

Passionist Family Group Newsletter – 20 September 2026



Reflection:

The excerpts below are from this Sunday's readings clearly reminding us that God's ways are very different from our human ways.

"Seek the Lord while he is still to be found" Isaiah 55

"I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake". Philippians 1:26

"Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard.'" "I choose to pay the last comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous. Mt20:1,16

Isaiah in the first reading encourages us to seek the Lord and to recognise the signs of God's presence in the people who accompany us in life—those whose care, goodness, kindness, and thoughtfulness help light our path. Through their friendship and love, we glimpse something of the mind and heart of God.

When we see someone struggling, it can be easy to criticise, exclude, or assign blame. Yet people who are wounded do not need judgement; they need the approach of Jesus: forgiveness, compassion, welcome, and a genuine sense of belonging.

In the second reading, Paul reflects on the foundation of his faith and the temptation he might have felt to leave behind his responsibilities as an apostle. Yet he recognises the urgent need to support, encourage, and nurture the early Christian communities, serving as an example and, in his own words, an "ambassador for Christ."

Matthew's Gospel brings these themes together by revealing the way God acts. God's justice is not narrow exactness; it is generous love. God does not reserve love for particular moments or privileged groups, but pours it out freely. In the parable of the workers in the vineyard, each worker agrees to a wage, and the landowner's generosity becomes the heart of the story. Whether people come to the Kingdom early or late, they are welcomed with the same dignity and grace. This stands in contrast to any religious attitude that reduces

justice to strict observance of rules rather than generous invitation, acceptance, and inclusion.

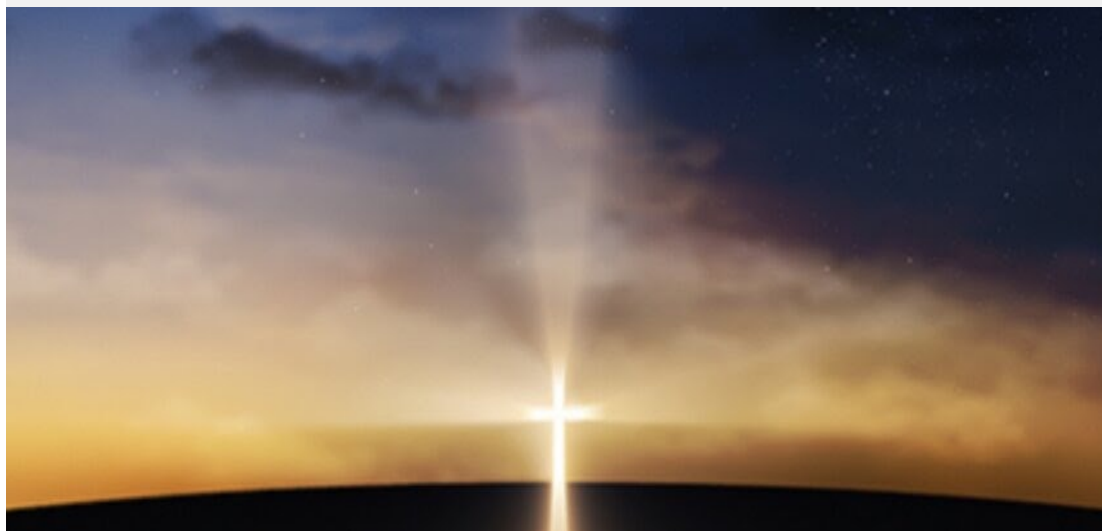
These readings teach us about the qualities of God: compassion, justice, and mercy. Through these values, the heart of God opens us to both opportunity and responsibility. Going to Mass and receiving the sacraments are deeply important, but if they are not accompanied by compassion, mercy, and justice, they risk becoming empty practices. Our faith is not merely about ourselves; it is about revealing God's presence through the way we live. We are called to embody the spirit of the Beatitudes so that the Kingdom of God may be seen among us.

"Each of us in our own way can try to spread compassion into people's hearts. Western civilizations these days place great importance on filling the human 'brain' with knowledge, but no one seems to care about filling the human 'heart' with compassion. This is what the real role of religion is". ~ Dala Lama



God go with you,

Paul



Scripture Reflection: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time — 20 September 2026



My thoughts are not your thoughts

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbour, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life.

This week, the readings focus on God's generosity, even if it is sometimes difficult for us to accept that God's ways are not our ways.

