

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, Monday, January 26, is the feast of St. Timothy and St. Titus. The Gospel reading for this feast day is Luke 10:1-9. Jesus said to his disciples, "Look, there is a rich harvest....." Jesus looked at a crowd and saw a rich harvest while the Pharisees looked at the same people and found only sinful, unfaithful people, worthy of judgment and condemnation. Jesus found people to be gathered, to be brought in and not shut out. Jesus wanted his disciples to maintain a positive attitude toward the world around them and gather people in rather than alienate them. A "rich harvest" means that the land is blessed, hard work has become fruitful, hope is fulfilled, joy has come and it is time to celebrate. We have a mandate from the Lord to bring joy into the world.

St. Paul advises us, as he did the Philippians, to make rejoicing a habit, "Rejoice in the Lord always" and again, I say, "Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4). Paul was in prison and the Philippian converts were about to experience the pain of persecution when he gave this advice. Today, we must make this our habit and nurture authentic joy amidst the many unpleasant and often painful things that happen around us.

I know many hard working men and women who are so busy fulfilling their daily chores, duties and obligations that they have no time to be joyful. Being joyful is seen as something that may happen in some distant future, may be some place in heaven! Being joyful is not some project to be accomplished in the future. It is the experience of the present moment. Joyfulness springs from a sense of well-being right now. Now is the moment of Grace. Enjoy every moment you have. You will enjoy it even more when you can share it with someone special. Open yourself to this path of Joy.

An old man had 8 hairs on his head. He went to a Barber shop. The annoyed Barber asked, shall I cut or count? The old man smiled and said, "Color it!" Life is to be enjoyed with whatever is available to you, however small or little it may be. Be joyful! Keep smiling! If you feel stressed, give yourself a break...be still for a few moments...take a minute vacation...have a cup of coffee or tea with family or friends...have some Ice cream or Candy bar or smoothie or whatever brings you joy! Always **remember, STRESSED spelled backwards is DESSERTS!**

May God bless you and help you find joy in Him and in all that you are called to do.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Third Week In Ordinary Time

January 26 - 31, 2026

**Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams.
Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential.
Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in,
but with what it is still possible for you to do.
(Pope John XXIII)**

January 26 – Saints Timothy and Titus

Life is short. Let it be filled with serenity and peace.

2 Timothy 1:1-8

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy to inspire and strengthen him for his mission at Ephesus. In this excerpt, Paul affirms his confidence in Timothy and appreciates his family's heritage. Then he encourages Timothy to cultivate qualities of courage, strength, love, and self-discipline as essential for any Christian teacher.

Psalm 96

**Sing to the Lord a new song,
Sing to the Lord all you lands,
Sing to the Lord, bless his name.....**

Luke 10:1-9

Jesus said to his disciples, "Look, there is a rich harvest....." Jesus looked at a crowd and saw a rich harvest while the Pharisees looked at the same people and found only sinful, unfaithful people worthy of judgment and condemnation. Jesus found people to be gathered, to be brought in and not shut out.....

The disciples of Jesus are called to maintain a positive attitude toward the world around them and gather people in rather than alienate them.....

Disciples of Jesus are called to live a simple life, travel light and not be burdened with stuff that weighs them down.....

Disciples of Jesus are called to be bearers of good news, of peace, of God's forgiving love, of God's healing presence and never to become a burden to others.

Saint of the Day, January 26 - Saints Timothy and Titus and 9 other saints are remembered this day.

Timothy

Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother named Eunice. Being the product of a “mixed” marriage, he was considered illegitimate by the Jews. It was his grandmother, Lois, who first became Christian. We do not have much more information about his birth and early days. Timothy was a convert of Paul around the year 47 and later joined him in his apostolic work. He was with Paul at the founding of the Church in Corinth. During the 15 years he worked with Paul, he became one of his most faithful and trusted friends. He was sent on difficult missions by Paul—often in the face of great disturbance in local churches which Paul had founded.

