

# Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday, the Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we reflected on the Scripture readings calling us to look beyond the transitory and passing realities of the material world and focus our attention on the eternal existence of love and truth. We are called not only to look beyond, but also to go beyond the immediate and the momentary.

To go beyond is a call for transcendence at every moment of our life, to a leap of faith to do God's will in every moment of our life.

We are called to go beyond our hurts, resentments, wounds, and experience the new lease of life in forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. Human condition is graced by God, but it is also marred by sinful lapses of human beings.

We are called to go beyond narrow loyalties, collective and individual prejudices, to universal embrace of love and openness. We have to admit honestly that a host of prejudices and narrow loyalties consciously or unconsciously color our perspectives, our attitudes.

We are called to proclaim the universal embrace of love that transcends all barriers of race, color, or nation. We are called to be sensitive to the needs, the feelings, the concerns and struggles of others and reach out in compassion.

We are called to go beyond our needs to the needs of others through delicate and sensitive attentiveness marked with cordiality, respect, and gentleness.

We live in a busy and noisy world. We are called to go beyond doing things and being busy to silence, to reflective living, to cultivate solitude within. We are called to listen to the Holy Spirit speaking from within. Without silence and solitude, no one can hear what God says at any moment in time.

I want to encourage you to take a few moments each day of this week to be still and to reflect on how your day has been. Reflect on what aspect of your life needs going beyond...

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

# **Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**August 1-6, 2022**

**Every believer in this world of ours must be a spark of light,  
a center of love, a vivifying leaven amidst his fellow men.  
And he will be this all the more perfectly,  
the more closely he lives in communion with God in the intimacy of his own soul.  
(Pope John XXIII)**

## **August 1 – Monday, Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Want to simplify? Establish routines.  
Routines can help you keep your life simple.**

### **Jeremiah 28:1-17**

Jeremiah tried to bring hope to his people. He encouraged his people to trust in God to free them from the “yoke” of Babylon and give them freedom. The peace that they would find is not the work of men but the gift of God.

**Seek the peace that only God can give you.**

### **Psalm 119 - Remove from me the way of falsehood...**

### **Mathew 14:13-21**

After feeding five thousand with fives loaves and a couple of fish, Jesus withdrew to the mountain alone for prayer. He sent the disciples ahead of him to the other side of the lake and they had to face strong headwinds. Jesus came to them on the troubled waters.

**The Lord reaches out to us when we are in troubled waters and are facing strong headwinds.  
Be confident...stand strong.... hold your heads high!**

The disciples were so frightened that they did not recognize the Lord reaching out to them. Fear has a way of blinding our eyes while simple faith opens our eyes. Peter saw his master and wanted to walk across to him over the troubled waters and he did. Peter lost his focus.....he saw how headstrong the wind was.....he became frightened, lost his strength and began to sink into the deep water.

Faith gives us a new vision...a vision of strength, of the presence of something and of someone far greater than ourselves in whom we can put our trust and face what must be faced.

**Stay focused! Keep your eyes on the Lord and his strength!**

**Saint of the day, August 1 - St. Alphonsus Liguori and 33 other saints are remembered this day.**

Alphonsus Maria de Liguori was born on September 27, 1696 in Marianella near Naples, Italy. His parents provided him with an exceptional education in philosophy, literature, and the arts. At the University of Naples, he received, at the age of 16, a doctorate in both canon and civil law. When he was 18, like many nobles, he joined the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mercy with whom he cared for the sick at the hospital for "incurables," washing afflicted bodies, feeding the helpless, changing bedclothes and devoting himself to works of mercy and compassion.

Following his father's will he became a lawyer and before he was 20, he was regarded as one of the most gifted lawyers working in the kingdom of Naples. After losing what was the most important court case he had ever taken on, Alphonsus left the legal profession to enter the priesthood, much to the disappointment of his father. He was ordained a priest in 1726 and concentrated his pastoral efforts on parish missions, hearing confessions, forming Christian groups.