LECTIONARY READINGS

First reading: Isaiah 55:6-9

Responsorial psalm: Ps 144(145):2-3, 8-9, 17-18

Second reading: Philippians 1:20-24, 27

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Link to readings – [click here](#)

Safeguarding: “Working Together for a Safe Church”

Any complaints should be directed through the National Office of Professional Standards (NOPS) or reported directly to the New Zealand Police or Oranga Tamariki.

Phone: 03 365 1993 or 0800 114 622. **Email:** prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz

www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz

Faith and Life Formation 2026: The Theme for this year's is Nurturing and Nourishment.

PJ Harding defines nurturing as what fills your cup, whether that is laughter, fresh air, good food or time with loved ones. In Passionist Family Groups our reaching out and being family to each other brings joy, understanding, service, care and support. It's not just about 'me' but the welfare and nourishment we can give to each other through our love, concern and compassion. This nurturing leads to nourishment of the heart. Email: paulus663@gmail.com or Mobile: 021357933

Formation Bookings: Cambridge - Hamilton October 11; Mt. Maunganui – October 16th, Katikati October 17 & Waihi Paeroa October 18, Levin and Otaki November 1st, Havelock North and Hastings November 8th There are parishes that are to confirm dates.



A Blessing for Nurturing

*May you see your body as a well where water needs to be replenished.
May you learn how to balance your self-needs with the needs of others so that you can live in
harmony with the world.*

*May you take the time to notice and nurture what your inner wisdom is asking of you.
May you find a place in nature where you can be in silence and hear your Creator in the trees,
the birds, the wind, and the earth.*

May you care for all of creation in gratitude, humbleness, and respect.

— Kaki Grubbs, Spiritual Literacy Certificates Program, 2024 Cohort

Belong, Behave, Believe



Prayer:

1. We pray for peace amid renewed tensions and the threat of hostilities between the United States and Iran.
2. We pray for the people of Nepal after the devastating floods and the huge loss of life.
3. We pray for refugees and for all those who have been displaced from their homes.
4. We remember all who are suffering, and we pray that we may act on Pope Leo XIV's call to uphold and preserve human dignity.
5. We pray with gratitude for all the men, women and children who have contributed to the life and spirit of our Passionist Family Group Movement over the past 38 years.
6. We pray that we may be more like Jesus, giving ourselves in service to others by welcoming, connecting, guiding, and leading with care, compassion, and forgiveness.
7. Keep in mind all those who continue to struggle with mental health challenges, and their families who support them in their daily lives.

8. *Please remember in prayer Stephanie Butchard and family, Preston and Jenny's daughter Kate, Pam and Bob Arthurs, Richard Gibbs, Shelley Wards's brother Brett Hanlin. Please keep Jo Moorcroft and family in your prayer. Fr. Litto, Fr Robert Steele PP and family. Margaret and Graeme Armstrong, Kev Bryant and family, Tim Walsh, Debbie Cotter; Christine and Derrick Scott; Paul, Deb and Nick Kelly, Norma Bellamy and family. Also, please remember, Pat Carson, Graeme Matthews, Di Buckley, Adrian van de Pas and her sons Robert and Dean, Tim Bartells & family, Linda Darbyshire and family in your prayer, Christine Geoghegan's daughter Kate and extended families; We pray for many members of PFG's in Whakatane who are seriously ill.*

We pray for one another and for all the intentions we hold in our hearts.



Humour:

- What did the computer go to the doctor? Because he had a virus.
- How many ears does Captain Kirk have? Three. The left ear, the right ear, and the final front-ear.
- "What do you call an elephant that doesn't matter? An irrelephant."
- "What do you get from a pampered cow? Spoiled milk."
- "I like telling Dad jokes. Sometimes he laughs!"
- "What's the best smelling insect?" "A deodor-ant."
- "I used to be a personal trainer. Then I gave my too weak notice."
- "Did I tell you the time I fell in love during a backflip? I was heels over head!"
- "If a child refuses to sleep during nap time, are they guilty of resisting a rest?"
- "I ordered a chicken and an egg online. I'll let you know."
- "It takes guts to be an organ donor."
- "If you see a crime at an Apple Store, does that make you an iWitness?"
- "I'm so good at sleeping, I can do it with my eyes closed!"
- "I was going to tell a time-traveling joke, but you guys didn't like it."

Belong, Behave, Believe



