

# Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This week, we remember men and women who lived extraordinary lives of faith and gave outstanding witness to Jesus. Today, September 30, we remember St. Jerome. After completing his education, he lived as a hermit in the Syrian Desert for five years. Pope Damasus invited him to be his secretary. In Rome he began a Bible study group for women, which was the first Bible study group that we know of. He believed that contact with Scripture would transform the lives of people.

He went to the Holy land and settled in Bethlehem where he lived for the rest of his life where he devoted his life to study and meditation and translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. This translation was called the Vulgate, from the Latin word for “the common people.” This translation was used for many centuries.

Tomorrow, October first, we remember St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, the Little Flower. At the age of fifteen, she joined the Carmelite convent and lived a life centered on the Gospel. She believed that any life could be a holy one. Her attitudes were: “pick up a pin for love” and do all daily chores joyfully with love. Theresa is known as “Little Flower” because she lived her life in a “little way,” always ready and willing to do humble, small things without complaining. Life of holiness is open to all people and it doesn’t have to include spectacular events!

On October second, we honor the Guardian Angels, remembering how our God protects us and watches over us. On October third, we honor Saint Theodora Guérin who, in spite of her fragile health, came to Indiana from Brittany, France, to teach and to care for the sick poor. On October fourth, we remember St. Francis of Assisi. A man who loved pleasure, fine clothes and all that wealth could bring, renounced his wealth and became one of the most extraordinary saints of the Middle Ages. On October fifth, we remember Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska who became the apostle of God's mercy, a model of how to be merciful to others, and an instrument for reemphasizing God's plan of mercy for the world.

**Please scroll down to the days below to learn more about the above mentioned saints and their extraordinary lives. Let us draw inspiration from these simple and ordinary men and women and strive to live our spiritual life where we are, doing whatever the Lord calls us to do, faithfully and joyfully.**

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

## **Twenty-sixth Week in Ordinary Time**

### **September 30 – October 5, 2024**

**If there is light in the soul, there will be beauty in the person.  
If there is beauty in the person, there will be harmony in the house.  
If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the nation.  
If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.**  
(Chinese proverb)

### **September 30 – Monday, Twenty Sixth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Forbearance calls forth self-discipline, self-restraint, self-control,  
humility and other-centeredness**

#### **Job 1:6-22**

Job faced four tragedies one after the other. He lost his cattle, his sheep, his camels and finally his own family. He was a good and just man. He did not do anything to deserve such treatment. Through all these, Job remained faithful to his God, never saying anything disrespectful of God.

#### **Psalm 17**

**Hear O Lord, a just suit;  
Attend to my outcry;  
Hearken to my prayer,  
from lips without deceit.**

#### **Luke 9:46-50**

The disciples wanted to know who was of greatest importance in the kingdom. Jesus responded: “unless you turn and become as children, you will not enter the kingdom of God.” You are going in the wrong direction, not in the direction of the Kingdom’. You are aiming at personal power, prestige, etc. which is the opposite of the Kingdom.

Humility is the quality of a person who belongs in the kingdom. Child's trust, dependence, innocence and purity are all qualities of people of the kingdom. Reflect on turning toward the Kingdom, away from personal power, prestige, etc.

Jesus invited his disciples and he invites us today to be childlike and be willing to surrender in loving and generous service. He invites us to have a new vision of "greatness" as service, humility, and self-surrender, different from what the world seems to offer. Those of us, who choose to follow Jesus and be his disciples, must learn to redefine greatness as humility, service, and self-surrender.

Change your vision: it is a privilege, an honor and blessing to be the last and to serve the least.

### **Saint of the Day, September 30 - Saints Jerome and 17 other saints are remembered this day**

Jerome was born in Dalmatia, along the coast of the Adriatic Sea around the year 347 and was educated in Rome. He had developed a passion for books and began a collection of expensive books. After completing his education, he lived as a hermit in the Syrian Desert for five years. Pope Damasus invited him to be his secretary. In Rome he preached many sermons which made the wealthy uncomfortable and angry. He began a Bible study group for women, which was the first Bible study group that we know of. He believed that contact with Scripture would transform the lives of people.

After the death of Pope Damasus, he went to the Holy land and settled in Bethlehem where he lived for the rest of his life. Paula, from the first bible study group, became a brilliant scholar and followed Jerome to Bethlehem. Many others also followed them and settled in Bethlehem. Paula and Jerome founded two monasteries, one for men and the other for women and a Church shared by both.

In Bethlehem, Jerome devoted his life to study and meditation. Assisted by Paula and others, he translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. This translation was called the Vulgate, from the Latin word for "the common people". This translation was used for many centuries. Jerome was always kind to the needy. When Rome was attacked in the year 410, many refugees came to the East to the monasteries. Jerome laid aside his studies to serve them saying, "Today, we must translate the words of scripture into deeds and instead of speaking saintly words, we must act on them."

