

A reading from the book of Exodus.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim.  
Moses said to Joshua,  
“Choose some men for us and go out, fight with Amalek.  
Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill  
with the staff of God in my hand.”  
So Joshua did as Moses told him,  
and fought with Amalek,  
while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.  
Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed;  
and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.  
But Moses’ hands grew weary;  
so they took a stone and put it under him,  
and he sat on it.  
Aaron and Hur held up his hands,  
one on one side, and the other on the other side;  
so his hands were steady until the sun set.  
And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the sword.

Amalek = AM-uh-lek

Rephidim = REF-ih-dim

Hur = HUHR



PAUSE for **THREE** seconds  
then look up at the people  
and say SLOWLY:

The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to Timothy.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Beloved:

Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed,  
knowing from whom you learned it,  
and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings  
that are able to instruct you for salvation  
through faith in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is inspired by God

and is useful for teaching,

for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,  
so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient,  
equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,  
who is to judge the living and the dead,  
and in view of his appearing and his kingdom,

I solemnly urge you:

proclaim the message;

be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable;

convince, rebuke, and encourage,

with the utmost patience in teaching.

Pause for **THREE** seconds

then look up at the people

and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## GOSPEL READING – C 29

The Lord be with you.

*And with your spirit.*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

*Glory to you, O Lord.*

Jesus told the disciples a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.

He said,

“In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for any human being.

In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying,

‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’

For a while the judge refused;

but later he said to himself,

‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for any human being, yet because this widow keeps bothering me,

I will grant her justice,

so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’“

And the Lord said,

“Listen to what the unjust judge says.

Will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night?

Will he delay long in helping them?

I tell you, God will quickly grant justice to them.

“And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## SCRIPTURES IN DEPTH

### Reading I: Exodus 17:8-13

It is puzzling to find this reading appointed for today. It has no apparent connection with any of the other readings except on one questionable interpretation. It does not follow in sequence with the first reading of the previous Sunday, nor does it appear to be particularly edifying.

Despite the assurance in the second reading that “all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching,” the New Testament writers never make use of this incident. Their use of the Old Testament was definitely *à la carte* (see C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* [London: Nisbet, 1952] and B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961]).

The passage could be given a typological interpretation of Moses holding up his hands in intercessory prayer (see the *Jerome Biblical Commentary*), but this interpretation is uncertain.

Moses' action is probably meant to be symbolic, like those of the prophets, which were thought to have potent influence on the course of events (see *Peake's Commentary*).

### Responsorial Psalm 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

This beautiful psalm of trust in divine protection needs little comment. If we have accepted the intercessory interpretation of the first reading, this psalm forms an excellent response to God's protection of his Church militant on earth.

In any case, it suggests a reflection on the biblical truth behind the dogma of the “infallibility” of the Church, namely, that God will never finally forsake his Church, however severe his judgment upon it may be from time to time.

His care and protection of the Church is exactly like that shown to the first Israel—never abandoning it, restoring it even after exile.

### Reading II: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

This reading is taken from those parts of the Pastoral Epistles that register the concern of the subapostolic age to preserve apostolic truth. Of the whole body of the Church's tradition, Scripture is the most important part.

“The New Testament canon appears not as separate from, or opposed to, the Christian tradition, but rather as an expression of it” (*Principles of Church Union*, 1966).

One cannot be sure that the “Pastor” (that is, the author or redactor of these letters) meant by “sacred writings” or “scripture” our New Testament as well as the Old Testament. Most likely not, for there is no indication elsewhere in these letters that an embryonic canon of New Testament writings was already in formation.

But certainly, as we read this passage today, it can be legitimately extended to cover both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

While the Pastoral Epistles are in some sense directed to the Church at large, their primary aim is to instruct the Church's ministers in apostolic succession.

Hence one of the most important duties of the "man of God" (this is a term accorded to Moses in the Old Testament tradition, suggesting a possible link with the first reading) is the study of Scripture.

This was nowhere put so well as by Cranmer in the ordinal of the book of Common Prayer, in the bishop's exhortation to those about to be ordained to the priesthood:

"And seeing ye cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work, pertaining to the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation take out of the Holy Scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same; consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the same Scriptures . . . and for this self same cause, how ye ought to forsake and set aside, as much as ye may, all worldly cares and studies."

And a little later in the same exhortation: ". . . that by daily reading and weighing the Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry."

But, as we observed, the Pastorals are also in some sense directed to the Church at large, and this knowledge of the Scriptures, though especially the business of the clergy, is not exclusively confined to them. It is to be shared with the whole people of God.

Exegesis is the special function of the priest, but it is meant to lead the people also to the exegesis of Scripture, and exegesis that is accomplished not merely in the understanding but in the living of the Christian life.

Gospel: Luke 18:1-8

The story of the unjust judge belongs to a class of parables that feature, not a typical everyday event with a surprising element in it, but a unique occurrence of a striking kind. Such parables are common to, although not confined to, the special Lucan material.

As in the story of the unjust steward (Lk 16:1-9), to which it is akin, the central figure is an unsympathetic character. Not every aspect of his behavior is held up for emulation, but only one particular aspect of it.

Having refused to listen to the woman's case, the judge eventually yields because of her continual pestering and agrees to hear it. Jesus' hearers are meant to infer from this aspect of the judge's behavior that God will indeed intervene and help his Church, even though he seems to forsake it.

By his editorial introduction (Lk 16:1), Luke has shifted our attention away from the judge to the woman, and made her an example of persistent prayer. The Lord's question at the end, however, makes it clear that the judge is meant to be the central figure.

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