He founded the Redemptorist congregation in 1732. It was an association of priests and brothers living a common life, dedicated to the imitation of Christ, and working mainly in popular missions for peasants in rural areas. The congregation was formally approved 17 years later. Alphonsus' great pastoral reforms were in the pulpit and confessional, replacing the pompous oratory of the time with simplicity, and the rigorism of Jansenism with kindness. He fought for the liberation of moral theology from the rigidity of Jansenism. His moral theology, which went through 60 editions in the century following him, concentrated on the practical and concrete problems of pastors and confessors.

He was made bishop at the age of 66 and at once instituted a thorough reform of his diocese. At the age of 71, he was afflicted with rheumatic pains which left incurable bending of his neck. He suffered a final 18 months of "dark night" scruples, fears, temptations against every article of faith and every virtue, interspersed with intervals of light and relief, when ecstasies were frequent. He died August 1, 1787 at Pagani, Italy

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## **August 2 – Tuesday, Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Create a simple system for your household activities.  
A simple system will keep everything in good order.**

### **Jeremiah 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22**

Jeremiah reflects on the plight of his people and sees them as a people with “incurable wound and grievous bruise”. He offers his people hope: God will restore their nation and give them a renewed sense of being God’s special people: “You shall be my people and I will be your God”.

### **Psalm 102 - The nations shall revere your name, O Lord...**

### **Mathew 15:1-2, 10-14**

This excerpt from Mathew describes the conflict that was developing between the Pharisees, scribes and Jesus. The question here is about ceremonial or ritual purification which the disciples of Jesus did not observe, and Jesus didn’t seem disturbed by it. Jesus challenged his listeners and adversaries to go beyond the rituals purifications to keeping the heart clean and pure, to go beyond man-made traditions to the law of God. For the Pharisees and scribes religion consisted of many and detailed external observances.

**Jesus taught his listeners that what really matters is not how we act but why. Man sees the deed, but God sees the heart, the intention, the motivation.**

What really matters is what is in one’s heart. Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure of heart, they will see God”. No one can call himself good because he follows certain rules and regulations and observes certain customs and traditions. Ceremonial observances do not guarantee inner purification. One is good when the heart is good and pure.

### **Saint of the day, August 2 - St. Eusebius of Vercelli and 10 other saints are remembered this day**

Eusebius was born in Sardinia, around March 2, 283. After his father's martyrdom, he was taken to Rome by his mother. He became the first bishop in Vercelli in northern Italy around the year 340, elected by the local leaders recognizing his piety. He founded a priestly community in Vercelli that resembled a monastic community. He was the first bishop to live in common with the clergy, devoting his best energies to form them in piety and zeal.

In 354, He was sent by Pope Liberius to persuade the emperor to call a council to settle Catholic-Arian troubles. When it was called at Milan, Eusebius went reluctantly, sensing that the Arian block would have its way, although the Catholics were more numerous. He refused to go along with the condemnation of Saint Athanasius; instead, he laid the Nicene Creed on the table and insisted that all sign it before taking up any other matter. The emperor put pressure on him, but Eusebius insisted on Athanasius' innocence and reminded the emperor that secular force should not be used to influence Church decisions. At first the emperor threatened to kill him, but later sent him into exile in Palestine. There the Arians dragged him through the streets and shut him up in a little room, releasing him only after his four-day hunger strike. They resumed their harassment shortly after.

His exile continued in Asia Minor and Egypt, until the new emperor permitted him to be welcomed back to his see in Vercelli. Eusebius attended the Council of Alexandria with Athanasius and approved the leniency shown to bishops who had wavered. Once back in Vercelli in 363, he continued to be a leader with Hilary of Poitiers in defeating Arianism in the Western Church and was one of the chief opponents of the Arian bishop Auxentius of Milan. Eusebius died peacefully in 370 or 371 in his own diocese at an advanced age.

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### **August 3 - Wednesday, Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simplify your life by learning to live frugally...buying less,  
wanting less and hoarding less.**

#### **Jeremiah 31:1-7**

Jeremiah continued to bring hope to a people whom he described as suffering from an "incurable wound and grievous bruise". He assured his people that the Lord has loved them with "age-old love". The lord will deliver and restore his people. So be confident and "shout with joy".

**Response: Jeremiah 31:10-13 - Hear the word of the Lord, O nations...**

#### **Mathew 15:21-28**

This excerpt must be understood in light of the friction that continued to exist between Christians from Jewish background and pagan converts. It was basically a tension between

classic Jewish exclusionism and the universal will of salvation of all people, revealed in Jesus.

