

# Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

P. O. Box 440, Whitehouse, Texas 75791

[www.wellspringcommunity.net](http://www.wellspringcommunity.net)

[frigus@suddenlink.net](mailto:frigus@suddenlink.net)

June 27, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Thoughts of giving faithful witness to Christ continues through the many the Scripture readings of this week as it did yesterday. We remember the great St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Irenaeus, St. Peter and Paul, The first martyrs of Rome, St. Junipero Serra, and St. Bernardino Realino – all of them are outstanding witness to Christ and his mission. Let us draw inspiration from their amazing, dynamic, and often conflicting lives.

We are blessed to have these great men to inspire us and move us to faithfulness. It is a gift to know faithful people, people who have made mistakes and rose to heights of fidelity and people whose inner strength urges them to be faithful, even when it costs them much. Their lives tell us that faithfulness is possible, though not easy. Failures and mistakes may happen, but we can rise above the failures and mistakes and become more faithful. Faithful people reflect God's faithfulness. Faithfulness is the characteristic of a person who simply loves and inspires a sense of confidence and trust in another, even when things don't seem to be going well. Faithful people know what it means to hang-in-there and do their best to fulfill their God-given mission in life.

On one occasion, Jesus was addressing the crowd and his mother and relatives came to speak with him (Mathew 12:46-50). When someone told Jesus about it, he said, "who is my mother and who are my brothers.....whoever does the will of my Father is brother and sister and mother to me". Jesus spoke of a new kind of relationship, one that is born of faithfulness, obedience, and surrender to the will of the one you love...one that goes far beyond blood relationships. Nothing can break the "blood connection" and yet we know that "blood ties" don't necessarily create a bond of love or dedication or affection.

Real relationships, true connections and bonds of love are established around shared goals, shared ideals, shared conflicts, shared cause, shared obedience – shared life and mission. Jesus calls us to enter into a relationship of love and obedience....an obedience that binds us together as brothers and sisters in Jesus, sons and daughters of the heavenly Father. Our common obedience makes us true brothers and sisters. I encourage you take a few moments each day of this week to reflect on how your day has been, and how faithful you have been to God and God's will and purpose for you.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

# Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time

June 27 to July 2, 2022

Dear Jesus, help us to spread Your fragrance everywhere we go.  
Flood our souls with Your Spirit and life.  
Penetrate and possess our whole being, so utterly,  
that our lives may only be a radiance of Yours.  
Shine through us, and be so in us,  
that every soul we come in contact with may feel Your presence in our soul.  
(John Henry Cardinal Newman)

**June 27 – Monday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**The simple are transparent and non-pretentious!**

**Amos 2:6-10, 13-16**

Amos reminds his people about the forgiving and healing presence of the Lord among his people. The Lord is a forgiving God. He has delivered his people from bondage and set them free. He has destroyed the enemies of his people. Now God's people must walk faithfully and gratefully.

**Psalm 50** - Consider this, you who forget God...

**Mathew 8:18-22**

A scribe wanted to follow Jesus. This in itself is a miracle that a scribe should call Jesus "teacher" and wanted to follow him - shows the impact Jesus had on others. It is good to remember that your personality, your presence, has an impact on others.

**Make your presence creative, life-giving, supportive - a blessing and grace for others.**

Count the cost before you make choices and decisions. Don't get carried away with feelings and ideas of the moment..... Learn to discern choices.

Seize the opportunity when it comes. There is tragedy in "unseized" moments. When you have come to know the urgency of getting out of a situation or into a situation, choose to do so. Do not wait for tomorrow.

**May God give us strength to make choices and decisions that will save us from the tragedy of “unseized” moments.**

## **Saint of the Day, June 27 - St. Cyril of Alexandria and 14 other saints are remembered this day**

Little is known for certain of Cyril's early life. He was most likely born in Alexandria, the metropolis of ancient Egypt, between 370 and 380. A few years after his birth, his maternal uncle Theophilus rose to the powerful position of Patriarch of Alexandria. His mother remained close to her brother and under his guidance, Cyril was educated. From his writings, it appears that he received a solid literary and theological education. When Theophilus died in 412, Cyril was chosen to succeed him at the head of the Egyptian Church. He continued his uncle's policy of insisting on Alexandria's preeminence within the Church over Constantinople, despite the political prominence of the imperial capital. The two Eastern churches eventually re-established communion in approximately 418.

