



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2026 – Trinity 19

COLLECT

O God, forasmuch as without you
we are not able to please you;
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
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 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; ♦
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures ♦
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul ♦
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; ♦
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me; ♦
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, ♦
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

A reading from the letter to the Philippians, chapter 4, verses 1-9.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

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 22, verses 1-14.

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 Matthew, chapter 22, verses 1-14.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

A Reflection from Peter

This Gospel passage conjures up something of a nightmare scene. Just imagine a family wedding. You send out the invitations – and the unthinkable happens: everyone refuses. You have no idea why. Some offer reasons, but they seem to you more like excuses. I guess the most likely reaction would be utter misery. This, the day that was supposed to be such a great celebration, looks like being a disaster. Should this unimaginable disaster happen to us I doubt that we should immediately rush out to find substitute guests. We'd either postpone the whole thing, or go ahead – but make it a small, quiet immediate family affair...

The parable actually has three parts. First, there is the event of the celebration itself. In the story this is the wedding of the king's son, but because Jesus tells us "the kingdom of heaven is like...." we understand that this refers to the new creation, the crowning moment of all God's loving, making and redeeming. Secondly, there is the business of having to find new guests to replace the original ones who refused. This is a wake-up call for us all. It is, once again, a reminder that God's ways are not our ways. Whenever we think we have understood what God is asking of us there is still every chance that we shall have missed something important. Just as Jesus suggests throughout the Gospels that the people of God's covenant were in danger of getting it all badly wrong, so today it is often the professional religious people who put too much emphasis on the wrong things and can end up leading people astray. We all need to be humble and ready to admit that we may be wrong. And the third – disturbing – part is when the wedding is under way and the king finds someone not wearing his wedding suit. When the servants went out to find replacement guests they were explicitly invited to a wedding – and should therefore have known how to dress. Of course no-one will be refused entry into the new creation because they shopped at Primark instead of M&S, but this reminds us that we need to be learning the ways of the kingdom **now** so that we shall be able to fit in when we get there! And the end of our first reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians puts it perfectly: "keep on doing the things you have heard and learned and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you."