

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday, the twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we reflected on God's call to a joyful celebration where God himself would be the host. We also reflected on our call to come to this feast wearing unstained garments. We were given the garment of grace at our baptism and were challenged to keep it unstained by living godly, noble, virtuous, and holy lives. The Scripture readings of our daily masses this week continues to carry this theme for our ongoing reflection and prayer. The Gospel readings call us to look beyond signs, symbols and rituals and not be confined or burdened by them. Instead, live godly lives, lives of holiness and grace and not be content with performing rituals in all details.

St. Paul reminded the Colossians that they had a noble vocation, that they were "God's chosen ones, holy and beloved" and that they were clothed with the garment of salvation (Colossians 3:12-21). Therefore, they must live a life worthy of this noble calling by living lives of honor, virtue, and grace. They must live lives that are holy with "heartfelt mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness and love". This is our calling today!

This also means, Paul says, that we must put to death whatever in our nature is rooted in earth. We must avoid sinful ways and embrace ways of virtue and honor and nobility. We must set aside anger, jealousy, greed, foul language and all that degrades and lowers our dignity and that of others and clothe ourselves in garments of "heartfelt mercy, kindness, meekness, patience, forgiveness and put on love which binds all virtues together and makes them perfect. We must let Christ's peace reign in our hearts (Colossians 3:5-17).

We have seen the lack of honor, integrity, virtue and respect from our world leaders and our spiritual leaders as well. We see it in the coarseness of our culture, the stuff on TV, the speech in civil & cultural circles, the ugly & gross lyrics of music, and the lack of virtue in relationships, even in Christian families. Regardless of how our leaders act or what direction the world is going, we must choose honor, integrity, respect, and all other virtues to keep us, our families, and our world safe and healthy and alive and well. Virtue means strength and life. Absence of virtue means weakness and eventual death. Let us choose Virtue, honor, and integrity!

God bless you and your family and keep you safe in His Love.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Twenty-eighth Week in Ordinary Time

October 12-17, 2026

**“If the heart wanders or is distracted, bring it back quite gently
and place it tenderly in God’s presence. And if you do nothing else
while at prayer but bring your heart back again and again
and place it in God’s presence...though it went away every time
you brought it back; your time of prayer would be very well spent”
(Introduction to Devout Life, St. Francis De Sales)**

October 12 – Monday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

**Peace and serenity are found only in this moment.....Be still
and Be present to the moment!**

Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1

Paul remembers the ancestors and spiritual heroes of Israel as people of God. He tells the Galatians that they are a people of noble history and that they need to be proud of their heritage and remain faithful to that heritage. However, now, the followers of Jesus enjoy a new freedom, the freedom of the children of God. Paul encouraged the Galatians not to return to the old law, instead follow the law of Christ, the new law, the law of love and live the new life in Christ.

Be grateful for your heritage of faith and be faithful.

Psalm 113

**Praise, you servant of the Lord
Praise the name of the Lord.
Blessed be the name of the Lord,
Both now and forever.**

Luke 11:29-32

The Jews wanted Jesus to do something extraordinary, sensational and earth-shattering to prove that he came from God and that he was the anointed one of God.

Jonah was God's sign to the Ninevites long ago. At his preaching, they repented, turned to God and changed their lives. Jesus was God's sign to them, and they failed to recognize him. Earlier in this chapter, Luke spoke of Jesus being accused of being in league with the prince of devils. They failed to recognize goodness and love and attributed all of it to evil powers. Their mind was closed, their eyes were closed, and their heart was hardened.

Jesus has been challenged many times to do something sensational to prove his claim. Each time he refused to do the extraordinary thing that they demanded. Each time, he invited them to recognize the wonders God has been doing in and through him.

No more signs, But Jesus. Jesus is the sign and the symbol and the reality. Jesus is the WISDOM of God, greater than Jonah and greater than Solomon.

Turn to Jesus for the wisdom of God to guide and govern your life.

Saint of the Day, October 12 - St. Edwin of Northumbria and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

Edwin was a prince, born a pagan, the son of King Ella of Northumbria in 586 at Deira, South Northumbria, England. He was King of Northumbria from 616 to 633. Having married the Christian princess (Saint) Ethelburga of Kent, Edwin began to consider becoming a Christian. As the king delayed a final decision about his religion, Pope Boniface V wrote to him, inviting him to accept "the medicine of salvation." He was baptized in 627 by Saint Paulinus of York and became the first Christian King of Northumbria.

