

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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October 19, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, we celebrate the Twenty Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time. We continue to journey with Jesus and his disciples through the Gospel of Luke. Last week, we reflected on being grateful disciples who are mindful of God's saving work and his loving presence in our life.

For the past 16 weeks or so Luke has been taking us on a journey with Jesus to Jerusalem through different geographical territories, among foreign and unfriendly people, into the moral and ethical concerns of many and often into the dark recesses of the human heart. Throughout this journey, Jesus was deeply engaged in the formation of his disciples: revealing to them God's love; calling them to God's saving will; encouraging them to challenge the values of the world; charging them with the mission of proclaiming the Good News; counseling them on how this mission has to be fulfilled; giving them a new lifestyle to live.

When the disciples seemed to find the challenge of discipleship overwhelming, Jesus gave them sound advice which has withstood the test of times and continues to support us today. You may remember the Gospel passage two weeks ago when the disciples talked about their struggle with the demands of discipleship and asked for an increase of faith, Jesus' advice was to trust the little faith they had and let it come to life. Last week, the advice was to be gratefully and thoughtfully aware of God's saving work and his loving presence in our life.

This week, the advice is: Be steadfast. Stand your ground. Be patient and Persevere. Pray without losing heart. This calls for a shift from self-reliance to God-reliance. Perseverance in prayer is more than true grit that will never quit. It is trust in a God who will never abandon or ignore those who put their trust in Him. It is God-centered and Grace-powered perseverance and not mere human effort or enterprise. It is a radical shift from self to God.

Be steadfast because God's love is steadfast. Never quit because God never does.

The first reading of today's mass (Exodus 17:8-13) speaks of Israel being at war with the Amalekites and Moses at prayer, hands lifted up in a gesture of need and openness to God. As Moses raised up his hands to the Lord, Joshua continued to defeat Amalek and his people. When his arms became tired, Israel began to fail and so Aaron and Hur supported his arms. Israel's victory is credited to the persevering and prayerful reliance of Moses on God. The second reading of today's mass (2 Timothy 3:14-4:2) challenges us just as it did Timothy and

the other disciples at Ephesus to be faithful to the truth revealed through the word of God, to pray and persevere and be willing to live the gift of faith and to “stay with the task” whether it is convenient or inconvenient. To be steadfast is to be firm in purpose, to be resolute, to be unwavering, to be tenacious, to be faithful and loyal just as our God is and never give up.

The Gospel reading of today’s mass (Luke 18:1-8) tells us the story of an unjust judge awarding a just decision to a widow because of her persistence, perseverance and steadfastness. A poor widow is given to us as a model of steadfastness. God will take care of the needs of his people. We must persevere in prayer and be steadfast in faith.

All of us have the potency to be strong, to stand fast and to be steadfast. Failures may happen, sin and sorrow may come our way. But through it all, we can be faithful, loyal and steadfast. Being steadfast means making new and brave choices and moving forward with courage and determination. It means Never giving up! Trying again and again! Taking a different approach and trying something that has not been tried before!

One of the most important learning for me over the years has been that failure is not the end. Failure can be a good teacher if we let it be. There is an old saying, “failure is the steppingstone to success.” It definitely can be, if we let it be! Another important learning has been that we don’t have to be perfect and being steadfast doesn’t mean being perfect. Being steadfast does mean beginning again, starting over, learning from failures, accepting imperfections, being courageous at turning points, accepting our incompleteness...most of all striving for excellence, NOT perfection.

We must be steadfast even in disappointing, difficult and trying times, even when things don’t seem to be going well. The final judgment is not about how we kept the rules and how many prayers we said. It is about how faithful we have been to God and God’s will and purpose for us...how steadfast we have been on our journey.

Full of life and energy or tired and weary, let us choose to be faithful. Let us strive to be true to ourselves, to be authentic in all we say and do, to be men and women of integrity, to be steadfast in living our faith and in loving our God and giving ourselves generously to one another in love and service. It takes a lifetime to learn to live authentic and steadfast lives! We must keep striving for excellence in all we do! We must keep on responding to God’s call, His will and purpose as it keeps unfolding for us! Responding to His call is not a finished product!

May God bless you and enable you to experience His steadfast, unfailing, unconquerable and unconditional Love. I pray that you will be faithful, loyal, unfailing, resolute, steadfast and tenacious in all places and situations that you encounter and never give up! God bless you and your family and keep you safe in his love.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Scroll down to read the reflections on the Scripture readings of today’s mass....

Twenty Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 19, 2025

**Knowledge must become action. Theory must become practice.
Theology must become life. Spirituality must become incarnate.
That is how saints are made. And that is the challenge of being steadfast.**

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
grant that we may always conform our will to yours
and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

**One of the great joys in life is finding your purpose
and discovering that in fulfilling your purpose
you are involved in something larger than yourself.**

Exodus 17:8-13

Israel was at war with the Amalekites and Moses at prayer, hands lifted up in a gesture of need and openness to God. As Moses raised up his hands to the Lord, Joshua continued to defeat Amalek and his people. When his arms became tired, Israel began to fail and so Aaron and Hur supported his arms. Israel's victory is credited to the persevering and prayerful reliance of Moses on God.

