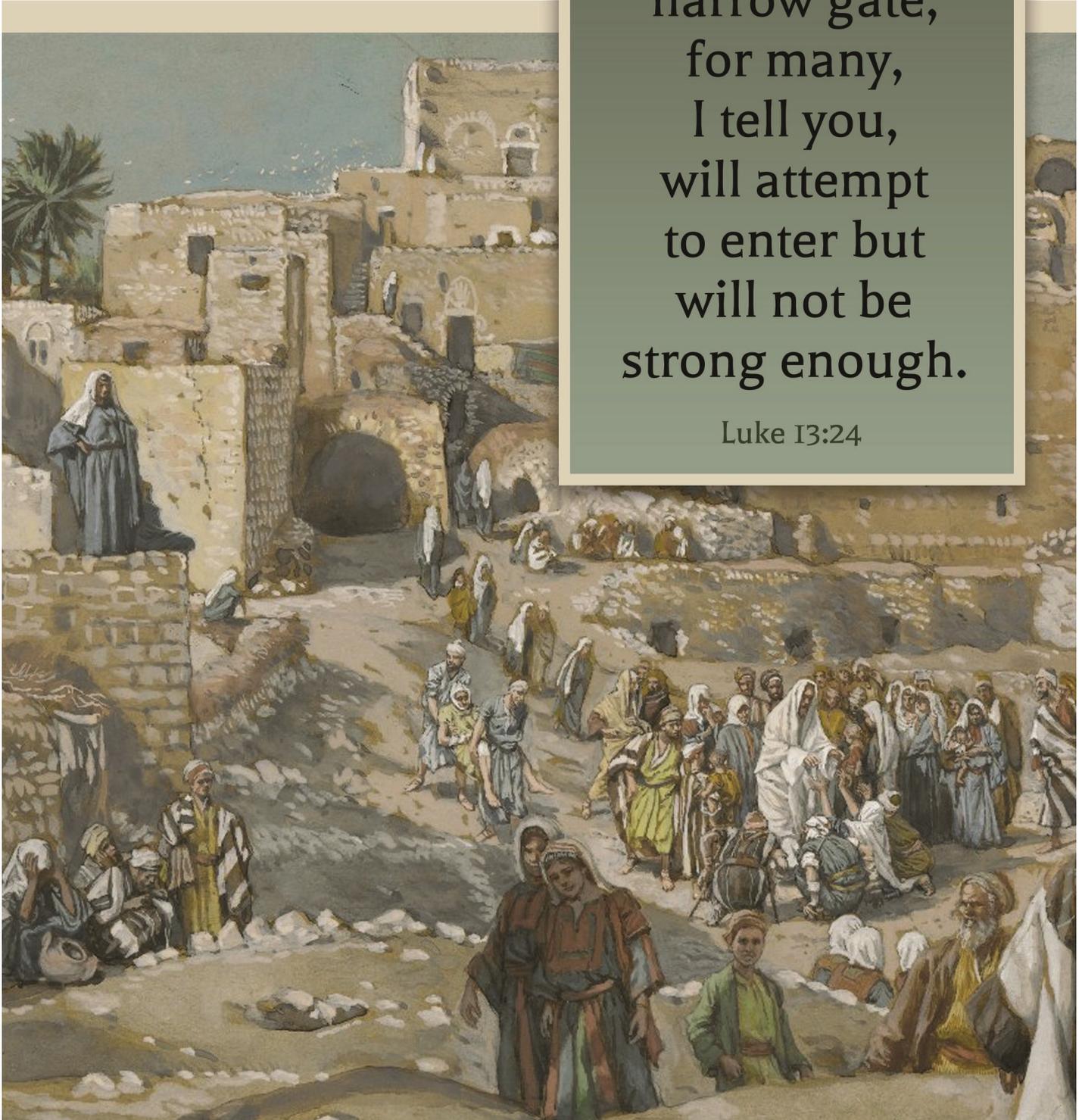


# TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Strive to enter  
through the  
narrow gate,  
for many,  
I tell you,  
will attempt  
to enter but  
will not be  
strong enough.

Luke 13:24



**AUGUST 21, 2022**

## God's People Gather

Our readings today remind us of the larger story of the Bible, of God's purposes and promises for the world. Because of humanity's rejection of God, as told in Genesis, human communities were first dispersed. Isaiah proclaims that one day God will gather these communities to be healed and reconciled with God. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus echoes Isaiah and teaches that all peoples in God's promised future "will recline at table in the kingdom of God." Notice that in Isaiah, the nations coming to God do not lose their ethnicity or unique identity. They bring their own distinct cultural gifts to God's table. Each people has its unique history with God, has received distinct blessings from God, and each is accountable to God. Today, we live in a global and multi-cultural Church. When God's diverse peoples gather in worship today, may we honor and celebrate each other's gifts and blessings.

