

Sunday Message

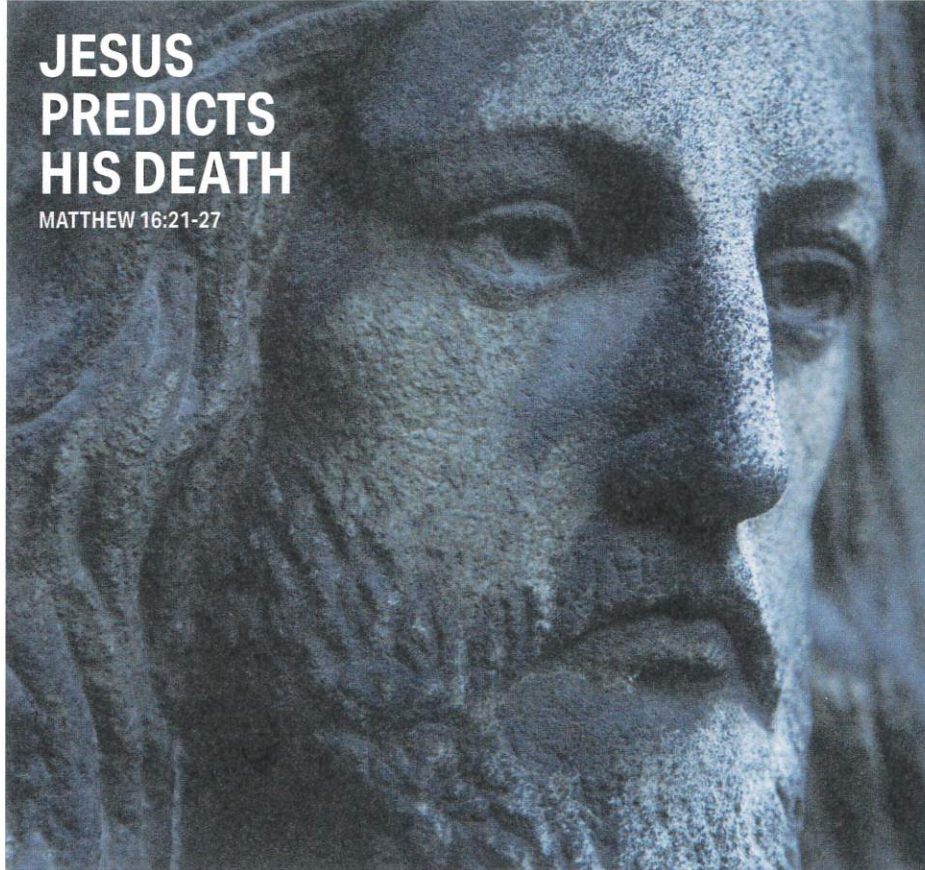
TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 30 August 2026 • Psalter Week 2

JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEATH

MATTHEW 16:21-27



In this passage, Jesus begins to reveal to his disciples the necessity of his suffering, death, and resurrection. This marks a turning point in Matthew's Gospel: the Messiah is not only the triumphant Son of God but also the suffering servant, fulfilling God's plan for salvation. Jesus speaks plainly about what lies ahead, preparing the disciples to understand the true nature of his mission.

Peter's reaction – rebuking Jesus – reveals a common human expectation: the desire for a triumphant Messiah who avoids suffering. Jesus' response, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me," underscores that even well-meaning intentions can conflict with God's will. Following Christ requires embracing God's plan, even when it challenges our understanding or comfort.

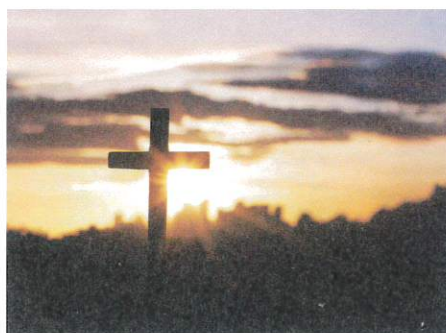
Jesus then calls the disciples to a radical form of discipleship: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross." True life is found in self-giving, and those who seek to save their lives apart from God risk losing them. Conversely, surrendering to God's will brings eternal life. Matthew emphasises that faith in Christ is inseparable from a willingness to follow him, even in sacrifice, and that ultimate reward is found in God's kingdom. ■

LEARN

True life and eternal reward come not from avoiding sacrifice, but from surrendering to God's will and living in love and service.

DO

This week, notice one area of your life where following Christ asks for patience, honesty, or self-giving, and take one concrete step to act faithfully, even if it's difficult.



REFLECT

Following Jesus means embracing sacrifice, challenges, and the reality of suffering. Peter struggles to accept this, reflecting how often we, too, hope for an easy path, avoiding difficulties in our lives. True discipleship is not about comfort, but about living with faith, courage, and trust in God's plan.

Jesus calls each of us to a radical way of life: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross." This does not mean seeking suffering for its own sake but rather being willing to put God and others first, even when it costs us. Small, everyday crosses – patience with difficult people, acts of honesty, generosity, or standing up for what is right – are part of this calling.

At the same time, Jesus promises hope: surrendering ourselves to God and following him brings life, not loss. The Gospel invites us to face challenges with faith, to choose love and integrity over ease, and to trust that God transforms our sacrifices into blessings for ourselves and others. True life is found in living with purpose, faith, and courage in the footsteps of Christ. ■

SAY

"My God, I offer you all my crosses with love, that they may unite me more closely to your Son."

St Francis de Sales

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry to you all the day long.
O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of mercy to all who call to you.*

COLLECT

God of might, giver of every good gift,
put into our hearts the love of your name,
so that, by deepening our sense of reverence,
you may nurture in us what is good
and, by your watchful care,
keep safe what you have nurtured.
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.

Amen.

FIRST READING Jeremiah 20:7-9

A reading from the Prophet Jeremiah.

O LORD, you have deceived me,
and I was deceived;
you are stronger than I,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughing-stock all the day;
everyone mocks me.
For whenever I speak, I cry out,
I shout, 'Violence and destruction!'
For the word of the LORD has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.
If I say, 'I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name',
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 63(62):2. 3-4. 5-6. 8-9. R. 2b

R: For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

1. O God, you are my God; at dawn I seek you;
for you my soul is thirsting.
For you my flesh is pining,
like a dry, weary land without water. *R.*
2. I have come before you in the sanctuary,
to behold your strength and your glory.
Your loving mercy is better than life;
my lips will speak your praise. *R.*
3. I will bless you all my life;
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet;
with joyful lips, my mouth shall praise you. *R.*
4. For you have been my strength;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings fast to you;
your right hand upholds me. *R.*

SECOND READING Romans 12:1-2

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

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to
present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to
God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this
world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by
testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and
acceptable and perfect.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL cf. Ephesians 1:17. 18

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
enlighten the eyes of our hearts,
so that we may know the hope to which he has called us.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 16:21-27

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go
to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief
priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.
And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Far
be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.' But he turned
and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to
me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on
the things of man.'

Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me,
let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For
whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life
for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains
the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give
in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with
his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each
person according to what he has done.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this sacred offering, O Lord,
confer on us always the blessing of salvation,
that what it celebrates in mystery
it may accomplish in power.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*How great is the goodness, Lord,
that you keep for those who fear you.*

Or

*Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of
righteousness,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Renewed by this bread from the heavenly table,
we beseech you, Lord,
that, being the food of charity,
it may confirm our hearts
and stir us to serve you in our neighbour.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.