

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** (Ps 118)

**ANTIPHON:** Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!

**RESPONSE: Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!**

**LECTOR:** They are happy whose life is blameless, who follow God's law! They are happy those who do his will, seeking him with all their hearts **R.**

**LECTOR:** You have laid down your precepts to be obeyed with care. May my footsteps be firm to obey your statutes **R.**

**LECTOR:** Bless your servant and I shall live and obey your word. Open my eyes that I may consider the wonders of your law. **R.**

**LECTOR:** Teach me the demands of your statutes and I will keep them to the end. Train me to observe your law, to keep it with my heart. **R.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia!

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON** (or a hymn) They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.

**(Or)** God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.

**TODAY'S READINGS** Sir 15:15-20; 1 Corinthians 2:6-10; Matthew 5:17-37

**NEXT WEEK** (7th Sunday Year A) Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18; Psalm 102; 1 Cor: 3 16-23; Mt 5: 38-48

## Free Family Guides

Family Guide Resources, including free downloadable material and stories of interest for couples, parents and children are designed to help families cope with the stresses of modern day living. Articles and links cover a range of topics, including Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol, Pregnancy, Adolescents, Grief, Shame, Anxiety, Relationships, Marriage breakdown and Disabilities. The guides are now available on the new majellan.media website. We will continue to keep adding material to the Family Guide Resources over time. For more information go to [www.majellan.media/guides/](http://www.majellan.media/guides/)

## The heart of the matter



16 February 2020 6th Sunday Year A

Over the next few weeks we will continue to listen to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. Today we hear of four (of six) examples of 'surpassing righteousness' which emerge out of the beatitudes and the images of salt and light we've heard over the past two weeks. Righteousness is a quality of God, as the beatitudes remind us.

All six bear upon right relationship between people, and what we're offered here, Jesus says, is meant to fulfill, or complete the law, not abolish it. A clue to the gospel's meaning is in the second paragraph where Jesus says, 'you will never get into the kingdom' if you think it's a matter of simply conforming to an agreed set of rules. Jesus is concerned with a change of heart, a new way of life that is centred on God.

So, we're not just opposed to murder, but to the anger that lies at the heart of it, as the recent stories of angry, murderous young men reveal. Jesus urges us to deal with it decisively, because if left to fester it will bring us undone. Leave your offering at the altar and go and be reconciled with your brother and sister. It's not only our anger, but theirs too we're concerned with.

Similarly, when it comes to adultery, we must deal with whatever stokes our desire. There have been enough disturbing stories of people addicted to what's on their smartphones for us to realise that we might

need to act. That's what Jesus is getting at when he says chop it off, pluck it out.

With divorce, it's not enough for a man to say, legally I'm allowed to do this – except in the case of infidelity – says Jesus, but there's more to it than that. Jesus isn't on about legalities – though we may turn it into this. Instead he proposes a 'vision of marriage', where a man and a woman pledge themselves to each other.

Finally, we know how prone we are to equivocating in our daily lives. Indeed, with the influence of social media and the 24-hour news cycle these days, we're said to live in a 'post-truth' age and no amount of swearing on the bible will counteract this. What does Jesus say? We have to learn to trust one another, otherwise no relationship, no truth.

The gospel is about the heart of the matter. We're not to be distracted by a literal reading, for its dramatic language, meant to stop us in our tracks, reveals 'the hidden wisdom of God', as Paul says in the second reading, given to us 'for our glory.'

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