This excerpt teaches us that faith breaks down barriers between Jews and Gentiles and in fact faith breaks down all barriers. “Woman, you have great faith. Your wish will come to pass”, Jesus said to the Canaanite woman.

**Let your faith make you free to love all people.**

**Be open-minded! Cultivate respect for all. Break down barriers that keep you apart from other people and cultures and religious traditions.**

### **Saint of the Day, August 3 - St. Peter Julian Eymard and 11 other saints are remembered this day**

Peter Julian Eymard was born on February 4, 1811 at La Mure, Isère in the French Alps. When his mother died in 1828 Julian resolved to enter the novitiate of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and, despite his father's opposition, did so in June 1829. His first attempt as a seminarian ended because of serious illness. Throughout his life, he suffered from poor health, particularly ‘weakness of the lungs’ and migraine headaches.

After his father's death in 1831, he succeeded, with the help of his former superior, in gaining admission to the major seminary of the Grenoble diocese. On July 20, 1834, he was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Grenoble and was assigned as assistant pastor at the town of Chatte, and three years later, appointed pastor of Mount Saint-Eynard. He was dissatisfied with parish work and decided to join the Marists (the Society of Mary). On August 20, 1837, he entered the Society of Mary seminary at Lyon and made his profession in February 1840. He worked with lay organizations promoting devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to the Eucharist, particularly in the Forty Hours Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. He rose to the position of Provincial of the Society at Lyon in 1844.

After praying at the shrine of Our Lady of Fourviere on January 21, 1851, Peter Julian Eymard moved to establish a Marist community dedicated to eucharistic adoration. However, his desire to establish a separate fraternity promoting adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was not seen as part of the charism of the Marists. His superiors disapproved, transferring him to the Marist College at La Seyne-sur-Mer. Eventually, he resolved to leave the Society of Mary to begin his new religious congregation with the diocesan priest Raymond de Cuers. On May 13, 1856, the Paris bishops consented to his plans for a ‘Society of the Blessed Sacrament’. After many trials, Peter Julian Eymard and Raymond de Cuers established public exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in Paris on January 6, 1857.

The Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament began working with children in Paris to prepare them to receive their First Communion. It also reached out to non-practicing Catholics, inviting

them to repent and begin receiving Communion again. Father Eymard established a common rule for the members of the society and worked toward papal approval. A second community was established in Marseille in 1859, and a third in Angers in 1862. Pope Pius IX granted a Decree of Approbation in June 1863. Peter Julian Eymard died on August 1, 1868 and was canonized on December 9, 1962 by Pope John XXIII.

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## **August 4 - Thursday, Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Want to simplify your life? Learn to be content with “enough.”  
Let enough be your abundance!**

### **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

Jeremiah says that the Lord will make a new covenant, not like the one that was broken. The Lord will write his law in the hearts of all people from the least to the greatest because the Lord will forgive the sins of his people and “remember their sins no more”.

### **Psalm 51 - A clean heart create for me, God...**

### **Mathew 16:13-23**

Jesus changes the name of Simon to Peter. Change of name implies radical change, change of character and lifestyle...becoming a new person.

Jesus asked Peter, “Who do you say I am?” This is a question of relationship - not information. The question was about who Jesus had become for Peter and the other disciples. It is a question that all of us must continue to answer...

“You are the Messiah!” “You are the rock!” These are responses of commitment, of covenant, of lasting, enduring, eternal relationships...Jesus and Peter defined each other and affirmed each other in lasting relationship.

Jesus affirms that this confession and commitment are not born of reason or logic but of Grace... “flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my heavenly father...” Peter’s confession is affirmed and proclaimed as a gift of Grace. As St. Augustine would say, even our longing for God is God’s gift.

**Jesus also points out that those of us who confess and commit ourselves to him must learn to live in conflict and tension...that the Father will gift us with the power to live out our commitment... “the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail...”**

**Saint of the day, August 4 - St. John Vianney and 13 other saints are remembered this day.**

Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney (John Vianney) was born on May 8, 1786 in Dardilly, France and was baptized the same day. As his education had been disrupted by the French Revolution, he struggled in his studies, particularly with Latin, but worked hard to learn. In 1802, the Catholic Church was reestablished in France and religious freedom and peace spread throughout the country. Unfortunately, in 1809, John was drafted into Napoleon Bonaparte's armies.