Timothy was with Paul in Rome during the latter’s house arrest. At some period, Timothy himself was in prison (Hebrews 13:23). Paul installed him as his representative at the Church of Ephesus. Timothy was comparatively young for the work he was doing. “Let no one have contempt for your youth,” Paul writes in 1 Timothy 4:12a. Several references seem to indicate that he was timid. And one of Paul’s most frequently quoted lines was addressed to him: “Stop drinking only water, have a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses” (1 Timothy 5:23). He, probably died around the year 97 A.D.

Titus

We do not know much about the birth and early days of Titus. He has the distinction of being a close friend and disciple of Paul as well as a fellow missionary. He was Greek, apparently from Antioch. Even though Titus was a Gentile, Paul would not let him be forced to undergo circumcision at Jerusalem. Titus is seen as a peacemaker, administrator, great friend. Paul’s second letter to Corinth affords an insight into the depth of his friendship with Titus, and the great fellowship they had in preaching the gospel: “When I went to Troas...I had no relief in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.... For even when we came into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way—external conflicts, internal fears. But God, who encourages the downcast, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus...” (2 Corinthians 2:12a, 13; 7:5-6).

When Paul was having trouble with the community at Corinth, Titus was the bearer of Paul’s severe letter and was successful in smoothing things out. Paul writes he was strengthened not only by the arrival of Titus but also by his encouragement and devotion to Paul. The Letter to Titus addresses him as the administrator of the Christian community on the island of Crete, charged with organizing it, correcting abuses and appointing presbyter-bishops. Titus probably died around 94 A.D..

January 27 – Tuesday, Third Week in Ordinary Time

The key to serenity is trusting that the universe has your back.

(Gabrielle Bernstein)

2 Samuel 6:12-15, 17-19

David brought the Ark of God into the city. He offered a sacrifice, blessed the people and the people celebrated the great event.....David and the people danced for joy because they believed that God had come to stay with them in the symbol of the Ark.

The Ark was the symbol of the presence of God among his people. Today, symbols of the presence of God are all around us. Look around, look within, look beyond, God is present!

Psalm 24

**Lift up, O gates, your lintels,
Reach up, you ancient portals,
That the king of glory may come in!**

Mark 3:31-35

This excerpt tells us about the family of Jesus coming to meet him. Jesus responded by saying, "Whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to me." True relationship may be built on common experiences. Followers of Jesus have a common experience.

True relationship may be built on common interest. Followers of Jesus have a common interest. True relationship may be built on common goal, common purpose, and common missions. Followers of Jesus have a common, shared mission.

True relationship lies, most of all, in a common obedience. Followers of Jesus have a common obedience. **Obedience to God's will make us true brothers and sisters in Christ. Such relationship goes far beyond "blood" relationships.**

Saint of the Day, January 27 - St. Angela Merici and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Angela Merici was born on March 21, 1474 in Desenzano, a small town in Lombardy, Italy. Angela and her older sister became orphans at the age of 10 and went to live with their uncle in Salo. There they led a quiet and devout Catholic Christian life. After the untimely death of her sister, Angela dedicated herself to the Lord and give her life in service to the Church to help

everyone grow closer to the Lord. She joined the Third Order of St. Francis where she also pledged to remain a consecrated virgin, forsaking marriage to one man to be married to the Lord and His Church.

When Angela was 20 years old, her uncle died, and she returned to Desenzano. She found that around her hometown there were many young girls who had no education and no hope. Her heart was moved. She also became distressed by their ignorance and upset at the parents who had not educated them. Angela became convinced that there was great need for a better way of teaching these young girls. So, she opened her own home to them and began to teach them herself. She devotedly taught them the Catholic Christian faith. By her example and instruction, she taught them to pray and participate in the sacramental life of the Church. She evangelized and catechized these young girls, opening them up to the life of grace.

On November 25, 1535, Angela gathered together 12 young virgins and laid down the foundation for the Order of the Ursulines. Her goal was to elevate family life through Christian education for women. The community she founded was different than many of the religious orders of women which existed in her day. She believed it was important to teach the girls in their own homes with their own families. One of her favorite sayings was, "Disorder in society is the result of disorder in the family."