Ten years later, however, a theological dispute caused a new break between Alexandria and Constantinople. Cyril's reputation as a theologian, and later as Doctor of the Church, arose from his defense of Catholic orthodoxy during this time. In 428, a monk named Nestorius became the new Patriarch of Constantinople. It became clear that Nestorius was not willing to use the term “Mother of God” (“Theotokos”) to describe the Virgin Mary. Instead, he insisted on the term “Mother of Christ” (“Christotokos”).

During the fourth century, the Greek Church had already held two ecumenical councils to confirm Christ's eternal preexistence as God prior to his incarnation as a man. From this perennial belief, it followed logically that Mary was the mother of God. Veneration of Mary as “Theotokos” confirmed the doctrine of the incarnation, and Christ's status as equal to the God the Father.

Nestorius insisted that he, too, held these doctrines. But to Cyril, and many others, his refusal to acknowledge Mary as the Mother of God seemed to reveal a heretical view of Christ which would split him into two united but distinct persons: one fully human and born of Mary, the other fully divine and not subject to birth or death. Cyril responded to this heretical tendency first through a series of letters to Nestorius (which are still in existence and studied today), then through an appeal to the Pope, and finally through the summoning of an ecumenical council in 431. Cyril presided over this council, stating that he was “filling the place of the most holy and blessed Archbishop of the Roman Church,” Pope Celestine, who had authorized it.

The council was a tumultuous affair. Patriarch John of Antioch, a friend of Nestorius, came to the city and convened a rival council which sought to condemn and depose Cyril. Tension between the advocates of Cyril and Nestorius erupted into physical violence at times, and both parties sought to convince the emperor in Constantinople to back their position. During the

council, which ran from June 22 to July 31, 431, Cyril brilliantly defended the orthodox belief in Christ as a single eternally divine person who also became incarnate as a man. The council condemned Nestorius, who was deposed as patriarch and later suffered exile. St. Cyril of Alexandria died on June 27, 444, having been a bishop for nearly 32 years. Long celebrated as a saint, particularly in the Eastern Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, he was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1883.

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## **June 28 – Tuesday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simple living means a calendar that's not packed with deadlines and obligations.**

### **Amos 3:1-8; 4:11-12**

Amos challenged his people to be faithful to God's choice. God had chosen Israel over other nations and made them his special people. But his people did not turn to God. Now Amos says that his people should prepare themselves to meet their God.

This reminds us of what Jesus said: I have chosen you; you have not chosen me. Be faithful to the choice God has made for you.

### **Psalm 5 - Because of your abundant mercy...**

### **Mathew 8:23-27**

This is one of the rare stories in the Gospels.... very human, very ordinary, down to earth experience of Jesus and the disciples.

We meet Jesus "soundly" asleep. We meet the disciples who were afraid of the storm but unafraid to wake up their master!

The Sea of Galilee was known for sudden and violent storms. Jesus trusted his men with the boat in an unpredictable Sea and went to sleep. His men woke him up in their urgent need. He woke up to save his men.

What a wonderful relationship between master and disciples...trusting each other...being free with each other.... unafraid of each other!

The Lord trusted his men with his mission and today he trusts us with his mission. It is up to us to trust in his presence, in his being with us in all our needs and to call him in our difficult moments with confidence. Be confident, the Lord is with you!

**Saint of the day, June 28 - St. Irenaeus and 13 other saints are remembered this day.**

Irenaeus was a Greek from Smyrna in Asia Minor, born during the first half of the 2nd century, probably between the years 120 and 140. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was brought up in a Christian family rather than converting as an adult.

