with him in this responsorial Psalm. Well aware of his own weaknesses he asks the Lord to help him be a true example of the faith he professes. "Those who hope in you must not be made fools of, Yahweh Sabaoth, because of me! Those who seek you must not be disgraced, God of Israel, because of me!" Let us join with him and ask the Lord to help us become Saints.
3. Our Gospel texts at Mass all week have been taken from Matthew's presentation of the parables of the Kingdom. Jesus used images which easily communicated to those who heard Him preach. In an agrarian society, a field is the source of income and held great value. So too did pearls. To his hearers, he immediately captured their attention. The kingdom of which he speaks is so valuable that the person or the merchant will enthusiastically pursue it.

The kingdom of God is STILL that valuable and we are all invited to pursue it, giving everything up to follow Jesus Christ. Another translation for the word rendered kingdom in English is Reign. We are all invited to let the King, Jesus Christ, reign in the real stuff of our daily lives. This will bring the kingdom into more of a lived experience. At the heart of the Kingdom is the only eternal King and Lord, Jesus Christ. It is when we enter into an intimate communion with Him that we begin to experience what it really means to begin living in the kingdom. The Saints put legs on this reality of living faith for each one of us. They demonstrate in their lives what can - and will - happen in our own, if we but choose to respond to the invitations of grace which are given to us daily.

The people who heard the powerful teaching of Jesus in the Gospel for today heard the very wisdom from heaven. But they refused to listen to Him because of his family "Where did the man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers? This is the carpenter's son, surely?" As a result, "he did not work many miracles there because of their lack of faith." Do we listen to Jesus?



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