READINGS 3rd AUGUST 2025 : 1st READING

A Reading from the Book, ‘Ecclesiastes’

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher,
   vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem,

applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom

all that is done under heaven;

it is an unhappy business

that God has given to human beings to be busy with.

I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun;

and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun,

seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me

—and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish?

Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled

and used my wisdom under the sun.

This also is vanity.

So I turned and gave my heart up to despair

concerning all the toil of my labours under the sun,

because sometimes

one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill

must leave all

to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it.

This also is vanity and a great evil. What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest.

This also is vanity.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

2025 3rd AUGUST – 2nd READING

A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Church of the Colossians.

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth; for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly:

fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life.

But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

10th AUGUST – 1st READING

A Reading from the Book ‘Genesis’

The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.’ But Abram said, ‘O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’ And Abram said, ‘You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.’ But the word of the Lord came to him, ‘This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.’ He brought him outside and said, ‘Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

10th AUGUST – SECOND READING

A Reading from ‘Hebrews’

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors were prepared by the word of God so that what is seen was made from things that were not visible.

By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set you, not knowing where he was going. By faith, he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heir with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder us God. By faith, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old – and Sarah herself was barren – because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, *as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grants of sand by the seashore.*

All these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they were seeking a homeland. Of they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

17th August – FIRST READING

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

Am I a God near by, says the Lord, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them! says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord. I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’ How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back—those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the Lord. Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

READINGS 17 AUGUST 2nd READING

A Reading from ‘Hebrews’

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets – who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT IS SAYING TO THE CHURCH

24TH AUGUST – FIRST READING

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
   you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
   the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
   and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
   and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
   and satisfy your needs in parched places,
   and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
   like a spring of water,
   whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
   you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
   the restorer of streets to live in.

If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,
   from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;
if you call the sabbath a delight
   and the holy day of the Lord honourable;
if you honour it, not going your own ways,
   serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;
then you shall take delight in the Lord,
   and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob,
   for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

24 AUGUST SECOND READING

A Reading from ‘Hebrews’

You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. (For they could not endure the order that was given, *If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death*.) Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, ‘I tremble with fear.’)

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, *Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven*. This phrase ‘Yet once more’ indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

31st AUGUST – 1ST READING

A Reading from the Book of the Proverbs

Do not put yourself forward in the king’s presence
   or stand in the place of the great;
for it is better to be told, ‘Come up here’,
   than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

31st August – 2nd reading

A Reading from ‘Hebrews’

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honour by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, *I will never leave you or forsake you*’ So we can say with confidence,
*The Lord is my helper;
   I will not be afraid.
What can anyone do to me?*

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church