

# 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Fr. Samuel Springuel

28 June, 2026

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** 2 Kings 4:8–11,14–16A

**Responsorial Psalm** Psalm 89:2–3,16–17,18–19

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** Romans 6:3–4,8–11

**Gospel** Matthew 10:37–42

“Hope.” We use this word in a myriad of ways in our everyday lives. I hope it doesn’t rain on Saturday so that we can enjoy Fr. Philip’s cookout outside. Fr. Peter hopes we’ll get plenty of soft rain so that his plants will grow. We hope that people will like the gifts we get them. Parents hope that their children will have better lives than they did. If we pay attention to how the Catechism defines “hope,” however, all of these uses are wrong. The Catechism defines hope as “the confident expectation of divine blessing and the beatific vision of God.” None of my examples have anything to do with God, at least not directly, and I very much doubt that most other uses of “hope” in our daily lives do either. But “hope” is a theological virtue, and thus true hope, according to the Catechism, has God as both its origin and object.

That is why, despite the fact that the word “hope” appears nowhere in today’s readings, I think it entirely appropriate to say that the theme of today’s Mass is hope. In our first reading, the beginning of the story of Elisha and the Shunemite woman that Fr. Gabriel spoiled last week, we hear of God making a specific promise to a specific person through Elisha. This is, in many ways, a single concrete example of what God does: He makes promises. These promises may also be broad, as in the Covenantal promise to the Israelites to be their God and for them to be his people. But whether broad or specific, God makes promises, and thereby invites us, those to whom those promises are made, to hope: to have a “confident expectation” in the fulfillment of those promises.

And that is the theme of the responsorial psalm: confidence in God’s promises. The psalmist is so confident in the fulfillment of God’s promises that he declares he will sing of them forever. These promises are not secrets, to be hidden away lest in revealing them we prevent their fulfillment like some wish made when blowing out the candles of a birthday cake. No, the promises of God are rather a sign of his faithfulness, a guarantee of his goodness. Whatever God has promised will occur. Perhaps not in the way or timing that we expect, but our confidence in God’s promises should be such that we are willing to stake our reputation, and even our lives, on them and proclaim them from the mountaintops for all to hear.

Our lives, yes, even our lives. What is death in the face of God’s promises? As we hear in St Paul’s letter to the Romans, Jesus has overcome death. If we have died with Christ, we need not fear bodily death. God’s promises cannot

be thwarted by something so small. Sure, life tries to convince us that death is a big deal, that it is the ultimate end, the only thing guaranteed in this life besides taxes. But in the face of God's promises, death is a small thing. A hiccup that can be resolved in three days.

Hence Jesus's teaching in the Gospel. God's promises are worth more than any of the "guarantees" given to us by this life. We need to let go of our worldly comforts. Not even family, the closest of bonds on earth, are worth anything in the face of God's promises. We need to be willing to put aside everything in this life, even our life itself, for the sake of God's promises, even the smallest ones. For the sake of a single drink of water in God's Kingdom, hope should drive us to anything on earth.

And so we have hope. We rely on God's strength to bring us to the fulfillment of his promises. Hope. Hope in the Lord. For his mercy endures forever.