During the persecution of Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor from 161–180, Irenaeus was a priest of the Church of Lyon. The clergy of that city, many of whom were suffering imprisonment for the faith, sent him in 177 to Rome with a letter to Pope Eleutherius concerning the heresy of Montanism. While Irenaeus was in Rome, a persecution took place in Lyon. Returning to Gaul, Irenaeus succeeded the martyr Saint Pothinus and became the second bishop of Lyon.

During the religious peace which followed the persecution of Marcus Aurelius, the new bishop divided his activities between the duties of a pastor and of a missionary. Almost all his writings were directed against Gnosticism. The most famous of these writings is *Adversus haereses* (Against Heresies). Irenaeus alludes to coming across Gnostic writings, and holding conversations with Gnostics, and this may have taken place in Asia Minor or in Rome.

The Church is fortunate that Irenaeus was involved in many of its controversies in the second century. He was a student, well trained, no doubt, with great patience in investigating, tremendously protective of apostolic teaching. Instead of proving his opponents wrong, he tried to win them by providing greater understanding. He maintained a very positive attitude toward all and called everyone to praise God by being good and doing good: "The glory of God is man fully alive", he says. The circumstances and details about his death, like those of his birth and early life in Asia Minor, are not at all clear.

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## **June 29 - Saints Peter & Paul, Apostles**

**Simple living focuses on what you love and enjoy.**

### **Acts 12:1-11**

The Lord sent his angel to rescue Peter who slept in prison between two soldiers, fastened with double chains, with guards watching at the door. Luke tells us that four squads of soldiers, that is, sixteen soldiers were guarding Peter. But Peter was freed. Remember what happened at the resurrection. Jesus was in the tomb with a heavy stone across the entrance, guarded by soldiers. Peter came to know what it meant to suffer for the Gospel and to experience the care and protection of God.

**Learn to trust in the abiding, empowering, protecting presence of God in your life!**

### **Psalm 34 - I will bless the Lord at all times...**

### **2 Tim 4:6-8, 17-18**

"The Lord stood by my side and gave me strength - that's how I was saved. He will continue to rescue me....." The author of this letter reflects on the thoughts and feelings of his hero and mentor in the face of his impending demise. He reflects on the cost of discipleship.....life being poured out as libation, time of departure being close at hand, fighting the good fight, running the race to the finish, keeping the faith, etc. This is the real sign and consequence of discipleship, of commitment to Christ. In all this, the real joy lies in being able to say, "I have kept the faith"..... I have been faithful because the Lord was by my side!

**Be faithful... the Lord is by your side!**

### **Mathew 16:13-19**

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, June 29 - Saints Peter and Paul and 6 others are remembered this day.**

Peter, originally known as Simon, was a fisherman by profession. Jesus called him, along with his brother Andrew, James, and John, to leave everything behind to become His follower and he did. At the end of a long journey through Tyre and Sidon and back to Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked what people thought about him and then what his followers have come to know him to be. Peter made a profound confession of faith that Jesus was the Messiah and Jesus gave him the nickname of “rock” (Matthew 16:18). All the Gospel writers list Peter first when naming the apostles of Jesus. However, Peter, the “rock-man”, was weak, imperfect, and so denied having any association with Jesus, three times (Luke 22:61).

St. Peter shows us how challenging and difficult it is to follow the way of Jesus. Peter was martyred, crucified upside down on a cross in the year 64 in Rome. He served as the first bishop of Rome, all the bishops of Rome since then being his successors the Popes.

Paul, originally known as Saul, was a Roman citizen. He was a well-educated Jew and a member of the Pharisee party. He was present at the martyrdom of St. Stephen, the first martyr of the Church (Acts 7:58). He was ruthless in persecuting the Christians. He had a dramatic and radical conversion on his way to Damascus and became a staunch defender of faith in Jesus. Saul the persecutor of Jesus became Paul the proclaimer of Jesus and His Gospel (Acts 9). Paul traveled around most of what was then the Roman Empire, establishing Christian communities. He was also martyred in Rome, three years after St. Peter, in the year 67 AD, by being beheaded since his Roman citizenship would not permit his being crucified.