Be patient...be faithful...and persevere in prayer!

Psalm 121

If you went to the Church only three times a year to great festivals, you will not expect it to be over in an hour. You want it to last. You want to celebrate, pray, rejoice and worship. For the Israelites, it was not “service” as we think of, it was “seasons” of worship on festival days and the seasons lasted several days.

The group of pilgrims, singing this psalm as they made the ascent to the City of God, was tremendously excited. They were going up, not just to sing hymns and songs, but to celebrate their faith in God from whom all help comes, to thank God for his vigilance and to share in an event that taught them that sacrifice is to be found in the very heart of God.

**I lift up my eyes toward the mountains;
Whence shall help come to me?
My help is from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.**

2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

The author of this letter challenged Timothy and the other disciples at Ephesus to be faithful to the truth revealed through the word of God, to pray and persist and be willing to live out the gift of faith. Inspired by the Scriptures, they must be fully “competent and equipped for every good work”. The author challenges us today as he did Timothy to “stay with the task” whether it is convenient or inconvenient.

Be faithful to what you have learned and believed.

Luke 18:1-8

Be steadfast. Even an unjust judge awards a just decision to a widow because of her persistence and perseverance. God will take care of the needs of his people. Pray. Be patient. Persevere. Be steadfast in faith.

For the past 16 weeks or so Luke has been taking us on a journey with Jesus to Jerusalem through different geographical territories, among foreign, unfriendly people, into the moral and ethical concerns of many and often into the dark recesses of the human heart. Throughout this journey, Jesus was deeply engaged in the formation of his disciples: revealing to them God’s love; calling them to God’s saving will; encouraging them to challenge the values of the world; charging them with the mission of proclaiming the Good News; counseling them on how this mission has to be fulfilled; giving them a new lifestyle to live.

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Be Still for a few moments!

Pray for your needs and those of your family and community.

Spiritual Communion

Lord Jesus, I believe in your real presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar. I place myself in your presence and adore you, worship you and glorify you. I am unable to receive you in Holy Communion at Mass today. I hunger and thirst for your way, your truth and your life. Come into my heart Lord and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. Bless me that I may give witness to your presence in my life. Amen

Be Still for a few moments!

Saint of the day, October 19 - Saints Isaac Jogues, Jean de Brébeuf, and Companions and 28 other saints are remembered this day

Isaac Jogues and his companions were the first martyrs of the North American continent officially recognized by the Church. As a young Jesuit, Isaac Jogues, a man of learning and culture, taught literature in France. He gave up that career to work among the Huron Indians in the New World, and in 1636, he and his companions, under the leadership of Jean de Brébeuf,

arrived in Quebec. The Hurons were constantly warred upon by the Iroquois, and in a few years Father Jogues was captured by the Iroquois and imprisoned for 13 months. His letters and journals tell how he and his companions were led from village to village, how they were beaten, tortured, and forced to watch as their Huron converts were mangled and killed.

An unexpected chance for escape came to Isaac Jogues through the Dutch, and he returned to France, bearing the marks of his sufferings. Several fingers had been cut, chewed, or burnt off. Pope Urban VIII gave him permission to offer Mass with his mutilated hands: "It would be shameful that a martyr of Christ not be allowed to drink the Blood of Christ."

In 1646, he and Jean de Lalande, who had offered his services to the missionaries, set out for Iroquois country in the belief that a recently signed peace treaty would be observed. They were captured by a Mohawk war party, and on October 18, Father Jogues was tomahawked and beheaded. Jean de Lalande was killed the next day at Ossernenon.

René Goupil who with Lalande, had offered his services as an oblate was tortured along with Isaac Jogues in 1642, and was tomahawked for having made the sign of the cross on the brow of some children. Father Anthony Daniel, working among Hurons who were gradually becoming Christian, was killed by Iroquois on July 4, 1648. His body was thrown into his chapel, which was set on fire. Jean de Brébeuf was a French Jesuit who came to Canada at the age of 32 and labored there for 24 years. He composed catechisms and a dictionary in Huron and saw 7,000 converted before his death in 1649. Having been captured by the Iroquois at Sainte Marie, near Georgian Bay, Canada, Father Brébeuf died after four hours of extreme torture.

Gabriel Lalemant had taken a fourth vow, to sacrifice his life for the Native Americans. He was horribly tortured to death along with Father Brébeuf. Father Charles Garnier was shot to death in 1649 as he baptized children and catechumens during an Iroquois attack. Father Noel Chabanel also was killed in 1649, before he could answer his recall to France. He had found it exceedingly hard to adapt to mission life. He could not learn the language, and the food and life of the Indians disgusted him, plus he suffered spiritual dryness during his whole stay in Canada. Yet he made a vow to remain in his mission until death.

These eight Jesuit martyrs of North America were canonized in 1930.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**The preacher must keep preaching, the teacher must keep teaching,
the parent must keep loving, caring, educating and forming the character of children
and that is the challenge of being steadfast!**