

Monday in 1st Week of Ordinary Time (II) – 12th January 2026:

In the 1st century, a person sought out a Master and become his disciple. This assumes that they have heard the man preach, find his message appealing and want to learn more. It is, then, difficult to understand why Peter, Andrew, James and John would leave everything behind to follow the Lord, a man that they have just met, who seemingly has no where to lay his head. And yet, there was something attractive about the Lord's call – it was clearly authentic, and it was challenging. And he will remind them later, that *'they did not choose him, no, he chose them and commissioned them to go out and bear fruit'*, a promise that they will have a real share in his mission and ultimately in his glory. It is the promise of being drawn into the very life of God himself, into the divine family of the Trinity in the Communion of Saints. The Lord begins his ministry as a lone preacher, but quickly he chooses those receptive to the Truth, to form a community of twelve. Following the Resurrection and Pentecost this community grows into Church, sent to gather the nations into the peace of God's Kingdom.

Tuesday in 1st Week in Ordinary Time (II) – 13th January 2026:

The Church building is focal point for God's people at prayer. It remains the place where Christ enters our hearts and once again breaks opens the scriptures for us. In the *'Ecclesia'*, the Church, as the gathered people of God, we do not come just to be reminded of what is written in the Scriptures but to actively participate again in the saving mysteries of our redemption. Here in this sacred place, Jesus Christ is present in the assembly at prayer, in the person of the priest, proclaiming His good news of salvation and nourishing us in the sacrament of his body and blood to strengthen us and make us holy, until he comes to take us into the Church Triumphant in heaven.

Wednesday in 1st Week in Ordinary Time (II) – 14th January 2026:

Our vocational calling is not passive, but a share in Christ's mission. God's call invites a generous response, *'here I am, for you have called me'*, an obedience that listens to what the Lord is asking of us and to carry it out with the mind of the Church, itself the mind of Christ. Every vocation, in its own way, is charged to faithfully hand on the deposit of faith so people may have the hope of the gospel. *'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening'* is a humility that we do not insist on our own ways but on God's way that cultivates our relationship with Him and trusts in his providence in this life as we prepare to come to rest in God's own house, the heavenly Temple, forever.

Thursday in 1st Week of Ordinary Time (II) – 15th January 2026:

In Jesus' time, people expected the Messiah to overthrow the oppressor, but Jesus moves the people away from an all too human and political idea of the Messiah. The preaching of the good news helps us overcome our spiritual demons, such as the capital vices of pride and greed preventing us from being attentive to our neighbour. At times, we are simply just disinterested and disengaged about the plight of another – we may throw a couple of coins into a second collection – but we have no intention of reading up on or doing anything proactive to bring about real change in our own lives, let alone the lives of the poor and marginalised. The Collect for the 1st Sunday of Ordinary Time is apt for our times: *'attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen'*. This is our commission to be another Christ for the Word!

Friday in 1st Week of Ordinary Time (II) – 16th January 2026:

Samuel deals with the people's desire for a King. Defeated in war, they look to their neighbours and want the same style of strong leadership. In asking for a King, they are rejecting God as their shepherd, and while they may see the benefits, Samuel says there is a trade-off. The King will take their children into his service, expecting a tithe of all they produce. Worse still, by excluding God, the people will try to solve their military, political and social problems without reference to Him or even in contravention of his Law, leading to their exile. The gospel should challenge us, that when we go to the *'ballot box'*, we do not seek more of the same ineffectual politics but let our representatives know we value truth, virtue, sacrifice, the measure of our society being how it looks after the vulnerable. Please God, we won't let cynicism be our guiding principle. No, we are ready, always and everywhere to stand up for what is right.

The Memorial of St Antony, Abbot – Saturday 17th January 2026:

St Antony, inspired by the account of the *'Rich Young Man'*, gave away his possessions to the poor, so he could lead a life of solitude and fasting, praying for the needs of the world. When people sought him out for his intercession, he told them to spend each day trying to become more like Christ in all things. It was not enough to be good and holy today, but to consider how we will be good and holy tomorrow and the next day, and every day. He told people the key to the spiritual life was perseverance, to hang in there and not give up. To seek what we need and not chase after what we want.