

Sunday Readings

24th August 2025

Collect

O God, who cause the minds of the faithful to unite in a single purpose,
grant your people to love what you command
and to desire what you promise,
that, amid the uncertainties of this world,
our hearts may be fixed on that place
where true gladness is found.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 36:18-21

Thus says the LORD: 'For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem,' says the LORD, 'just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites,' says the LORD.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 116. R/. Mk 16:15

R/. Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News.

O praise the Lord, all you nations,
acclaim him all you peoples! **R/.**

Strong is his love for us;
he is faithful for ever. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews 12:5-7. 11-13

Brothers and Sisters: Have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? 'My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one 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? For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the

peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel Acclamation

John 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the way, and the truth, and the life, says the Lord.

No one comes to the Father except through me. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Luke 13:22-30

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke. *Glory to you, O Lord.*

At that time: Jesus went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem. And someone said to him, 'Lord, will those who are saved be few?' And he said to them, 'Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, "Lord, open to us", then he will answer you, "I do not know where you come from." Then you will begin to say, "We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets." But he will say, "I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!" In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.'

The Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer over the Offerings

O Lord, who gained for yourself a people by adoption through the one sacrifice offered once for all, bestow graciously on us, we pray, the gifts of unity and peace in your Church. Through Christ our Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Complete within us, O Lord, we pray, the healing work of your mercy and graciously perfect and sustain us, so that in all things we may please you. Through Christ our Lord.

The Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year C

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

Tuesday 26 August 2025

Blessed Dominic Barberi

Jesus is steadily making his way to Jerusalem passing through many towns and villages. He is approached by a man who wants to know if only a few will be saved. One has the feeling that he expects the answer to be 'Yes' and that he regards himself as being among the chosen ones.

Jesus does not answer the question directly but he implies that those who are saved are not necessarily those who regard themselves as God's chosen ones but rather those who walk a certain path in life. That path, of course, is precisely what he is proposing through his own life and teaching. It is a narrow door, he says, which many will not be able to enter.

When the Master comes at the end to close that door for the last time, some will stand outside knocking and begging for the door to be opened. They will hear very frightening words, "I do not know where you come from." They will counter by saying, "We ate and drank in your company. You taught in our streets." But he still says he does not know them and tells them to go away.

It is clearly not enough to be just in Christ's company or to have heard his teaching, for example, being a baptised Christian or even routinely fulfilling a few religious obligations like being physically present at Sunday Mass but not really part of what is going on. To go in the "narrow door" is to be actively committed to living the Gospel in one's daily life.

Jesus' next words are directed to some of the Jews but to Christians also. They will see the great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets enter the kingdom, not because of their status but because of their commitment to serving God. On the other hand, many of Jesus' hearers will be rejected because they relied only on their ethnic and religious origins. But that is not enough. In the meantime, they will see people, Gentile outsiders from the four corners of the earth, people they rejected and despised, going ahead of them into the Kingdom, again because these people heard the call of God and entered by the narrow door that leads to life.

The gospel is addressed directly to each one of us. It is vital that we do not think that, simply on the basis of our membership of our Church, we are somehow on an inside track. Each day of our lives we have to walk through that narrow door, that door of faith and trust and love for Jesus and our brothers and sisters. Only then will we find ourselves joining the patriarchs, the prophets and all the saints in that life of unending happiness and union with our God for which we were made.



Dominic Barberi was born near Viterbo, Italy, in 1792 and joined the Passionist Order, urged on by an inner assurance that God called him to work as a missionary in England. He was ordained a priest in 1818 and worked in

Italy and Belgium before coming to England in 1841. His first foundation was at Aston Hall in Staffordshire; he established four Passionist houses in all, and received many Anglicans into full communion, the most famous being the Venerable John Henry Newman, who was received at Littlemore near Oxford on 9 October 1845. Blessed Dominic was noted for the personal warmth of his approach to non-Catholics and for his zeal in preaching; he drew crowds in spite of his strong Italian accent. He favoured a higher profile for the small Catholic body in England; he went around in his Passionist habit and, while at Aston Hall in 1844, organised a Corpus Christi procession through the streets of the neighbourhood, which is believed to have been the first public procession of its kind in England in modern times. Blessed Dominic died at Reading on 27 August 1849 and was beatified by Pope Paul VI in 1963.

Prayer of the Week

**A Prayer to the Holy Spirit
St Augustine of Hippo**

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy.

Amen.