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**June 30 - Thursday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simple living includes practices that minimizes your possessions  
and curbs your desire for possessions.**

**Amos 7:10-17**

Amos had courage and stood his ground, claiming no connection with a prophetic lineage. He came because “the Lord took me.....and said to me to prophesy to my people Israel....” He had to face conspiracies.....and he warned the king of what was about to happen to the kingdom.....because he found strength in his call.

**Be courageous...stand your ground.....be faithful!**

**Psalm 19 - The law of the Lord is perfect...**

**Mathew 9:1-8**

Jesus affirmed the faith of those who reached out to him and healed a paralyzed man.

**Think of the kind of paralysis, from which, you or someone else you know, need healing and pray about it.**

Why do you harbor evil in your hearts? Jesus asked.

**Reflect on the tendency to harbor evil thoughts about others - may be not evil, but may be unkind, uncharitable, unloving.....**

**Reflect on the need to think “well” of others, to bless others, to see good in others, to bring out the good from others.....**

Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven”. Isn’t that another way of saying, you are acceptable, you are welcome here, you are called to “wholeness”, you don’t have to stay in guilt and shame, you can be better.....

**Saint of the day, June 30 - First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church and 16 other saints re remembered this day.**

This feast first came into the General Roman Calendar in the 1969 calendar reforms. The intention of the feast was to give a general celebration of early Roman martyrs. Prior to the calendar reforms, there were many Roman martyrs commemorated in the calendar. Several of these had little or no historical evidence. This feast is a replacement for the many feasts of Roman martyrs. The placement of the feast is directly after the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, who are the principal patron saints of Rome.

There was a large Jewish population in Rome. Probably as a result of controversy between Jews and Jewish Christians, the Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome in 49-50 A.D. Many returned to Rome after Claudius' death in 54 A.D. In July of 64 A.D., more than half of Rome was destroyed by fire. Nero, who wanted to enlarge his palace, was blamed for this tragedy. He shifted the blame by accusing the Christians. Many Christians were put to death. Peter and Paul were probably among the victims.

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## **July 1 – Friday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simplify your life by reducing your possessions and your consumption.**

### **Amos 8:4-6, 9-12**

In this excerpt, Amos gives us a description of the way the rich in his time treated the poor. They looked for ways to oppress the poor and take advantage of them. The business men went so low as to sell even "the refuse of the wheat". Amos warned them of the day famine will break upon the land if they did not repent and change their ways and become just in their dealings with all people. He said to them that they may not even hear God's word even if they listened because they were unjust to their neighbors.

**Psalm 119 - Happy are they, who observe his decrees...**

### **Mathew 9:9-13**

One of the most unlikely candidates was Mathew and he was called and he followed. Mathew was a man who not only extorted his own people but also swindled the government. Jesus saw not only what Mathew was but also what he could be - So Jesus called and Mathew responded. What does this say to you? What does it mean to you?

**Reflect on what Mathew lost and what Mathew found. He lost a comfortable job, income, security, power.....But he found a new mission, honor, adventure, peace, joy, love, destiny, treasure eternal - wealth that he never dreamed of.**

Jesus sat with Mathew and few others like him. To sit at table with the likes of Mathew!!!!  
Jesus did much more. He dined with Mathew and others like him.

**What does this mean to you, in the context of your own life today?**

“I came not to call the righteous but sinners”. The word used for “call” in Greek here is the technical word for inviting a guest to a house or to a meal.

**Jesus called Mathew and he calls all of us today to the feast of the kingdom.**

**Saint of the day, July 1 - St. Junipero Serra and 16 other saints are remembered this day.**

Saint Junipero Serra was born Miguel José Serra Ferrer in the village of Petra on the island of Mallorca in the Balearic Islands off the Mediterranean coast of Spain. By age seven, Miguel was working in the fields with his parents, helping cultivate wheat and beans, and tending the cattle. At age 16, Miguel's parents enrolled him in a Franciscan school in the capital city, Palma de Majorca, where he studied philosophy. A year later, he became a novice in the Franciscan order. He was given the religious name of Junípero in honor of Brother Juniper, who had been among the first Franciscans and a companion of Francis of Assisi. He immersed himself in rigorous studies of logic, metaphysics, cosmology, and theology. In 1737, he became a priest, and three years later earned an ecclesiastical license to teach philosophy at the Convento de San Francisco.

