



# Ordinary Time

## Lectionary reflections for 28th June - Pentecost 5

Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42

Following Pentecost, the liturgical calendar moves us into Ordinary Time: an ordered sequence of weeks between the major feast days of the Christian year which give Christian communities the opportunity to reflect on the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, to embody the mission of Jesus, and to grow in our discipleship.

**JUNE:  
BECOMING**

One of Scripture's most disturbing narratives (the binding and near sacrifice of Isaac) meets lament amid anxious waiting, a baptismal exhortation to resist sin's dominion, and Jesus' teaching on receiving "little ones." Together, they ask what kind of God we proclaim, what kind of obedience we commend, and what kind of community discipleship produces.

Genesis 22 has multiple interpretations but must not be domesticated into an endorsement of unquestioning obedience. The story itself turns on the angel's "Do not lay your hand on the boy" and the provision of an alternative. Any reading that sanctifies intended harm endangers the vulnerable, especially those already subject to coercive religious, domestic, or institutional power.

Discipleship here is about discernment: recognising voices that sound “religious” but produce death, and choosing, instead, practices that protect life. We should name safeguarding as gospel work, honour the “how long” protest of our hearts as prayer, and measure worship by its mercy. Matthew’s “cold water” image invites small, consistent acts as resistance to cultures of harm.



## PrayerPoem

God of the almost-knife and the stopped hand,  
 we bring you the hard stories,  
 the ones that make our stomachs turn.  
 We confess how easily “obedience” gets tangled  
 with harm, how quickly we bless violence  
 when it wears religious language.  
 Interrupt us, Holy One. Provide another way.  
 Let your voice be the one that says, “Enough,”  
 the one that refuses sacrifice of the vulnerable.  
 When the psalm is only a thin thread  
 - “How long, O Lord?” -  
 teach us that waiting is also prayer,  
 and that lament is not failure.  
 Christ, reshape our allegiance.  
 Unhook our hands from what enslaves:  
 prestige, fear, the need to be right.  
 Train us in the small fidelities:  
 receiving the stranger,  
 honouring the child,  
 offering cold water without keeping score.  
 Make our worship measurable:  
 not in noise, but in mercy.  
 Not in what we are willing to destroy,  
 but in what we are brave enough to protect.  
 Teach us gentleness as holy resistance,  
 and let it be our offering.