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## Saints and Special Observances

<b>Sunday:</b>	Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
<b>Monday:</b>	The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
<b>Tuesday:</b>	St. Rose of Lima
<b>Wednesday:</b>	St. Bartholomew
<b>Thursday:</b>	St. Louis of France; St. Joseph Calasanz
<b>Saturday:</b>	St. Monica

## Readings for the Week

<b>Monday:</b>	2 Thes 1:1-5, 11-12; Ps 96:1-5; Mt 23:13-22
<b>Tuesday:</b>	2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17; Ps 96:10-13; Mt 23:23-26
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Rv 21:9b-14; Ps 145:10-13, 17-18; Jn 1:45-51
<b>Thursday:</b>	1 Cor 1:1-9; Ps 145:2-7; Mt 24:42-51
<b>Friday:</b>	1 Cor 1:17-25; Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11; Mt 25:1-13
<b>Saturday:</b>	1 Cor 1:26-31; Ps 33:12-13, 18-21; Mt 25:14-30
<b>Sunday:</b>	Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29; Ps 68:4-7, 10-11; Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a; Lk 14:1, 7-14



## Today's Readings

**First Reading** — Brothers and sisters of every race and language will be brought to Jerusalem (Isaiah 66:18-21).

**Psalm** — Go out to all the world and tell the Good News (Psalm 117).

**Second Reading** — Be strong and endure your trials as the "discipline" of a loving God, for it will result in the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13).

**Gospel** — People from east and west, north and south, recline at table in the kingdom of God (Luke 13:22-30). The English translation of the Psalm Responses from the Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

## Prayer Of The Week

**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, God, for ever and ever.**

## Reflection question:

**How can I know what God commands?**

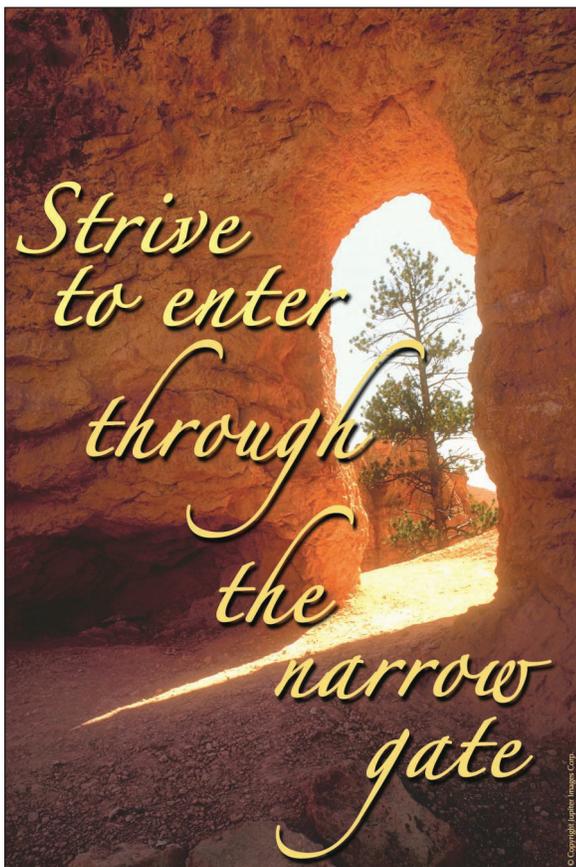
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## *Treasures From Our Tradition*

Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Christians share a love for the Byzantine liturgy because it is during the Eucharist that the Church is most true to its identity, expresses its integrity, and discovers its vocation. Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Christians celebrate essentially the identical liturgy, with only very slight variations. It is a fairly complex ritual weaving together three separate layers of prayers: a liturgy prayed in the sanctuary by priests, often hidden by a curtain or screen; a liturgy sung by the assembly and led by a deacon in front of a screen formed of painted icons; and a third layer of private prayer by the priest, who prays in support of the deacon and the faithful. It is an eyes-wide-open experience, gorgeous in visuals, and filled with the sound of God's people singing prayer. The energy of the worship centers on the presence of Christ, largely through an awareness of heaven touching earth when the Church gathers to celebrate. In the late twentieth century, Latin Rite Catholics were encouraged to embrace a style of worship that was "full, conscious, and active," a value that has never been lost in the East. The liturgy has great impact in its beauty, in its poetry and contemplation, and by the actions of bowing, signing with the cross, and chanting that are required of the assembly. Contact with the Eastern Church reveals some key values that have been obscured in our own Church and are slowly being recovered.

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## *Looking Good*

Don't you love it when the underdog wins? When the Cardinals beat the Yankees for the championship or the Blues beat the Redwings, or the Rams beat anyone? Even when I watch a game with no St. Louis teams playing, I still like to root for the underdog. That is what I like about today's Gospel: the last will be first and the first will be last.

Some say that Jesus was referring to the Jews, God's chosen people, whom Jesus called first to be his disciples. When they rejected him, the call went out to the Gentiles, who became followers. Or perhaps in Jesus' time, he was talking about the leaders of the Jews, the scribes and Pharisees. These refused to follow Jesus, while ordinary Jews who did not feel threatened by Jesus' teaching became disciples. In a way, you can understand why the leaders rejected Jesus. They made a nice living out of the offerings made by ordinary Jews. As long as they could decide who could enter the temple, they had a nice income flow. They were smart enough to include the poor, by asking them for smaller offerings. And who could argue with them? They worked for God. How dare Jesus say that they would be cast out, while people from the rest of the world would enter the Kingdom of God!

