

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Do not seek to have everything that happens happen as you wish
but wish for everything to happen as it actually does happen,
and your life will be serene.**

(Epictetus)

Isaiah 55:10-11

Chapter 55 of Isaiah invites us to come to God, to listen to God's wisdom, to be fed and nourished on God's word of wisdom, to renounce the way of foolishness and wickedness and to turn to God and God's ways. The prophet says God's ways are not our ways. So, seek the Lord and his ways! God's word is alive, active, and dynamic. God's word is faithful word and the word will become fruitful and life-giving.

Nourish and strengthen yourselves with God's word.

Psalms 65

In the days of the temple, the Harvest Thanksgiving Service and the celebration of New Year were conjoined in an eight-day-long festival. This also included how God had re-created Israel when he brought them out of slavery in Egypt.

This psalm puts together two aspects of God's favor (Grace) for His people: (1) God is all-grace in redeeming his people from Egypt and in forgiving their sins. Forgiveness re-creates a person and lets him be a new man; (2) God is all-grace in controlling the powers of nature and giving his people a good harvest. God had fed them spiritually and materially and that calls forth gratitude and praise.

**You have visited the land and watered it;
greatly you have enriched it.
God's watercourses are filled;
you have prepared the grain.**

Romans 8:18-23

Paul had taught the Christians in Rome that they were no longer under the influence of sin but were filled with the spirit of Jesus and were under the influence of the spirit.

Because of Jesus and his perfect obedience, we are filled with a power that is not our own and are offered a life not dominated by the flesh, but by the spirit of God. If we do not live in the spirit, we die. The spirit helps us to put to death evil desires and tendencies.

In this excerpt, Paul says that he considers all the sufferings as nothing compared to the glory of being sons of God, freed from the corruption of sin. In fact, the whole creation longs for this liberation.... "all creation groans and is in agony even now". Our longing is that we will live the redeemed life in peace with God and experience a world transformed by the spirit of Jesus.

Take a few moments to get in touch with the longings of your heart!

Mathew 13:1-23

Jesus began to teach them in parables. In this Gospel passage, we read about the parable of the farmer going out to sow seeds. The seeds, which fell on various kinds of unproductive soil, failed to yield and the seeds, which fell on good soil, yielded abundance.

The farmer keeps sowing knowing well that some of the seeds may fall on the wayside or among thorns or on rocky ground and may become unproductive. But he knows that some will fall on good soil and will yield. He also knows that if he wants a good harvest, he has to prepare the soil, he has to choose good seeds, he has to sow and allow the seeds to sprout. He knows that if he wants a good harvest, he has to sow even if some seeds may not meet his expectations.

The preacher must keep preaching, the teacher must keep teaching, the parent must keep loving, caring, educating and forming the character of children...knowing well that all that is taught may not be learned, all the love may not be fruitful, all children may not learn, all efforts may not be successful.....

Be faithful to your calling! All you do may not be successful in your eyes. The real success lies in your fidelity to who you are and what you have come to know as your calling. Just be faithful!

Jesus shared some practical wisdom with his disciples. To the man who has, more will be given and from the man who has not, even what he has, will be taken away. The more you know, the more you are capable of knowing; the more you train the body, the more able it becomes; the more the effort, the more the result; the more responsibility one shoulders, the more one is able to accept responsibility; the more you work with a skill, the more developed the skill becomes; the diligent and the hard-working may get more and more while the lazy and careless may lose even what he has..... This is the law of

increase, growth, and development. When we overcome one weakness or problem, our capacity to overcome other difficulties and problems increases.

Every good thing we do, every act of sacrifice we make, every act of kindness we show, etc. make us better persons..... Keep doing the good you can do!

Jesus called the disciples to remember how blessed they were. They have seen what many in history only dreamed of.

Remember, with gratitude, how blessed you are: to see what you see; to know what you know; to touch what you touch; to feel what you feel..... Be grateful!!!

Saint of the Day, July 12 - St. John Jones and 25 other saints are remembered this day

John Jones was born in Wales into a Welsh family, who had remained faithful Roman Catholics throughout the Protestant Reformation. He was ordained a diocesan priest and was imprisoned in the Marshalsea under the name Robert Buckley from 1582 to about 1585 for administering the sacraments. By summer 1586 he was out on bond, but in 1587 confined at Wisbech Castle. He left England, either escaped or exiled, in 1590 and at the age of sixty joined the Conventual Franciscans at Pontoise. Afterwards he went to Rome, where he lived among the Observant Friars of the Ara Coeli. After a time he was sent back by his superiors to the English mission. He reached London towards the end of 1592, and stayed temporarily at the house which Father John Gerard, S.J., had provided for missionary priests. He ministered to Catholics in the English countryside until his arrest in 1596.

In 1596 the 'priest catcher' Richard Topcliffe was informed by a spy that Father Jones had visited two Catholics and had said Mass in their home. It was later shown that the two Catholics were actually in prison when the alleged offense took place. Regardless, Jones was arrested, severely tortured and scourged.

Following his torture, Jones was imprisoned for nearly two years. During this time Jones helped sustain John Rigby in his faith, who later also became one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales. On July 3, 1598 Father Jones was tried on the charge of "going over the seas in the first year of Her majesty's reign (1558) and there being made a priest by the authority from Rome and then returning to England contrary to statute". He was convicted of high treason and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered.

The execution was delayed by about an hour because the hangman forgot to bring a rope. Jones used the time to preach to the people and answer their questions. When the time came to draw away the cart, the hangman whipped the horses; but they were

held back by three or four fellows till Jones had finished what he was saying. John Jones' dismembered remains were fixed atop poles on roads leading to Newington and Lambeth. His remains were later reputedly removed by at least two Catholic Englishmen, one of whom suffered a long imprisonment for this offense. He was canonized on October 25, 1970 by Pope Paul VI as one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales, who are commemorated on that date.

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