Two days into his service, John fell ill and required hospitalization. As his troop continued, he stopped in at a church where he prayed. There he met a young man who volunteered to return him to his group, but instead led him deep into the mountains where military deserters met. John lived with them for one year and two months. He used the name Jerome Vincent and opened a school for the nearby village of Les Noes' children.

John remained in Les Noes and hid when gendarmes (armed force) came in search of deserters until 1810, when deserters were granted amnesty. Now free, John returned to Écully and resumed his ecclesiastic studies. He was ordained priest on August 12, 1815 and eventually appointed parish priest of the Ars parish.

When he began his priestly duties, Fr. Vianney realized many were either ignorant or indifferent to religion as a result of the French Revolution. Many danced and drank on Sundays or worked in their fields. Fr. Vianney spent much time in confession and often delivered homilies against blasphemy and dancing. He spent 11 to twelve hours each day working to reconcile people with God. In the summer months, he often worked 16-hour days and refused to retire. His fame spread until people began to travel to him in 1827. Within thirty years, it is said that he received up to 20,000 pilgrims each year.

By 1853, Fr. Vianney had attempted to run away from Ars four times, each attempt with the intention of becoming a monk but decided after the final time that it was not to be. Six years later, he passed away on August 4, 1859 at the age of 73 and was canonized on May 31, 1925.

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**August 5 – Friday, Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simplify your life by removing distractions  
and focusing on the essential.**

## **Nahum 2:1, 3; 3:1-3, 6-7**

Nahum calls his people to rejoice and celebrate and fulfill their vows to Yahweh because the Lord, Yahweh is restoring his people and renewing his covenant. He encouraged his people to trust in the word of Yahweh. The greatest of earth's glories, if not built on the foundation of God's word, will surely pass away.

## **Deuteronomy 32:35-41 - Learn then that I alone am God...**

## **Mathew 16:24-28**

Intimate relationship calls forth commitment which involves suffering, pain, self-sacrifice, self-surrender and total giving in death...Yet there is always "resurrection", newness, new life, new growth, new possibilities.....each person being graced, blessed and rewarded according to "his conduct", according the way he/she lived!

The Jews waited for the Messiah, conqueror, and King. To them, Jesus spoke of the terrible experience he would go through, the experience of the cross which his disciples would also have to take up. How different from the idea of conqueror King! Jesus came not with avenging armies but giving His life and he called his disciples to do the same.

**The cost of being a disciple of Jesus is great...deny self, take up the cross and follow the master.....but the reward is greater still...welcome into the kingdom of the Father, into the eternal presence of steadfast love and grace!**

## **Saint of the day, August 5 - Dedication of Saint Mary Major Basilica and 14 other saints are remembered this day**

This feast commemorates the dedication of the rebuilt Basilica Saint Mary Major by Pope Sixtus III, just after the First Council of Ephesus in 431. This major basilica, located on the summit of the Esquiline Hill in Rome, is called the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore because it is the largest church in Rome dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The original church was built during the pontificate of Pope Liberius (352–366), and is thus sometimes known as the Basilica Liberii or Basilica Liberiana. First raised at the order of Pope Liberius in the mid-fourth century, the Liberian basilica was rebuilt by Pope Sixtus III shortly after the Council of Ephesus affirmed Mary's title as Mother of God in 431. Rededicated at that time to the Mother of God, St. Mary Major is the largest church in the world honoring God through Mary. Standing atop one of Rome's seven hills, the Esquiline, it has survived many restorations without losing its character as an early Roman basilica. Its interior retains three

naves divided by colonnades in the style of Constantine's era. Fifth-century mosaics on its walls testify to its antiquity.

St. Mary Major is one of the four Roman basilicas known as patriarchal cathedrals in memory of the first centers of the Church. St. John Lateran represents Rome, the See of Peter; St. Paul Outside the Walls, the See of Alexandria, allegedly the see presided over by Mark; St. Peter's, the See of Constantinople; and St. Mary's, the See of Antioch, where Mary is supposed to have spent most of her later life.

