

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year C

PC-S44-C

Textual unit	Text / citation
Introductory Rites	
Entrance Antiphon	<i>Cf. Ps. 67:6–7, 36 (modern 68); Deus in loco sancto suo.</i>
Collect	<i>Adesto, Domine, famulis tuis; divine help is sought for those who glory in God as creator and guide.</i>
Liturgy of the Word	
First Reading	Eccl. 1:2; 2:21–23.
Responsorial Psalm	Ps. 90:3–4, 5–6, 12–13, 14, 17; response from Ps. 95:8.
Second Reading	Col. 3:1–5, 9–11.
Gospel Acclamation	Matt. 5:3.
Gospel	Luke 12:13–21.
Liturgy of the Eucharist	
Prayer over Offerings	<i>Sanctifica, quaesumus, Domine Deus, haec munera.</i>
Communion Antiphon A	Wis. 16:20.
Communion Antiphon B	John 6:35.
Prayer after Communion	<i>Quos caelesti recreas munere.</i>

Sense	Synthesis
Literal	Toil cannot secure its fruit or its possessor; the rich man's stored abundance cannot preserve his life.
Allegorical	Those raised with Christ receive their life from him, not from accumulated goods; Communion directs desire toward the giver.
Moral	Numbered days, poverty of spirit, and the putting away of greed train a responsible freedom for stewardship and mercy.
Anagogical	The hidden life will appear with Christ in glory, while goods stored only for oneself end at death.

Scriptural Date and Location

Textual unit / alternative	Citation	Location	Date
First Reading	Eccl. 1:2; 2:21–23	Probably Judea, commonly Jerusalem; exact place unknown	Late Persian or early Hellenistic period, often placed in the third century BC
The book frames Qoheleth as a Davidic royal wisdom speaker. Its unnamed author, exact date, and place remain debated. The discontinuous selection joins the programmatic “vanity” saying to toil, anxiety, and property left to another; Hebrew <i>hevel</i> can suggest breath, transience, or enigma, not simple nihilism.			
Responsorial Psalm	Ps. 90:3–6, 12–14, 17; response Ps. 95:8	Israel/Judah; exact setting unknown	Undated; received heading associates Moses
The psalm moves from dust, passing time, and grass to numbered days, mercy, and the work of human hands. The heading is inherited attribution, not proof of individual Mosaic composition. The appointed response is drawn from another psalm.			
Second Reading	Col. 3:1–5, 9–11	Addressed to the church at Colossae in Asia Minor	Traditionally a Pauline imprisonment, about AD 60–62; authorship and circumstances debated
The canonical letter names Paul and Timothy and presents a prison setting. The appointed cut is discontinuous: it moves from life hidden with Christ and the mortification of greed to the old and new person and unity in Christ.			
Acclamation	Matt. 5:3	Galilee in the narrated discourse; composition setting uncertain	Canonical Greek Matthew commonly dated late first century
The beatitude supplies an authorized liturgical lens of poverty of spirit; it is not part of Luke’s narrated inheritance dispute.			
Gospel	Luke 12:13–21	Journey-to-Jerusalem teaching scene; exact narrated location unstated	Canonical Greek Luke commonly dated about AD 80–90; exact place unknown
An inheritance request prompts Jesus to refuse the requested adjudication and warn the crowd about greed through the rich-fool parable. The narrative does not establish either brother’s civil merits.			
Communion A	Wis. 16:20	Alexandrian Jewish setting commonly proposed	Late Hellenistic period, before the first century AD
The verse recalls divinely given food in Israel’s wilderness history; here it functions as a Missal antiphon, not a Lectionary reading.			
Communion B	John 6:35	Capernaum in the narrated discourse	Canonical John commonly placed late first century
Jesus identifies himself as the bread of life. This alternative remains distinct from the Wisdom antiphon.			

