

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass Readings & Spiritual Leadership Guide

July 5, 2026 · Lectionary 100

Sunday Mass Readings

FIRST READING

Zechariah 9:9–10

Thus says the LORD: Rejoice heartily, O daughter Zion, shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king shall come to you; a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass, on a colt, the foal of an ass. He shall banish the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; the warrior's bow shall be banished, and he shall proclaim peace to the nations. His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 145:1–2, 8–9, 10–11, 13–14

R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

I will extol you, O my God and King, and I will bless your name forever and ever. Every day will I bless you, and I will praise your name forever and ever.

R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. The LORD is good to all and compassionate toward all his works.

R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD, and let your faithful ones bless you. Let them discourse of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might.

R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

The LORD is faithful in all his words and holy in all his works. The LORD lifts up all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.

R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:9, 11–13

Brothers and sisters: You are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Consequently, brothers and sisters, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

GOSPEL

Matthew 11:25–30

Alleluia Verse (cf. Matthew 11:25): Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

At that time Jesus exclaimed: “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to little ones. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.”

“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.”

All readings sourced from USCCB, Lectionary 100¹.

¹United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Lectionary 100.

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/070526.cfm>

Reflection

Zechariah's vision of the coming king is startling in its reversals: a conqueror who rides not a warhorse but a donkey, a sovereign who arrives not in armor but in meekness. The warrior's bow is banished. Peace is proclaimed. This is not weakness dressed up as strength—it is a fundamentally different kind of power, one that does not need to intimidate because it has nothing to prove.

Jesus steps directly into this image in the Gospel. He does not summon the powerful; he invites the weary. He does not offer a program or a platform; he offers himself—"learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart." Leadership that flows from this posture does not crush; it carries. It does not demand; it draws. Paul completes the picture: this kind of life is possible only by the Spirit. Those who lead from the flesh—from ego, anxiety, and control—will exhaust themselves and others. Those who lead by the Spirit carry a yoke that is easy, because they are not carrying it alone.

Leadership Principles

PRINCIPLE 1

Power Surrendered Is Greater Than Power Seized

The king in Zechariah 9 arrives on a donkey, not a warhorse—and his dominion extends to the ends of the earth (Zech 9:9–10). The most transformative leaders are not those who accumulate power but those who willingly set it aside. Meekness is not timidity; it is strength under control, directed by love rather than ego.

PRINCIPLE 2

Lead by Invitation, Not Compulsion

"Come to me" (Mt 11:28) is not a command but a call. Jesus does not force, manipulate, or threaten. He describes what he offers—rest—and invites people to receive it. Those who rely on compulsion exhaust themselves and breed resentment. Those who create genuine invitation build cultures people choose to belong to.

PRINCIPLE 3

Humility Is the Curriculum for Leading your Family

"Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt 11:29). Jesus does not say "learn my methods" or "follow my strategy." He says learn from his character. Humility is not a personality type; it is a discipline, and it is the foundation of every other virtue for those who lead their family—listening, service, integrity, and trust.

PRINCIPLE 4

Lead by the Spirit, Not the Flesh

Paul draws a stark contrast: life according to the flesh leads to death; life by the Spirit leads to life (Rom 8:13). Men who are driven by ego, fear of failure, or the need for control will eventually burn out themselves and those around them. Those who are attuned to the Spirit—present, prayerful, and surrendered—show the way to those around them with a sustainability the flesh cannot manufacture.

PRINCIPLE 5

Revelation Comes to the Available, Not Just the Accomplished

Jesus praises the Father for revealing the mysteries of the Kingdom to “little ones” rather than “the wise and the learned” (Mt 11:25). Spiritual leaders stay perpetually learnable: curious, open, and willing to receive insight from unexpected people and places. Expertise can close a leader’s ears. Childlike openness keeps them open.

Discussion Questions

QUESTION 1

Zechariah describes a king who arrives in meekness, not military might, and whose dominion is universal (Zech 9:9–10). Where, in how you lead your family, are you relying on the “warhorse”—force, status, or control—when you could arrive on a “donkey”? What would meekness look like in that situation?

QUESTION 2

Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). Is there someone in your family, parish, or community that is carrying a burden they were not meant to carry alone? How might your interaction with them this week become a source of rest rather than additional weight?

QUESTION 3

Jesus reveals the mysteries of the Kingdom to “little ones”—not the experts (Mt 11:25). Think of a time when a person with less experience, status, or credentials showed you something true. What makes a leader genuinely teachable? What makes them stop being teachable?

QUESTION 4

Paul warns that living “according to the flesh” leads to death, while living by the Spirit leads to life (Rom 8:13). In your life, what does “flesh-driven” behavior look like—anxiety, people-pleasing, control, self-promotion? What would it look like this week to put that to death and live by the Spirit instead?

QUESTION 5

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me” (Mt 11:29). A yoke joins two animals so they share the load. What would it mean for you to be “yoked” to Christ in your day-to-day activities—to let his pace, his direction, and his character shape how you carry your responsibilities?

Closing Action

A concrete, personal response drawn from the readings this week:

This week, identify one place in your daily life where you are carrying more than you need to—a burden you have been holding through control, worry, or self-reliance. Bring it explicitly to Christ in prayer, naming it and releasing it. Then take one practical step toward leading from rest rather than strain: delegate something, simplify a process, say no to one obligation, or slow down long enough to listen before acting. Let the yoke be easy (Mt 11:28–30).

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves.” — Matthew 11:29

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the king who comes in meekness—not on a warhorse but on a donkey, not grasping power but surrendering it, not demanding service but offering rest. Teach us to lead the way you lead: with authority that does not intimidate, with strength that does not crush, and with a yoke so well-fitted that those who carry it alongside us are lifted rather than burdened.

Give us the humility to remain little ones before you—teachable, open, and dependent on your Spirit rather than our own understanding. Where we have been leading from the flesh—from fear, ambition, or exhaustion—renew us. Let your Spirit dwell in us so deeply that our leadership carries the fragrance of your gentleness and the weight of your peace.

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, we praise you that you have hidden these things from the wise and revealed them to little ones. Make us little. Make us learnable. Make us yours. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

“I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God.” — Psalm 145:1