Though the women in the community wore no special religious habit and took no formal vows, Angela wrote a Rule of Life for those who lived and served in the community of women. They did pledge to live a life of consecrated celibacy, poverty and obedience. They lived this Rule of Life within their own homes. This was the first group of consecrated women to work outside of a formal cloister or convent in her day and became the first teaching order of women in the Catholic Church. The community existed as what is called a "secular institute" until years after Angela's death.

Angela Merici died on January 27, 1540. She was beatified on April 30, 1768 by Pope Clement XIII and canonized May 24, 1807 by Pope Pius VII. Her Rule was officially approved by Pope Paul III in 1544 and the Ursulines became a recognized religious community of women with a teaching ministry.

January 28 – Wednesday, Third Week in Ordinary Time

**From serenity comes gentleness, patience and peacefulness,
the strength of your soul.**

2 Samuel 7:4- 17

David had a deep desire to build a house for the Lord. He felt that he lived in a palace and the Lord deserved better. Nathan had a vision in which the Lord revealed to him that it was not up to David to

build a house for God and that God would establish an enduring, lasting Kingdom for David....it was God's doing and not David's...

Psalm 89

**I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David my servant;
Forever will I confirm your posterity,
And establish your throne for all generations.**

Mark 4:1-20

This parable reminds us that the ground may be hard and unprepared to welcome the seed....the ground may be rocky, the soil shallow with little nourishment and moisture and the sprouting seed may wither away....the ground may be full of thorns and the thorns may choke the life out of the sprouting seed... But then, the ground just may be good and clean with deep soil in which the seed can flourish..... So, the Sower must keep sowing.... hoping that the seeds will sprout and grow... Sower must prepare the earth, keep it clean and moist and fertile... Sower must keep a positive attitude.....that harvest will sure happen.....

Parents must educate, teachers must teach, preachers must preach...knowing that all that is heard may not be received, all that is received may not be understood, all that is understood may not be practiced... Keep educating, teaching and preaching and doing the best you can with dynamic hope!

Saint of the Day, January 28 - St. Thomas Aquinas and 20 other saints are remembered this day.

Thomas was born into a wealthy family in the castle of Roccasecca in the Kingdom of Sicily, Italy, in 1225. At the age of five, he was given to the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino in his parents' hopes that he would choose that way of life and eventually become abbot. In 1239 he was sent to Naples to complete his studies. It was here that he was first attracted to Aristotle's philosophy. By 1243, Thomas abandoned his family's plans for him and joined the Dominicans. On his mother's order, Thomas was captured by his brother and kept at home for over a year.

Once free, he went to Paris and then to Cologne, where he finished his studies with Albert the Great. His greatest contribution to the Catholic Church is his writings. The unity, harmony and continuity of faith and reason, of revealed and natural human knowledge, pervades his writings. Unlike many others, Thomas saw reason as a divine gift to be highly cherished.

The Summa Theologica, his last and, unfortunately, uncompleted work, deals with the whole of Catholic theology. He stopped work on it after celebrating Mass on December 6, 1273. When

asked why he stopped writing, he replied, "I cannot go on.... All that I have written seems to me like so much straw compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me." He died March 7, 1274.

In his younger days he was known as "dumb ox" because he was big, shy and didn't say much. He proved himself different. In him we find a unity of great intelligence, learning, wisdom, humility and holiness. He even died leaving his great work unfinished.

January 29, 2026 – Thursday, Third Week in Ordinary Time

Serenity is not freedom from the storm, but peace amid the storm.

2 Samuel 7:18-19, 24-29

David, having experienced God's special favor for him and his people, turned to God with a deep sense of humility and expressed his gratitude. He said in prayer, "your servant now finds courage to make this prayer.....bless the house of your servant." **Be humble and turn to God in prayer, "bless us and our house and our people and our country...by your blessing, we shall be blessed forever."**

Psalm 132

**Advance, O Lord, to your resting place,
You and the Ark of your majesty.
May your priests be clothed with justice,
Let you faithful ones shout merrily for joy.**

Mark 4:21-25

Mark invites us to reflect on four different and disconnected sayings of Jesus: (1) Truth is meant to be seen, not concealed. Christian message is to be seen; Christian life must bear witness. (2) Truth will prevail. Truth is indestructible, eternal. Copernicus remained silent for thirty years about the truth he discovered (1543) and Galileo (1616) was silenced for speaking the truth he discovered. But the truth itself prevailed.