Edwin spent the six remaining years of his reign as a devout Catholic monarch who brought peace to his kingdom. In a letter to Edwin, Pope Honorius I praised the king's newfound piety and zeal: "Your sincere Christian character, afire with ardent faith in the worship of your Creator, has shone out far and wide." Edwin was killed in battle with the pagan English warrior Penda of Mercia on October 12, 633. Edwin was venerated as a martyr slaughtered for his Christian faith.

October 13 - Tuesday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

**The final wisdom of life requires not the annulment of incongruity
but the achievement of serenity within and above it.**

(Reinhold Niebuhr)

Galatians 5:1-6

Paul taught the Galatians to trust in God's gift of Grace and live a life of Grace. His position was that the way of Grace and the way of law were mutually exclusive. The way of the law makes salvation dependent on human achievements, and the way of Grace makes a person depend on the mercy of God. The essence of Christian life was seen as a personal relationship with Jesus and not obedience to any law. With the coming of the reign of Grace, the reign of law was ended.

You are called for freedom. "Only faith which expresses itself through love" can bring the justification that we hope for. "So stand firm" and make your choice: freedom in Christ or slavery to the law.

Psalm 119

**Let your kindness come to me, O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise.
Take not the word of truth from my mouth,
For in your ordinance is my hope.**

Luke 11:37-41

Jesus accepted the invitation of a Pharisee to dine at his house. Jesus was neither afraid nor ashamed to associate with the Pharisees who were looking out for ways to trap him. Jesus used every opportunity to fulfill his mission of bringing the good news of God's love to people.

Welcome every opportunity to bring the good news of Jesus to others.

The Pharisees were surprised to see that Jesus did not observe the ceremonial laws such as washing hands before eating. Ceremonial laws were prescribed and spelled out in all details. To omit the smallest detail of this was to sin. Jesus told them that they should be more concerned about the cleansing of their hearts than cleansing of their hands. It is much easier to observe the details than to be faithful to the truth of the Gospel. It is not difficult to go to church regularly, read a few passages from the bible, sing a few hymns to Jesus, give a few dollars to the poor, etc. It is much more challenging and difficult to be just, to be honest, to be respectful, to be forgiving, to be peacemaking, etc.

Jesus challenged the Pharisee to be true to the values of religion without ignoring the details. Go beyond the conventions of religion and be faithful to the truth.

Saint of the Day, October 13 - Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher and 15 other saints are remembered this day

Eulalie Durocher was born in a little village near Montreal, Quebec, Canada on October 6, 1811. She was the tenth of a family of eleven children. She received her initial education from her mother and her grandfather. At the age of 16, she felt the desire to become a religious, but was forced to abandon the idea because of her weak health. At the age of 18, when her mother died, her priest brother invited Eulalie and their father to come to his parish in Beloeil, not far from Montreal. For 13 years, Eulalie served as housekeeper, hostess, and parish worker. She became well-known for her graciousness, courtesy, leadership, and tact. she became known as “the saint of Beloeil.”

Canada was one diocese from coast to coast with half-million Catholics facing a shortage of priests and sisters. In 1843 the new bishop suggested that Eulalie form a religious congregation dedicated to education. Eulalie with two companions founded the “Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.” In 1844, in the church at Longueuil, Eulalie Durocher professed vows and became Mother Marie-Rose.

Marie-Rose was 32 and the next six more years were filled with poverty, trials, sickness, and slander. The qualities she had nurtured in her “hidden” life came forward—a strong will, intelligence and common sense, great inner courage, and yet a great deference to directors. Before she died, Marie-Rose smiled and said to the sister with her, “Your prayers are keeping me here—let me go.” She died on October 6, 1844. Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher was beatified in 1982 by Pope John Paul II.

October 14 - Wednesday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

One of the most basic sources of peacefulness and serenity is forgiveness of past hurt, failures, resentments, sins, guilt and shame.

Galatians 5:18-25

Paul had taught the Galatians to trust in God’s gift of Grace and live a life of Grace. His teaching was that with the coming of the reign of Grace, the reign of law was ended.

