

Sunday Message

TWELFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 21 June 2026 • Psalter Week 4

DO NOT BE AFRAID

MATTHEW 10:26-33



In this passage, Jesus prepares his disciples for the challenges they will face as they carry out his mission. He warns them not to fear those who oppose them, saying, "Do not be afraid of them." The reassurance is grounded in God's providence: nothing is hidden from the Father, not even the smallest detail of our lives.

Jesus contrasts the apparent power of human threats with the deeper reality of God's care. If God values even the sparrows, then the disciples – and all who follow Christ – are infinitely more precious. The theme of the passage is trust: discipleship involves reliance on God rather than fear of others.

The passage calls the disciples to fear God above all, highlighting the difference between earthly threats and ultimate spiritual reality. Even in the face of persecution, followers are invited to remember God's knowledge, care, and protection.

Matthew emphasises that discipleship is both a personal trust in God and a public witness to Christ, even under pressure or threat. In essence, faith requires courage, honesty, and confidence in God's enduring care. ■

REFLECT

Jesus speaks to his disciples with both honesty and encouragement. He knows that following him will not always be easy. There will be opposition, misunderstanding, and fear. Yet he says, "Do not be afraid of them." Faith is not a promise of comfort without challenge, but a call to trust in God's care.

The imagery is striking: if God notices even the sparrows, how much more does he value each of us? This reminds us that fear and anxiety often exaggerate our sense of danger. God sees, knows, and loves us fully, even in moments when we feel exposed or vulnerable.

Following Christ requires courage – courage to speak our faith, to act with integrity, and to stand for what is right, even when it is unpopular or difficult. To "acknowledge Christ before others" is not about pride, but about honesty and trust, letting our lives reflect the One we follow.

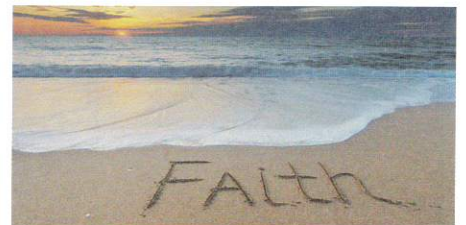
This Gospel encourages us to live without fear, grounded in God's care. Each small act of faith, each quiet confession of trust, is an expression of our value in God's eyes and a witness to others that courage is possible when God is at the centre of our lives. ■

SAY

Trust God, speak your faith, do not be afraid.

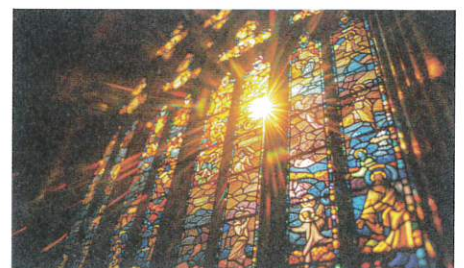
DO

This week we might acknowledge our faith in a gentle way – in conversation, a message, or an act of kindness – without fear of what others think.



LEARN

The Church teaches that discipleship calls us to live courageously in faith, trusting God's care and openly acknowledging Christ in our words and actions. (CCC 1816)



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*The Lord is the strength of his people,
a saving refuge for the one he has anointed.
Save your people, Lord, and bless your heritage,
and govern them for ever.*

COLLECT

Grant, O Lord,
that we may always revere and love your holy name,
for you never deprive of your guidance
those you set firm on the foundation of your love.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Jeremiah 20:10-13

A reading from the Prophet Jeremiah.
Jeremiah said:
I hear many whispering.
Terror is on every side!
'Denounce him! Let us denounce him!'
say all my close friends,
watching for my fall.
'Perhaps he will be deceived;
then we can overcome him
and take our revenge on him.'
But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble;
they will not overcome me.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonour
will never be forgotten.
O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous,
who sees the heart and the mind,
let me see your vengeance upon them,
for to you have I committed my cause.
Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hand of evildoers.
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 69(68):8-10. 14. 17. 33-35. R. 14c

R: In your great mercy, answer me, O LORD.

1. It is for you that I suffer taunts,
that shame has covered my face.
To my own kin I have become an outcast,
a stranger to the children of my mother.
Zeal for your house consumes me,
and taunts against you fall on me. **R.**
2. But I pray to you, O LORD,
at an acceptable time.
In your great mercy, answer me, O God,
with your faithful salvation.
LORD, answer, for your mercy is kind;
in your great compassion, turn towards me. **R.**
3. The poor when they see it will be glad,
and God-seeking hearts will revive;
for the LORD attends to the needy,
and does not spurn his own in their chains.
Let the heavens and the earth give him praise,
the seas and everything that moves in them. **R.**

SECOND READING Romans 5:12-15

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters: Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned – for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL John 15:26b. 27a

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

The Spirit of truth will bear witness about me, says the Lord,
and you also will bear witness.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 10:26-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Jesus instructed his apostles: 'Have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation and praise
and grant that, cleansed by its action,
we may make offering of a heart pleasing to you.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*The eyes of all look to you, Lord,
and you give them their food in due season.*

Or

*I am the Good Shepherd,
and I lay down my life for my sheep, says the Lord.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed and nourished
by the Sacred Body and Precious Blood of your Son,
we ask of your mercy, O Lord,
that what we celebrate with constant devotion
may be our sure pledge of redemption.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.