At the age of 35, he left his prestigious teaching profession and chose to become a missionary to spread the Gospel in the Spanish colonies in the Americas. In 1750 he left Europe and began establishing Catholic missions in Central Mexico and the Baja Peninsula. From 1769 to 1792, he traveled north through Spanish Colonial California and founded missions in San Diego, Monterey/Carmel, San Gabriel, San Luis Obispo, San Francisco, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Clara, and San Buenaventura.

He brought the Gospel to the native peoples, baptizing over 6,000 and confirming 5,000. Fr. Serra also taught them methods of making a living in agriculture, cattle raising, and arts and crafts. Many of the native people died due to disease and harsh treatment by the Spaniards, including overwork, torture, and daily beatings. In Mexico City, Fr. Serra pleaded for and obtained protections for the native people and the missions. This protection was the basis for the first significant legislation in California, a “Bill of Rights” for Native Americans.

Fr. Serra was frequently cold and hungry, faced unsympathetic military commanders, and was in danger of death from non-Christian natives. His zeal for the Lord, however, was strong, and he persevered through prayer. Fr. Serra died in 1784, was beatified in 1988 and canonized by Pope Francis on September 23, 2015.

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## **July 2 - Saturday, Thirteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Simplify your life by slowing down  
and reducing the sense of urgency or busyness.**

### **Amos 9:11-15**

Amos looks forward to the day when the Lord will restore Israel and rebuild the fallen kingdom of David. He promises his people that the Lord will redeem his people and new beginnings will be marked by radical change.

### **Psalm 85 - I will hear what God proclaim...**

### **Mathew 9:14-17**

Religion by rule seems to be a standard for many. Some even make an agony of their religion. Many have the idea, like the Jews of the time of Jesus, that a person was not being religious unless he/she was being uncomfortable. If it is not bitter, it is not medicine. If it is not uncomfortable, it is not religion.

Jesus brings in a new vision; you don't have to be uncomfortable. In fact, you need to rejoice. More than once, Jesus compared the Christian life to a wedding feast.

### **Joy is the primary characteristic of Christian life!**

A passion for the old and closed mind will not allow change, growth, transformation. Never be afraid of change! Remain open to new approaches, new methods, new possibilities.....

**A thing has "always" been done may be a reason "not to" do it. And a thing has "never been" done may be a reason for trying it.**

**However, be discerning and wise in choosing the new. Fearlessness is a good thing. Recklessness brings disaster.**

## **Saint of the day, July 2 - St. Bernardino Realino and 20 other saints are remembered this day**

Bernardino Realino was born into a noble family in Carpi, Italy on December 1, 1530. He began his studies in philosophy and medicine in Bologna but later changed to the study of law. He graduated with a doctorate in both civil and canon law. He served as a judge in Felizzano and as the chief tax collector in Alessandria. He became noted in these places for his legal brilliance and learning. In 1554 he was summoned to Naples to assume the position of auditor and lieutenant general.

In Naples, moved by a Jesuit priest's sermon, he came to the realization that he had a religious vocation. He joined the Jesuits on October 13, 1564 and was ordained to the priesthood on May 24, 1567. For three years he devoted himself to the service of the poor and the youth, and then he was sent to Lecce where he remained for the last forty-two years of his life.

St. Bernardino was a model confessor, a powerful preacher, a diligent teacher of the Faith to the young, a dedicated shepherd of souls, as well as Rector of the Jesuit college in Lecce and Superior of the Community there. His charity to the poor and the sick knew no bounds. So greatly was this saint loved and appreciated by his people that in 1616, as he lay on his death bed the city's magistrates formally requested that he should take the city under his protection. Unable to speak, St. Bernardino bowed his head. He died on July 2, 1616 with the names of Jesus and Mary on his lips. He was canonized on June 22, 1947 by Pope Pius XII.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

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