

# SUNDAY *Plus*

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time **Divine Office Week II** Year A



We are afraid to listen to the reasoning of the heart because it embraces pure reason and commonsense rationality and leads them out beyond their own limits to the totally new and unexpected. Reason itself cautions prudence: stay as you are, keep to the beaten track, hold on, risk nothing; what you have may be all there is. It tells us we are secure, yet we are not content, and we have no peace. Our security is one of self-imposed imprisonment. Locked up in a cage, at least you know where you are. The irony is that isolated in this way, we do not know who we are, nor can we recognise the rich depths within us. And ignorance is the best greed-breeding ground for fear. How can we be content and at

peace when what is deepest in us, our true self, is denied the union it is yearning for with the rest of creation? There can be no union unless we go out towards others, and that means we have to pull down the barriers we have built around ourselves. The heart, not pure reason, whispers that love is the greatest power for good in the universe. Love opens up the mystery at the heart of everything. The heart knows too that love is vulnerable, it leaves itself open to ridicule and rejection, but it can never be conquered. The heart says: let go and risk everything. In the moment of surrender the self and the cosmos become one.

Eric Doyle OFM, *St Francis and the Song of Brotherhood*

Jesus, Lord, may I follow you with the courage I need to carry my cross and walk in love alongside you, especially when love demands effort and self-sacrifice. Help me to find my true life in you.  Amen.

## Force or persuasion?

The Wind and the Sun argued which was the stronger of the two. They agreed that whichever soonest made a traveller take off his cloak should be accounted the more powerful.

The Wind began and blew with all his might, a blast, cold and fierce, but the stronger he blew, the closer the traveller wrapped his cloak around him, and the tighter he grasped it with his hands.

Then broke out the Sun. With his welcome beams he dispersed the vapour and the cold; the traveller felt the genial warmth, and as the Sun shone brighter and brighter, he sat down, overcome with the heat, and cast his cloak on the ground.

Thus, the Sun was declared the conqueror, and it has ever been deemed that persuasion is better than force; and that the sunshine of a kind and gentle manner will sooner lay open a poor man's heart than all the threatening and force of blustering authority.

Aesop, *Fables*

May we always praise God for his goodness, cultivate unity with our loved ones, open our hearts to those who are far away and, in particular, to all those in need.

Pope Leo XIV



## Feast of the week Thursday 3 September

### St Gregory the Great (c. 540-604)

St Gregory the Great was a towering figure in Church history: pope, monk, theologian, and servant of poor people. Born into Roman nobility, he renounced wealth to embrace monastic life, transforming his family home into a monastery. As pope from 590, Gregory led with humility and vision, calling himself "servant of the servants of God". He reformed Church administration, cared for those who were sick and hungry during plague and famine, and sent missionaries to England, including St Augustine of Canterbury. His writings, especially *Pastoral Care* and *Dialogues*, shaped Christian spirituality for centuries. Gregory also influenced liturgical worship, with Gregorian chant bearing his name. His feast invites us to lead with compassion, serve with integrity, and seek holiness in daily life. St Gregory reminds us that true greatness lies not in power, but in love poured out for others.

## READINGS

Today:  
Jeremiah 20:7-9  
Romans 12:1-2  
Matthew 16:21-27

Monday:  
1 Corinthians 2:1-5  
Luke 4:16-30

Tuesday:  
1 Corinthians 2:10-16  
Luke 4:31-37

Wednesday:  
1 Corinthians 3:1-9  
Luke 4:38-44

Thursday:  
1 Corinthians 3:18-23  
Luke 5:1-11

Friday:  
1 Corinthians 4:1-5  
Luke 5:33-39

Saturday:  
1 Corinthians 4:6-15  
Luke 6:1-5

Next Sunday:  
Ezekiel 33:7-9  
Romans 13:8-10  
Matthew 18:15-20