

The Readings on This Day

****Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)*

Sunday, August 21–27

Lectionary 21



Our standard Sundays continue, the word in Matthew and Romans, the sacrament in bread and wine, as we join Peter to acclaim Jesus as Son of God.

[Isaiah 51:1-6](#)

The Isaiah poem is chosen because of the use of the image of the rock as the believing community. This poem suggests that the rock of Matthew 16 is also best seen as the community of the faithful, past and present, from which God will create a garden. Though the earth be destroyed, God's salvation is forever.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

In [Psalm 138](#), the troubles of the past are acknowledged, yet the community praises God, trusting in a future of God's steadfast love. The psalm offers many small connections to the readings of the day: with the ancient Israelites, we look to God for safety; for Christians, the temple is Christ, embodied now in his body; with Paul, we affirm God's blessing of even the lowly; and with Peter, we glorify the divine name of Christ.

[Romans 12:1-8](#)

This Sunday the second reading is well coordinated with the gospel. Paul's description of the body of Christ presents a different picture from Matthew's prescription for the church, yet both refer to the faith in Christ that is the grounding of the church's existence.

[Matthew 16:13-20](#)

Every Sunday is Easter, and Peter speaks for us all the resurrection faith: that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Roman Catholics and Protestants have quarreled over

the referent of “the rock”: yet for all Easter communities who hear this reading, the Rock is Christ, as well as the faith in that Christ and the believers who share that faith. Enlivened by that rock, we will conquer Hades, an archaic way to speak of the realm of death.