This led to misunderstandings and misinterpretations to the point of saying that the law did not matter and that all that mattered was trust in God’s Grace and do what you like. Now Paul sets out to teach the Galatians that God’s love frees us to love and to live in the spirit of Jesus and not follow our own desires and inclinations. Those who follow Christ are guided by the spirit and they must follow the way of the spirit and not of the flesh. “If you are guided by the spirit, you are not under the law”. So you must cultivate the fruits of the spirit and remove evil tendencies.

Psalm 1

**Happy the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked
Nor walks in the way of sinners, nor sits in the company of the insolent,
But delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night.**

Luke 11:42-46

Jesus spoke harsh words to the Pharisees and to the lawyers. They were beyond reproach by external standards. However, their motives were not noble. They drew attention to themselves. They loved respect in public places, they concentrated on externals that gave them recognition, they focused on details and forgot essential matters of the law such as justice and care for the less privileged. They had the right ideas but failed to practice them.

It is easy to get caught up with details of worship and fail to worship; details of helping the poor and fail to help the poor, details of hospitality and fail to be hospitable; details of social service and fail to do justice for the oppressed.....

Stay focused on important matters of life without neglecting essential details. Set your priorities straight.

Saint of the Day, October 14 - St. Callistus and 19 other saints are remembered this day

Pope Callistus is listed as a martyr, but we have no record of how he was martyred or by whom. There were no official persecutions at the time, but he may well have been killed in riots against Christians.

As sad as it is to realize that the only story we have of his life is by an enemy, it is amazing to see in it the fact that the Church is large enough not only to embrace sinners and saints, but to proclaim two people saints who hold such wildly opposing views and to elect a slave and an alleged ex-convict to guide the whole Church.

Callistus was a slave in the imperial Roman household. Put in charge of the bank by his master, he lost the money deposited, fled, and was caught. After serving time for a while, he was released to make some attempt to recover the money. He was arrested for brawling in a Jewish synagogue. This time he was condemned to work in the mines of Sardinia. Through the influence of the emperor's mistress he was released and went to live at Anzio.

After winning his freedom, Callistus was made superintendent of the public Christian burial ground in Rome, known as the cemetery of Saint Callistus and probably the first land owned by the Church. The pope ordained him a deacon and made him his friend and adviser.

Callistus was elected pope by a majority vote of the clergy and laity of Rome, and thereafter was bitterly attacked by the losing candidate, Saint Hippolytus, who let himself be set up as the first antipope in the history of the Church. The schism lasted about 18 years.

Hippolytus is venerated as a saint. He was banished during the persecution of 235 and was reconciled to the Church. He died from his sufferings in Sardinia. He attacked Callistus on two fronts—doctrine and discipline. Hippolytus seems to have exaggerated the distinction between Father and Son—almost making two gods—possibly because theological language had not yet been refined.

He also accused Callistus of being too lenient, for reasons we may find surprising: 1) Callistus admitted to Holy Communion those who had already done public penance for murder, adultery, and fornication; 2) he held marriages between free women and slaves to be valid—contrary to Roman law; 3) he authorized the ordination of men who had been married two or three times; 4) he held that mortal sin was not a sufficient reason to depose a bishop; 5) he held to a policy of leniency toward those who had temporarily denied their faith during persecution. Callistus was martyred, probably during a local disturbance in Trastevere, Rome, around the year 222 C.E.

October 15 – Thursday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

**Bless yourself with your gift of forgiveness
and let this gift fill you with peace and serenity!**

Ephesians 1:1-10

Paul tells the Ephesians: God chose us before the world began to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love...God has given us wisdom to understand fully the mystery, the plan he was pleased to decree in Christ.....to bring all things into one in Christ!

Psalm 98

**Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things;
his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.
The LORD has made his salvation known
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.**

Luke 11:47-54

The Scribes were experts in the law, but they did not keep them themselves because they were experts in evasions as well. They professed a deep admiration for the prophets. But the prophets they admired were dead. They honored the dead with tombs and memorials and dishonored the living.

The Scribes shut people off from Scripture. Their interpretation was so fantastic that it was impossible for the ordinary man to understand it. In their hands, scripture became a book of riddles. They were experts in the scripture, but to the common man it remained a dark mystery.

There are still those who demand from others standards they themselves refuse to follow. There are still those whose religion is nothing but legalism. There are still those who make the word of God so difficult that the seeking mind of the common man is bewildered and does not know what to believe or to whom to turn.

