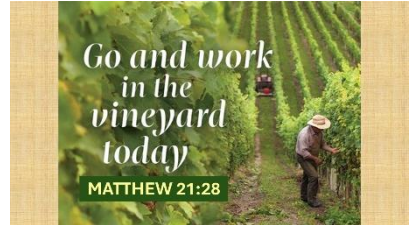


The Readings on This Day

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

Sunday, September 25–October 1

Lectionary 26



During these standard Sundays we continue to read through Matthew, now illumined by Philippians, and interpreted in light of holy communion.

[Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32](#)

This excerpt is assigned as the first reading to emphasize God’s desire for our repentance. The good news from Ezekiel is that God wants us to live. For Christians, the “new heart and new spirit” that God promises come through baptism into Christ.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

We respond to Ezekiel’s call to repentance by singing [Psalm 25:1-9](#). “My enemies” ties together the ancient Babylonians with our own adversaries of sin and death. Like the obedient son, we wish to follow the will of God: the psalm affirms that God will forgive us and lead us from death to life.

[Philippians 2:1-13](#)

This important excerpt, appointed also each year on the Sunday of the Passion, includes the early Christian affirmation of Jesus as Lord, in this context meaning Divine Authority. Thus the hymn ties in well with today’s gospel. The paradox of the faith is that we see the will of God of which Matthew wrote in Jesus’ death on a cross. “Fear and trembling” is a phrase made famous in theology because of the anguished writings of Søren Kierkegaard; yet Paul concludes the phrase with his confidence in God’s good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

Why do we preach and follow Christ? According to today's gospel, we have seen in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ the will of God; in believing in Jesus as the Word of God, we enter God's "kingdom," that is, we participate in the life God offers. From the first century on, Christians have debated about what precisely is "the will of his father." Preaching on Sunday has been a primary method for exploring the will of God.