



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER 2025 – Last of Trinity

COLLECT

Blessed Lord,
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them
that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word,
we may embrace and for ever hold fast
the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 84. 1-7

- 1 How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! ♦
My soul has a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
- 2 The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young: ♦
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
- 3 Blessed are they who dwell in your house: ♦
they will always be praising you.
- 4 Blessed are those whose strength is in you, ♦
in whose heart are the highways to Zion,
- 5 Who going through the barren valley find there a spring, ♦
and the early rains will clothe it with blessing.
- 6 They will go from strength to strength ♦
and appear before God in Zion.
- 7 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; ♦
listen, O God of Jacob.

A reading from Paul's second letter to Timothy, chapter 4, verses 6-8 and 16-18.

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

At my first defence no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:

The second reading is from Luke, chapter 18, verses 9-14.

and then at the end:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

We do not live by bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke, chapter 18, verses 9-14.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'

A Reflection from Hannah...

This week (as a bit of a change!) I invite you to reflect on a depiction of our Gospel story- do use the picture as a focus as you ponder Jesus' words. Remember too, that the Tax Collector's words 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!' are a version of the *Jesus Prayer*- an ancient centring prayer, that is still used by the Orthodox church today. It's usual phrasing is: 'Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' Prayed anywhere and everywhere, until it becomes part of the very breath of the pray-er, these words call us home to the truth of who we are, and whom we depend on.

Next to the picture (from a twelfth century manuscript- the *Tetraevangelion*) , there are some thoughts from Ellen T Charry, taken from the Visual Commentary on Scripture (<https://thevcs.org>).



This Byzantine manuscript illumination does away with the narrative setting, props, and staging of Luke's story. We simply have two figures against a gold ground. The colourfully dressed pharisee lifts his gaze and extends his right arm towards a heavenly opening above him. His left arm is extended as if in invitation towards his companion. The tax collector is drably dressed, bent in half to suggest his humility, and without a head covering.

Contrary to the text, in which each man keeps to himself—perhaps even unaware that the other is in the building—here, the men face each other. The penitent's plaintive eyes look up to the uplifted face of the pharisee and he reaches toward the pharisee's

extended hand. Although their hands do not meet, the energy in the composition flows from left to right then upwards, from the bent penitential back of the tax collector through his outstretched hand to the other man's upwardly extending body and arm and finally to the opening above him.

Thus, unlike in Luke's text, the figures facing each other are shown in relationship. The pharisee beseeching heaven seems to be sending the penitent's prayers aloft as the priestly conduit of contrition.

Triumph and shame defy colourisation. The agonised penitent is not the triumphant Church that the Strasbourg sculptor carved for his cathedral. The artist seems to have turned Luke around.