May we never be bound or chained by our doctrines or ideals or practices or customs or traditions! May we be free to seek! May we remain open to let God's word unfold God's truth and wisdom! May we never chain God's word!

Saint of the Day, October 15 - St. Teresa of Avila and 13 other saints are remembered this day

Teresa Sánchez de Cepeda y Ahumada was born on March 28, 1515, Ávila, Spain. Her father, Alonso Sánchez de Cepeda, was a successful wool merchant and one of the wealthiest men in Ávila. He bought a knighthood and assimilated successfully into Christian society. Teresa's mother brought her up as a dedicated Christian. Fascinated by accounts of the lives of the saints, she ran away from home at age seven, with her brother Rodrigo, to seek martyrdom in the fight against the Moors. Her uncle brought them home when he spotted them just outside the town walls.

When Teresa was eleven years old, her mother died, leaving her grief-stricken. This prompted her to embrace a deeper devotion to the Virgin Mary as her spiritual mother. Teresa was sent to the Augustinian nuns' school at Ávila. Illness forced her to leave the convent during her second year. But the influence of her devout uncle Peter, along with her reading of the letters of the monk and Church Father St. Jerome, convinced Teresa that the surest road to salvation lay in forsaking marriage, property, and worldly pleasures completely. Against the will of her father, who wanted her to postpone the decision, she joined the Carmelite Order.

Teresa became a professed member of the order at age 20 but soon developed a serious illness that forced her to return home. She experienced severe pain and physical paralysis for two years and was expected to die when she went into a coma for four days. But she insisted on

returning to the Carmelite monastery as soon as she was able, even though she remained in a painful and debilitated state.

For the next three years the young nun made remarkable progress in her spiritual life, developing the practice of recalling herself into the presence of God through quiet contemplation. As her health returned, however, Teresa lapsed into a more routine prayer life. While she remained an obedient Carmelite, she would not re-establish this close personal connection to God for almost twenty years.

When she was nearly 40, however, Teresa found herself dramatically called back to the practice of contemplative mental prayer. She experienced profound changes within her own soul, and remarkable visions that seemed to come from God. Under the direction of her confessors, Teresa wrote about some of these experiences in an autobiography that she completed in 1565. Teresa played a significant role in the renewal of the Church that followed the Council of Trent. She proposed a return of the Carmelites to their original rule of life, a simple and austere form of monasticism – founded on silence and solitude – that had received papal approval in the 12th century and was believed to date back to the Old Testament prophet Elijah.

Together with her close collaborator, the priest and writer later canonized as Saint John of the Cross, she founded what is known today as the Order of Discalced Carmelites – “discalced,” meaning barefoot, symbolizing the simplicity to which they chose to return the order after a period of corruption. The reform met with fierce opposition but resulted in the founding of 30 monasteries during her life.

Teresa's health failed her for the last time while she was traveling through Salamanca in 1582. She accepted her dramatic final illness as God's chosen means of calling her into his presence forever. She died on October 15, 1582. She was canonized on March 22, 1622, along with three of her greatest contemporaries: St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, and St. Philip Neri. In 1970, Pope St. Paul VI proclaimed St. Teresa as a Doctor of the Church, along with the 14th century Dominican St. Catherine of Siena.

October 16 – Friday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Conscious and intentional release of anger, hurt, guilt, resentment, shame, etc. bring emotional freedom and inner peace and serenity.

Ephesians 1:11-14

This is a beautiful prayer-hymn that centers around the theme, “God chose us in Jesus Christ and will raise us to everlasting life in Jesus Christ”. Therefore, we must live holy and blameless

lives in response to this noble calling. This life must be lived in Christ. In Christ we have been brought into the mystery of the fullness of God's life and love.

God has chosen us in Christ. Be faithful to this noble calling. Live holy and blameless lives!

Psalm 33

**Exult, you just, in the Lord;
Praise from the upright is fitting.
Give thanks to the Lord on the harp;
With the ten-stringed lyre chant his praises.**

Luke 12:1-7

In this excerpt, we hear the call of Jesus to be honest and sincere and not hypocritical and pretentious! Jesus calls us to trust in God who knows us and personally cares for us. This trust should make us fearless and courageous and not reckless.

God's care is very personal. We are not just one in the crowd – Each one is important and precious in the sight of God. God takes personal care.

Are not five sparrows sold for a few pennies? Yet not one of them is neglected by God, said Jesus. God personally cares for you.