This is true even about the truth about self. Self-deception makes a person unhappy. No one can hide the truth from himself or from God. (3) Receiving depends on the quality of giving. (4) 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!

Saint of the Day, January 29 - Servant of God Brother Juniper and 12 other saints are remembered this day.

Servant of God Brother Juniper was a simple man who joined Saint Francis in the earliest days of the Order. Saint Francis praised him and wished he had a “whole forest of such Junipers.” We don’t know much about Juniper before he joined the friars in 1210. Francis sent him to establish “places” for the friars in Gualdo Tadino and Viterbo. When Saint Clare was dying, Juniper consoled her. He was devoted to the passion of Jesus and was known for his simplicity.

Several stories about Juniper in the Little Flowers of St. Francis illustrate his exasperating generosity. Once Juniper was taking care of a sick man who had a craving to eat pig’s feet. This helpful friar went to a nearby field, captured a pig and cut off one foot, and then served this meal to the sick man. The owner of the pig was furious and immediately went to Juniper’s superior. When Juniper saw his mistake, he apologized profusely. He also ended up talking this angry man into donating the rest of the pig to the friars!

Another time Juniper had been commanded to quit giving part of his clothing to the half-naked people he met on the road. Desiring to obey his superior, Juniper once told a man in need that he couldn’t give the man his tunic, but he wouldn’t prevent the man from taking it either. In time, the friars learned not to leave anything lying around, for Juniper would probably give it away. He died in 1258 and is buried at Ara Coeli Church in Rome.

January 30, 2026 – Friday, Third Week in Ordinary Time

Joyfulness is the serenity of heaven.

2 Samuel 11:1-4, 5-10, 13-17

This episode describes how David had abused his position and privilege as King and seduced Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. David covered his guilt and shame by sending Uriah to the battle front where he died serving the man who betrayed him.

David, the man chosen and anointed by God, the man who was dreaming of building a house for God, the man whose kingdom was going to last and stand firm forever, fell into sinful adventure and became unfaithful to God and to his people.

This excerpt teaches us to be alert and awake, to be cautious, to be discerning of what is of God and from God, to be watchful...weak moments set in by surprise!

Psalm 51

**Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
In the greatness of your compassion, wipe out my offense.
Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me...**

Mark 4:26-34

In this excerpt, Mark gives us the parable of the growing seed. This short parable reminds us of our “helplessness and insufficiency”. The farmer does not make the seed grow. He does not even understand how it grows. It has a secret of life and growth of its own. No man ever possessed the secret of life and its mysteries. Man, neither creates nor invents, he only discovers what God has already put in place.

We do not create the Kingdom of God. We only participate in the Kingdoms’ life and growth. Human efforts are spasmodic with increase and decrease, health and ill health, good deeds and bad deeds. The growth of the Kingdom is constant and imperceptible from day to day – the growth goes on because it is God’s work, God’s ongoing creative activity. The kingdom is like a grain of mustard seed.....A small grain of seed grows into a tree that can shelter and feed the birds of the sky. So, never be afraid or ashamed of small beginnings.

Nature’s growth is imperceptible; growth is constant; growth is inevitable; harvest time will come. So be prepared, be patient, be hopeful.

Saint of the Day, January 30 - Saint Hyacintha of Mariscotti and 15 other saints are remembered this day.