The Propers: Themes and Movement

1. The limit that exposes desire

Qoheleth and the Gospel are intentionally correlated: property passes to another, anxious labor cannot master the night, and stored abundance cannot answer death. Neither text condemns work or created goods. They expose the false claim that possession can make life self-secure.

2. Wisdom for numbered days

Psalm 90 turns mortality into petition. The assembly asks not for the abolition of work but for wisdom, mercy, and divine establishment of its hands' work. The inter-psalm response from Psalm 95 adds urgency to hear now.

3. A life reoriented in Christ

Colossians is a semi-continuous apostolic strand, read in course. Yet its language creates a strong textual overlay: greed is idolatry, the old person is put away, and life is hidden with Christ.

4. Gift, offering, and communion

The shared prayers situate human action inside divine creation, guidance, sanctification, and heavenly gift. Either Communion antiphon leads away from self-enclosed accumulation: one through divinely given food, the other through Christ the bread of life.

The movement is therefore not from labor to passivity, nor from property to its indiscriminate rejection. It is from the illusion of ownership as ultimate security to work and stewardship received under God.

Augustine reads the psalm's return to dust, numbered days, mercy, and work of hands as a Christian school of humility and hope. Chrysostom reads Colossians' "above" as life with Christ rather than spatial escapism, and presses the old/new-person contrast into transformed conduct. Augustine's Gospel sermon and Ambrose's treatment of withheld grain make greed socially visible, while their added reconstructions are their own, not Luke's.

The acclamation's poverty of spirit concerns humble dependence; it neither erases the material and economic force of the Gospel warning nor romanticizes involuntary poverty. Francis's 2019 Angelus makes the enduring pastoral application concrete in inheritance conflict, enslavement to possessions, sharing, and the legacy a life leaves.

Prudent provision, agriculture, saving, retirement planning, ownership, and care for dependents are not condemned as such. The controlling question is whether goods serve responsible love or become the imagined ground of life and the rival of God.

Source-Grounded Synthesis Across the Propers

Property, night, and death

The official Old Testament–Gospel correlation is unusually close: labor passes its result to another, anxiety persists into night, an inheritance dispute exposes division, and the rich man’s imagined future ends that night. The Gospel sharpens the first reading: the successor is not only uncontrollable but unnamed, while the owner himself becomes accountable before he can consume what he has stored. Psalm 90 mediates by teaching the assembly to number its days rather than asking stored goods to lengthen them.

Mortality without futility

The Psalm refuses both self-sufficiency and despair. Human beings return to dust, yet mercy is sought and work may be established by God. This is the decisive distinction between the readings: work is not rejected, but received under creaturely limits and divine judgment. In this Year C occurrence, the shared formulary’s language of guidance, sanctification, heavenly gift, and continuing aid reinforces that distinction. The formulary serves all three years, not these readings alone.

The independent apostolic course

Colossians remains semi-continuous. Its overlap is nevertheless textually strong: greed becomes idolatry, earthly fixation yields to life hidden with Christ, and the possessive self of the parable is answered by a renewed humanity in which Christ is all and in all. The union is liturgical and canonical.

Rich toward God

The Gospel’s closing contrast does not supply an accounting formula. “Rich toward God” is defined narratively by its opposite: a life reduced to self-address, abundance, storage, and postponed enjoyment. Read with the acclamation and either Communion alternative, the contrast can be heard as receptive poverty, sharing rather than enclosure, and life received as gift. It does not authorize contempt for creation, romanticize involuntary poverty, or excuse neglect of dependents.

The Propers: Notable and Quotable

- The 2014 *Homiletic Directory* 145–149 identifies the rich fool with this Sunday and explains the Old Testament–Gospel harmony while preserving the Apostle’s semi-continuous course.
- Francis’s Angelus of 4 August 2019 redirects the inheritance dispute toward wealth’s power to enslave and the obligation to share.
- Basil’s homily *I Will Pull Down My Barns*, especially §7 (PG 31, 276B–277A), an ancient sermon on this very passage, turns surplus into a question of stewardship toward the poor; that question is Basil’s, not Luke’s narrated circumstance.
- Rembrandt’s 1627 *Parable of the Rich Man* relocates the barns into a nocturnal scene of solitary money-accounting (Gemäldegalerie Berlin, inv. 828 D).
- Charles Ives’s *Psalm 90* (1923–24) gives musical afterlife to the psalm’s petition to number our days; score and recordings are not reproduced.