So be fearless. You are worth more.....

Saint of the Day, October 16 - Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque and 32 other saints are remembered this day.

Margaret Mary Alacoque was born on July 2, 1647, in Verosvres, France. She was the fifth of seven children of Claude and Philiberte Alacoque. Her father died of pneumonia when Margaret was about eight. Her early years were marked by sickness and a painful home situation. After considering marriage for some time, Margaret Mary entered the Order of the Visitation nuns at the age of 24. On December 21, 1674, three years a nun, she received the first of her revelations. She felt "invested" with the presence of God, though always afraid of deceiving herself in such matters. The request of Christ was that his love for humankind be made evident through her.

During the next 13 months, Christ appeared to her at intervals. His human heart was to be the symbol of his divine-human love. By her own love Margaret Mary was to make up for the coldness and ingratitude of the world—by frequent and loving Holy Communion, especially on

the first Friday of each month, and by an hour's vigil of prayer every Thursday night in memory of his agony and isolation in Gethsemane. He also asked that a feast of reparation be instituted.

Like all saints, Margaret Mary had to pay for her gift of holiness. Some of her own sisters were hostile. Theologians who were called in declared her visions delusions and suggested that she eat more heartily. Later, parents of children she taught called her an impostor, an unorthodox innovator. A new confessor, the Jesuit Claude de la Colombière, recognized her genuineness and supported her. After serving as novice mistress and assistant superior, Margaret Mary died at the age of 43 on October 17, 1690. While being anointed, she said: "I need nothing but God, and to lose myself in the heart of Jesus." She was canonized by Pope Benedict XV in 1920.

October 17 – Saturday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

**Serenity requires forgiving yourself, healing your hurt, cleansing your guilt,
and letting go of self-condemnation for past mistakes.**

Ephesians 1:15-23

The author of this letter has a prayer for us that we will enjoy the knowledge of God here and now, that we will be empowered with Holy Spirit, that we will be enlightened, that we will know God as God is, that we will be blessed with wisdom and understanding.....

Make this passage from Ephesians your prayer for the week.

Psalm 8

**O God, our God,
how glorious is your name over all the earth!
Your glory is praised in the heavens.
Out of the mouths of children and babes
you have fashioned praise because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the rebellious.**

Luke 12:8-12

Jesus promised the disciples His Holy Spirit. The Spirit, he said, would teach them what they needed to know and what they had not understood yet. For the listeners of Jesus the Holy Spirit was someone who revealed the truth, helped the person to understand the truth as it was revealed to him and helped the person to live the truth that he had come to know. This is

the Spirit that Jesus promised. His own Spirit would come and teach the disciples His truth, His wisdom and give them words to proclaim the truth that he revealed. St. Paul would eventually teach his followers that the Holy Spirit would help them to pray and that the Holy Spirit would even pray in them when they did not know how to pray.

Keep listening to the Holy Spirit...Be docile.... Let the Holy Spirit help you come to know the truth and live the truth and proclaim the truth.

Saint of the day, October 17 - Saint Ignatius of Antioch and 23 other saints are remembered this day

Ignatius was born in Syria in the middle of the first century A.D. He is said to have been personally instructed, along with another future martyr, Saint Polycarp, by the Apostle Saint John. When Ignatius became the Bishop of Antioch around the year 70, he assumed leadership of a local church that was, according to tradition, first led by Saint Peter before his move to Rome. In the year 107, Emperor Trajan visited Antioch and forced the Christians there to choose between death and apostasy. Ignatius would not deny Christ and thus was condemned to be put to death in Rome.

Ignatius is well known for the seven letters he wrote on the long journey from Antioch to Rome. Five of these letters are to churches in Asia Minor; they urge the Christians there to remain faithful to God and to obey their superiors. He warns them against heretical doctrines, providing them with the solid truths of the Christian faith. The sixth letter was to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who was later martyred for the faith. The final letter begs the Christians in Rome not to try to stop his martyrdom. "The only thing I ask of you is to allow me to offer the libation of my blood to God. I am the wheat of the Lord; may I be ground by the teeth of the beasts to become the immaculate bread of Christ." Ignatius bravely met the lions in the Circus Maximus on July 6, 108.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life;
rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise,
God, whose very own you are,
will lead you safely through all things;
and when you cannot stand it, God will carry you in his arms.
(St. Francis De Sales)**