

Ezekiel 33: 7 – 9

Ezekiel, the former Temple priest, lived in a challenging time. He was deported in 597BC to Babylon, which is where he had his series of visions. Here Ezekiel experiences the demanding divine request to serve as the watchman or sentinel over the Israelites, which means he has to warn them of impending disaster when they turn away from God. Quite often people do not want to listen to such messages, and it is tempting not to want to deliver the warning. But it is made clear that Ezekiel must be willing to condemn all wickedness, so there is a chance for repentance. If people do not repent, they will have to live with the consequences and so will those who knowingly stayed silent in the face of wrongdoing. This is a challenging passage, since it challenges us to stand up and be counted, even when we fear hostility and marginalisation.

The Great Amen

The Great Amen is the name given to the Amen said or sung by the people at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer. It is the most significant Amen in the whole liturgy as it expresses the people's assent to, and belief in, all that the priest has just done on their behalf during the Eucharistic Prayer. It particularly expresses their belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the elements. This Amen also signifies the people's desire to join themselves to the sacrifice of Jesus which is being set forth on the altar: just as Christ offered himself on the cross, we offer our gifts and ourselves in union with him. In the fourth century, St Jerome wrote that, when the Great Amen was proclaimed, 'all the pagan temples trembled'.



Sunday 6th Sept. 2026 **Trinity 14 / 23rd Ordinary** **Gospel: Matt. 18: 15 – 20**



In today's Gospel the Lord gives direction on how to address an errant brother or sister. If one is wronged by another within the family of the Church, how does one address the issue? The Lord's direction is clear, the issue must be addressed directly and honestly: 'have it out with him alone, between yourselves'. Courageous honesty is encouraged, but privately and discreetly. If this does not succeed, then the Church is to be involved, but again, modestly so: 'take one or two brothers along with you', says the Lord. Only when that fails to affect repentance in the wrongdoer, is the person to be 'reported to the community', the body which has the ultimate sanction of excommunication: 'treat him like a pagan or a tax collector'. The Lord's direction in today's Gospel stresses how rumour, sniping, gossip, and scapegoating are to be avoided. These behaviours should never be given opportunity to flourish among the disciples of Jesus Christ. We are reminded that members of Christ's mystical body, whose law is love, should act in no other way.