

**Thoughts on the Daily Word**

*21<sup>st</sup> Week of Year. Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August. Readings: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5,8-10; Psalm: 149; Matthew 23:13-22.*

We now leave the Old Testament for the New. Perhaps Paul would not have understood this as a break but rather as a new beginning, like so much in the Scripture. He is nurturing new communities of faith based on the Scripture, as it was understood. Paul was doing just what so many had done before him, reinterpreting the past in the light of the present. Did he know that his letters would become scripture in their turn? Perhaps not. Nevertheless, his words of encouragement and chastisement would be the basis of a new understanding of what the People of God was about. The communities would be called churches, again a new meaning of an old word. The Gospel calls us to be wary of 'blind guides', people who mistake God's Word for rules and regulations on a page. Paul represents a different Spirit, one that would bring to life a whole new vision of what humanity could be. We too have to test the spirits, and the guides, to discover the real Spirit, and life in its fulness.