

## 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary time – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Headings	Gospel (Luke 13:22-30)	First Reading (Isaiah 66:18-21)	Second Reading (Hebrews 12:5-7,11-13)
<b>Context</b>	In this passage Jesus uses the image of a narrow door to emphasise the importance of striving to enter God's kingdom. It highlights the need for a committed and focused approach to following Jesus. The narrow door represents Jesus himself, the only way to salvation.	This is a very important passage that essentially ends the Book of Isaiah. It is by far the most influential book of the prophets. The verse highlights God's intention to appoint gentile converts as priests and leaders of worship	God's discipline is not meant to be burdensome. Rather it is a sign of God's love, who acts as a father toward his children. Christians should not become discouraged in the face of hardships, but be invigorated by it, knowing that God permits it for the perfecting of their faith.
<b>Key verse</b>	<b>He said to them " Try your best to enter by the narrow door because I tell you , many will try to enter but will not succeed"</b>	<b>" I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory" "And of some of them I will make priests and Levites, says the Lord"</b>	<b>My Son, when the Lord corrects you; do not treat it lightly; but do not get discouraged when he reprimands you. For the Lord trains the ones that he loves, and punishes those he acknowledges as his sons. Suffering is part of your training"</b>
<b>Key themes/ messages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entering by the narrow door implies that salvation depends first on God's grace, then on our co-operation and obedience.</li> <li>• Jesus stresses the difficulties of entering God's glory while the door remains open.</li> <li>• The affirmations of sacred scripture and the teachings of the church are an urgent call to conversion.</li> <li>• The weeping and gnashing of teeth describes the suffering of those who have turned away from God and cannot enter the kingdom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lord will gather all nations to Jerusalem and reveal his glory to them.</li> <li>• The messengers will return home bringing the exiles of Israel back from the nations to which they were scattered.</li> <li>• God will send out messengers to declare his glory in distant lands.</li> <li>• God will choose priests and ministers of worship from among the gentiles.</li> <li>• This passage has a missionary tone which was not very common in the Old Testament.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is a wise and loving father who desires only to make his children better.</li> <li>• It's because he loves us so much that he allows difficulties to train us and raise us to spiritual adulthood.</li> <li>• According to the author the sons of God are being forged in the image of God the Son, who "learned obedience through what he suffered"</li> <li>• Using the image of an athlete he urges us to summon our energies to charge ahead toward the finish line.</li> </ul>
<b>Questions/ application to our lives</b>	<p>What does the image of the narrow door stand for? What kind of strength does it take to enter by this way? How can you gain that strength?</p> <p>Do we sometimes take it for granted that we can enter the kingdom by our own efforts alone?</p> <p>Do you ever fear that you will not be able to enter heaven? What encourages you if these thoughts arise?</p>	<p>Before his ascension Jesus asked his followers to make disciples of all nations. How successful has the church been in doing this through the centuries? Can you suggest new initiatives that would fulfill the call of Jesus? The Lord talks much of revealing his glory. Are there any ways in which you feel he may do so today?</p>	<p>Although he was a Son Jesus learned obedience through suffering (<b>Hebrews 5:8</b>). How much more do we, because of our imperfections, need to learn obedience? How can we learn obedience through the struggles of everyday life? Why do we need God's grace to enable us to be obedient? Can you think of a verse in scripture that expresses this truth? ( see Ephesians 2:8)</p>
<b>Further reading</b>	<i>Catechism 543-546, 853, 1036,1344, 1696, 1889, 2656</i>	<i>Catechism 360, 775-776</i>	<i>Catechism 1889, 2825-2827</i>