The Propers: Interpretive Possibilities

Editorial status

The following proposals are original editorial syntheses. They claim neither historical selection intent nor attribution to the cited witnesses.

The two works of hands

Psalm 90 asks God to establish human work, while the Gospel depicts barns enlarged as a closed circuit of self-address. The contrast may distinguish work offered to divine judgment from work imagined as its own final warrant. It fails if used to label ordinary planning or productive labor sinful.

Hidden life and visible storage

Colossians locates life “hidden with Christ,” while the rich man makes security increasingly visible and countable. The conjunction can expose the difference between sacramental identity and inventory-based identity; it does not make material transparency or accounting suspect.

Another receives

Qoheleth’s unnamed successor, Luke’s disputing brothers, and Colossians’ renewed humanity together invite a stewardship reading of inheritance. The proposal remains exploratory: neither reading supplies a civil inheritance rule.

Food that cannot be hoarded

The barns store food, while either Communion alternative presents food as divine gift or Christ himself. The sacramental movement may turn possession toward reception and communion. It must not collapse Eucharistic theology into an economic metaphor.

Appendix: Liturgical Resolution

Field	Resolved liturgical instance
Celebration	Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C; ‘PC-S44-C’.
Books	Roman Missal, Third Edition for the United States; U.S. Lectionary no. 114.
Owner	Week XVIII shared formulary owner.
Occurrence	Recurring Year C formula; 3 August 2025 is the checked official occurrence witness.
Structure	Sunday in Ordinary Time, green; no proper-calendar overlay resolved.

Branch ID	Authority and trigger	Status	Units affected	Resolution
sunday-sprinkling	Sunday permission	permitted	Opening rite	Unresolved.
communion-antiphon-wisdom	Missal alternative	appointed alternative	Communion antiphon	Unresolved.
communion-antiphon-john	Missal alternative	appointed alternative	Communion antiphon	Unresolved.
chant-selections	GIRM and approved repertory	locally selected	Entrance, offertory, Communion music	No enacted selection documented.
preface-ep	Missal/GIRM compatibility	permitted	Preface and Eucharistic Prayer	No enacted selection documented.

Appendix: Scope and Qualifications

This source-first guide treats the recurring U.S. Year C formula, not a parish record or local Ordo. The Missal owner controls reusable formulary evidence; the leaf audit controls Lectionary composition and branches. Protected ICEL, CCD, and modern Bible texts are not reproduced. The public-domain Douay–Rheims appointed-text sheet is a study translation only. The official occurrence page’s Psalm-response marker is preserved as a discrepancy pending named altar-book typography-level collation. Jerome and an uncertain Ambrose psalm locator were excluded rather than promoted.

References

- U.S. Lectionary no. 114, official USCCB occurrence page, 3 August 2025.
- *Missale Romanum* (2002), Week XVIII, printed pp. 467–468; official 2008 variation-list control.
- Augustine, *Exposition on Psalm 90*, §§4–17; *Sermon 57* (Benedictine 107), §§2–6.
- John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Colossians* 7–8.
- Ambrose, *On Duties* III.6.41–44.
- Basil, *I Will Pull Down My Barns*, §7 (PG 31, 276B–277A).
- Francis, Angelus, 4 August 2019.
- Dicastery for Divine Worship, *Homiletic Directory* 145–149.
- Rembrandt, *Parable of the Rich Man*, 1627, Gemäldegalerie Berlin, inv. 828 D.
- Charles Ives, *Psalm 90* (1923–24).

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