

## First Reading

*Jeremiah 20:7-9 (JB)*

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

*The word of the Lord God has meant derision for me.*

You have seduced me, Lord, and I have let myself be seduced;  
you have overpowered me: you were the stronger.  
I am a daily laughing-stock,  
everybody's butt.  
Each time I speak the word, I have to howl  
and proclaim: 'Violence and ruin!'  
The word of the Lord has meant for me  
insult, derision, all day long.  
I used to say, 'I will not think about him,  
I will not speak in his name any more.'  
Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart,  
imprisoned in my bones.  
The effort to restrain it wearied me,  
I could not bear it.

## Second Reading

*Romans 12:1-2 (JB)*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*May you present your bodies as a living sacrifice.*

Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

## Gospel

*Matthew 16:21-27 (JB)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself.*

Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. 'Heaven preserve you, Lord,' he said. 'This must not happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's way but man's.'

Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. What, then, will a man gain if he wins the whole world and ruins his life? Or what has a man to offer in exchange for his life?

'For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and, when he does, he will reward each one according to his behaviour.'