



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 2 AUGUST 2026 – Trinity 9

COLLECT

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 145. 8-9, 15-22

- 8 The Lord is gracious and merciful, ♦
long-suffering and of great goodness.
- 9 The Lord is loving to everyone ♦
and his mercy is over all his creatures.
- 15 The Lord upholds all those who fall ♦
and lifts up all those who are bowed down.
- 16 The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, ♦
and you give them their food in due season.
- 17 You open wide your hand ♦
and fill all things living with plenty.
- 18 The Lord is righteous in all his ways ♦
and loving in all his works.
- 19 The Lord is near to those who call upon him, ♦
to all who call upon him faithfully.
- 20 He fulfils the desire of those who fear him; ♦
he hears their cry and saves them.

A reading from the letter to the Romans, chapter 9, verses 1-5.

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed for 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 Matthew, chapter 14, verses 13-21.

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.**

I am the light of the world, says the Lord. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew, Chapter 14, verses 13-21.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' They replied, 'We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.' And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

A Reflection from Hannah (sort of!)

This week we have a piece of art and commentary- showing how that famous miracle of the loaves and fishes has been interpreted in context through the ages. Below is an excerpt from the *Visual Commentary on Scripture*.



Bartolomé Estebán Murillo

The Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, 1671, Oil on canvas, 250 x 590 cm, Church of the Hospital de la Caridad, Seville; Album / Art Resource, NY

Despite appearances, this is not a straightforward depiction of either the Feeding of the Five Thousand or the Feeding of the Four Thousand. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's painting belongs to a complex iconographic programme commissioned by nobleman Don Miguel Mañara for the church of the Brotherhood of the Holy Charity in his hometown of Seville.

The city was still reeling after decades of suffering caused first by the bubonic plague and later by food shortages that resulted in riots. Mañara chose this passage as an illustration of one of the seven corporal works of mercy, 'To feed the hungry'.

Murillo's contribution to the series focused on the hope of salvation through individual good works. Painted in his characteristic warm, calm style, these seven scenes drawn from the Old and New Testaments provided the viewer with a hopeful guide to eternal bliss following the principles of the Counter-Reformation. All the paintings emphasize the importance of kindness and compassion.

In contrast with the undefined multitude that populates the background, the figures in the foreground of Murillo's painting are recognizable as contemporary Sevillian people. Murillo follows the Gospel of John, since he includes a young boy carrying a platter with two fishes as the centre of his composition (John 6:9). A mother holding a small child and an elderly woman watch the miracle unfold. These popular figures appear as witnesses who invite the intended viewers—seventeenth-century Sevillian churchgoers—to identify with the people profiting from Jesus's teachings.

The 'young lad' who chose to share his food embodies the generosity that Mañara intended to promote as an example for ordinary citizens.

By Mercedes Ceron