And how about us? Remember that the Gospel was not written for non-believers. Are we threatened by Jesus' message? Just as the scribes and Pharisees considered themselves important in God's eyes because of their office, do we consider ourselves "saved" because we call ourselves Christians? Do we respect all people, or just the ones we like? Are we generous to the poor, or just to our friends? Do we give good example to the people we work with? Do we follow our conscience or do we follow the crowd?

Entry into the Kingdom of God is not a fashion statement. We don't get there by looking good. We are invited by Jesus to be last on earth so we can be first in the Kingdom.

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## *Worthy Teachers*

All who undertake to teach must be endowed with deep love, the greatest patience, and, most of all, profound humility. The Lord will find them worthy to become fellow workers with him in the cause of truth.

—St. Joseph Calasanz



# CATHOLIC CORNER

## ABC

When children start school they begin to "learn their ABCs." This usually means the basics of reading and writing. But there are ABCs, as well as some other letters, that you can learn about your Catholic faith. Try to fill in the blanks with words that begin with the bold letters.

The **A** \_\_\_\_\_ were twelve men who lived and traveled with Jesus.

**B** \_\_\_\_\_ is the first sacrament we receive.

The feast of **C** \_\_\_\_\_ celebrates the birth of Jesus.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the city of **D** \_\_\_\_\_.

We celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead on **E** \_\_\_\_\_.

**F** \_\_\_\_\_ was a saint known for his love of animals.

The angel **G** \_\_\_\_\_ announced to Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus.

The **H** \_\_\_\_\_ **S** \_\_\_\_\_ is the third person of the Blessed Trinity.

**I** \_\_\_\_\_ was one of the prophets who spoke about the coming of the Messiah.

Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead in the city of **J** \_\_\_\_\_.

The Three **K** \_\_\_\_\_ were wise men from the East who brought gifts to Jesus.

Jesus shared a meal with his friends, the **L** \_\_\_\_\_ **S** \_\_\_\_\_, on the night before he died.

**M** \_\_\_\_\_ is the mother of Jesus.

Can you think of sentences to describe the rest of these words?

Nazareth	Original sin	Pope	Queen of Heaven	Rosary
Saint	Tabernacle	Upper room	Vatican City	
Wine	Yahweh	Zechariah		

Apostles—Baptism—Christmas—David—Easter—Francis—Gabriel—Holy Spirit—Isiah—Jerusalem—Kings—Last Supper—Mary



They shall come  
and see my glory.  
Isaiah 66 : 18



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AUGUST 21, 2022

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Luke 13:24

## COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

The term “fair-weather friend” might need a technological-era updating. Perhaps “short attention span friend” would work. In our world of multiple communication platforms, it somehow has become increasingly easy to lose track of friends. We shouldn’t be surprised when we reach out and they’ve moved on due to our indifference. The God who is love and whose covenant is one-hundred percent about relationship is depicted in the same way by Jesus today. Hey God, remember us? There was that one time we were really in trouble and you helped out; well, we’re in trouble again. But we may find that God has moved on since we turned out to be only foul-weather friends. The covenant relationship has two parties: God and us. If that covenant relationship falls apart, and we’re no longer “friended” by God, it’s not because God failed as a friend. Keeping up the friendship and relationship with God is equally our responsibility.

## FROM EAST TO WEST

With our modern understanding of the world and its various cultures and religions, it’s hard to grasp how shocking Isaiah’s words today would have been to those who first encountered them. After all, they were the people God called “Chosen.” It was easy for them to presume that after the sufferings of exile that God’s freeing redemption would be for them and them alone. Yet here is Isaiah saying that the saving hand of God will extend to all nations, even those of varying ways and languages. Perhaps most shocking to Isaiah’s initial audience would have been today’s final line: that God would take these outsiders and fugitives, elevating them to the priesthood, to include them in the descendants of one of Jacob’s sons, Levi. It’s not difficult to imagine that this sweeping vision of God’s mercy and love beyond the bounds of the Chosen People was met with resistance, much as similar messages are met with resistance today.

## FROM NORTH AND SOUTH

Jesus shows himself to be firmly in Israel’s prophetic tradition, a true son of Isaiah today, as he proclaims a similar message. Those who had been chosen as disciples could not presume that merely keeping physical proximity with Jesus or remaining in his company gave them any real claim to call themselves true disciples. As important as table fellowship is in Luke’s Gospel, even eating and drinking with Jesus does not guarantee an eventual seat at the table of God’s reign. Even being a “pureblood” (a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) doesn’t make your final destination a sure thing. How the world has placed you into its categories—first or last—just might get scrambled too. It is those who follow Jesus through the “narrow gate” of discipleship, truly abiding by his example who are sure to find themselves reclining at table in the kingdom.

## TODAY’S READINGS

Isaiah 66:18–21  
Psalm 117:1, 2  
Hebrews 12:5–7, 11–13  
Luke 13:22–30

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