Hyacintha was born to a wealthy and prominent family in Vignanello, Italy on March 16, 1585. Her father was Count Antonio of Mariscotti and her mother descended from the princely Roman family of the Orsini. After her younger sister had been given in marriage, Clarice (as Hyacintha was then called), entered the convent of the Tertiaries at Viterbo as a secular Tertiary. However, she supplied herself with enough food, clothing, and other goods to live a very comfortable life amid these sisters who had pledged to mortification and self-denials. Her rooms were furnished with much worldly equipments. The spirit of mortification, penance and self-denial, that was an integral part of the life of a Tertiary, was not yet an ideal for Hyacinth.

A serious and strange illness required that her confessor bring Holy Communion to her room. When he saw the worldly and frivolous objects in her cell, the confessor advised her to live more humbly. Following her confessor's advice, she went to the common dining hall and with a rope around her neck, begged forgiveness of her fellow sisters for the scandal she had given them. She gave up her fine clothes and special foods and became very penitential in food and clothing. She was ready to do the most humble work in the convent. She developed a special

devotion to the sufferings of Christ and by her penances became an inspiration to the sisters in her convent. She died on January 30, 1640 and was canonized in 1807.

January 31, 2026 – Saturday, Third week in Ordinary Time

**Serenity means allowing things to unfold at their own speed
rather than forcing things to happen.**

2 Samuel 12:1-7, 10-17

Nathan confronted David and helped him to see that he had committed a crime and that he had done something unworthy of a king anointed by the Lord. David acknowledged his guilt and began a fast clothed in sackcloth.

Take courage to confront, challenge and help each other recognize shortcomings, failures and sinfulness and gently call forth conversion and transformation of life.

Psalm 51

**A clean heart create for me, O God,
And a steadfast spirit renew within me.
Cast me not out from your presence,
And your holy spirit take not from me.**

Mark 4:35-41

Jesus reached out to the disciples who were frightened by the storm in the sea. 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 “sound” asleep. 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.

We meet the disciples who were afraid of the storm but unafraid to wake up their master 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, January 31 - St. John Bosco and 21 other saints are remembered this day.

John Bosco was born to a poor farming family in Becchi, Italy, on August 16, 1815. At the age of two, John lost his father, leaving him and his two older brothers to be raised by his mother, Margherita. Raised primarily by his mother, John attended church and became very devout. When he was not in church, he helped his family grow food and raise sheep. Despite their poverty, his mother found enough to share with the homeless who sometimes came to the door seeking food, shelter or clothing.

Poor and unable to afford an education, he learned magic tricks and also worked in a vineyard. Inspired and moved by his mother's witness, John went to Mass regularly and became drawn to serve the Lord as a priest. John's older brother became angry at this apparent disloyalty, and he reportedly whipped John saying he's "a farmer like us!" John was undeterred, and as soon as he could, he left home to look for work as a hired farm laborer. John had difficulty finding work but managed to find a job at a vineyard. He labored for two more years before he met Jospeh Cafasso, a priest who was willing to help him. Cafasso himself would later be recognized as a saint for his work, particularly ministering to prisoners and the condemned. In 1835, John entered the seminary and following six years of study and preparation, he was ordained a priest in 1841.

Fr. John was assigned to a parish in Turin, Italy, where there was widespread poverty. He saw teenagers in the prisons and felt the call to prevent other boys from going to prison. He went to the streets, attracted boys with his magic tricks, and when he had their attention, he helped them by sharing God's word. Fr. John found lodging and work for the boys.

By the 1860s, with the help of his mother, Fr. John secured housing for 800 boys. He was an advocate for child apprentices who were suffering abuses from their employers by negotiating new rights for them. He also identified boys who might become priests and helped them prepare for this vocation. In 1859, John Bosco selected the experienced priest Vittorio Alasonatti, 15 seminarians and one high school boy and formed them into the "Society of St. Francis de Sales." This was the nucleus of the Salesians, the religious order that would carry on his work of helping boys staying out of trouble and becoming good Christians. Fr. John died on January 31, 1888. He was canonized in 1934 and given the title, "Father and Teacher of Youth." He is the patron saint of magicians, apprentices, schoolchildren, and juvenile delinquents.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**A bird sitting on a tree is never afraid of the branch breaking,
because its trust is not on the branch but on its own wings.**