One legend, unreported before the year 1000, gives another name to this feast: Our Lady of the Snows. According to that story, a wealthy Roman couple pledged their fortune to the Mother of God. In affirmation, she produced a miraculous summer snowfall and told them to build a church on the site. The legend was long celebrated by releasing a shower of white rose petals from the basilica's dome every August 5.

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## **August 6 - Transfiguration of the Lord**

**Simplify your life by creating routines for the start and end of your day.**

### **Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14**

Daniel describes four beasts that rose up out of the sea, the abode of evil and chaos. The beasts represented the Babylonian, Median, Persian and Greek kingdoms which have been oppressing the Jewish people. The beasts were condemned to the fire. In his vision, Daniel saw the son of man coming on the clouds with power, glory and dominion. He saw thousands ministering to the son of man. The powers of the "beasts", the earthly kingdoms could not stand against the power of God whose kingdom is eternal.

**The vision of Daniel invites us to hope for the day when all powers will be brought together under the one power of God, when all nations and peoples will serve the one true God of love and compassion.**

### **Psalm 97 - The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice...**

## **2 Peter 1:16-19**

The early Christians had a difficult time living out their newfound faith in a hostile environment. The author of this letter writes about his own personal experience of Jesus in glory and splendor in an effort to support and strengthen the growing and struggling community of Christians. They had to struggle with many erroneous teachers as well as with the delay in the coming of Christ, which they believed was imminent.

The author shares these thoughts with his readers as the thoughts of Peter, their leader in faith. He invites his readers and us today to hang on to the hope of “transfigured glory”, to stand strong in the face of trials and difficulties and walk faithfully to the end.

## **Luke 9:28-36**

In this excerpt from Luke, we read about the voice of God declaring Jesus as “my Son, my Chosen One” and calling all disciples to listen to him. In the presence of Jesus, transfigured in glory, Peter, James and John felt secure, happy, at home. They felt they had reached the end of their journey and they were not ready to move on - they just wanted to stay in their experience of comfort, joy, security and glory.

**Rejoice in experiences of joy, success, greatness, wonder, glory, happiness - all of life’s peak experiences and be grateful!**

They had found a temporary serenity and security. But the journey of Jesus was not complete and the disciple’s journey was not complete either. They had to leave this experience, come down the mountain and accept life with all its joys and sorrows, even accept the cross and eventual death.

**They had to continue their journey into the unknown, uncertain and insecure future. They had to walk in mystery!**

The journey of Jesus would take him to the cross and then to unending glory. His disciples must follow and travel a similar path. On their way, Jesus would serve as their map, their route, their guide and eventually their way - and the way, the journey and the end of the journey become one.

**Be prepared to accept the inconveniences, suffering, pain, cross - all of life’s struggles. Be strong and stand strong in faith during difficult times.**

**Saint of the day, August 6 - Transfiguration of the Lord and 203 other saints are remembered this day.**

This feast remembers Jesus being transfigured and becoming radiant in glory upon a mountain. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36) describe it, and the Second Epistle of Peter also refers to it (2 Peter 1:16–18). It has also been hypothesized that the first chapter of the Gospel of John alludes to it in John 1:14. In these accounts, Jesus and three of his apostles, Peter, James, and John, go to a mountain to pray. On the mountain, Jesus begins to shine with bright rays of light. Then the prophets Moses and Elijah appear next to him and he speaks with them. The disciples heard the voice of God declaring Jesus as “my Son, my Chosen One” and calling all disciples to listen to him.

Tradition names Mount Tabor as the site of the revelation. A church first raised there in the fourth century was dedicated on August 6. A feast in honor of the Transfiguration was celebrated in the Eastern Church from about that time. Western observance began in some localities about the eighth century. On July 22, 1456, Crusaders defeated the Turks at Belgrade. News of the victory reached Rome on August 6, and Pope Callistus III placed the feast on the Roman calendar the following year.

Many Christian traditions, including the Eastern Orthodox, Catholic Church and Anglican churches, commemorate the event in the Feast of the Transfiguration, a major festival.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin.  
Beginning makes the conditions perfect.**