He died in Bethlehem around the year 420.

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## **October 1 - Saint Therese of the Child Jesus**

**Forbearance is living through our struggles  
and carrying our burden without going under.**

### **Isaiah 66:10-14**

The power of the Lord will be revealed in and through his servants. They are to rejoice and exult in the fulfillment that he gives them. He will give them comfort and prosperity.

### **Psalm 131**

LORD, my heart is not proud;  
nor are my eyes haughty.  
I do not busy myself with great matters,  
with things too sublime for me.

### **Mathew 18:1-5**

The disciples wanted to know who was of greatest importance in the kingdom. Jesus responded: “unless you turn and become as children, you will not enter the kingdom of God.” You are going in the wrong direction, not in the direction of the Kingdom. You are aiming at personal power, prestige, etc. which is the opposite of the Kingdom.

**Humility is the quality of a person who belongs in the kingdom. Child’s trust, dependence, innocence and purity are all qualities of people of the kingdom.**

**Reflect on turning toward the Kingdom, away from personal power, prestige, etc.**

### **Saint of the Day, October 1 - St. Theresa of the Child Jesus and 34 other saints are remembered this day**

Marie Françoise Martin was born on January 2, 1873 in Alençon, France to pious parents, both of whom were canonized saints in October 2016. Her mother died when she was four, leaving her father and elder sisters to raise her. At the age of fifteen, she joined the Carmelite convent and was given the name Therese. She lived a life centered on the Gospel. She believed that any life could be a holy one. “To pick up a pin for love can convert a soul” reflected her attitude and she did her daily chores joyfully with love.

Theresa is known as “Little Flower” because she lived her life in a “little way”, always ready and willing to do humble, small things without complaining. Greatness lies also in doing little things and doing it well with love. Life of holiness is open to all and it doesn’t have to include spectacular events! Just before her death at the age of 24, suffering from tuberculosis, she said, “I promise to spend my heaven doing good on earth”.

Thérèse offered herself as a sacrificial victim to the merciful Love of God on June 9, 1895, the feast of the Most Holy Trinity and the following year, on the night between Holy Thursday and Good Friday, she noticed the first symptoms of Tuberculosis, the illness which would lead to her death on September 30, 1897 in Lisieux, France

She was canonized a saint on May 17, 1925 by Pope Pius XI and was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope John Paul II in 1997 - 100 years after her death at the age of 24. She is only the third woman to be so proclaimed, after Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa of Avila.

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## **October 2 – Wednesday, Twenty Sixth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Forbearance is a determined and steadfast approach to achieving goals and solving problems and not pressurizing immediate results.**

### **Job 9:1-12, 14-16**

Job says to his taunting friends that God is wise in heart and mighty in strength and that he must beg God for what is due to him.

**Be humble before God and seek His wisdom.**

### **Psalm 88**

**Daily I call upon on your Lord;  
To you I stretch out my hands,  
Will you work wonders for the dead?  
Will the shades arise to give you thanks?**

## **Luke 9:57-62**

This excerpt tells us about the response Jesus made to those who wished to follow him. It also tells about how he challenged them to remain resolute and faithful to their mission and surrender themselves in service. Someone in the crowd expressed his desire to follow Jesus and he was asked to count the cost. Jesus called others to follow him and they had various excuses and he challenged them to seize the opportunity to be involved in the kingdom.

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

**Seize the opportunity when it comes. There is tragedy in "unseized" moments. May God give us strength to make choices and decisions that will save us from the tragedy of "unseized" moments.**

**When you have come to know the urgency of getting out of a situation or into a situation, choose to do so now. Do not wait for tomorrow. Now is the moment of Grace...Now is the kingdom.**

**Make a clean break from all the binding forces for discipleship. Stay focused on the Lord and His purpose for you..... do not look back or get side-tracked..... stay focused... no turning back.**

## **Saint of the day, October 2 - Guardian Angels and 11 other saints are remembered this day**

Angels are mentioned many times in the Bible. They had a powerful presence in our history and in our heritage of faith. Each of them is God's messenger and in some way represents God's presence to the believer. Christians have always believed that every person has a guardian or protecting angel. This belief has its roots in the Hebrew culture and traditions.

The Jews were so impressed with God's individual/personal care that they believed that every blade of grass had a guardian angel. So, no one needs to fear for each one can say, "God cares for me. He has assigned me a guardian angel". The mission of the angel is to assist, guide and protect each person on his/her journey to God.

Remembrance of Guardian angels is a profound proclamation: God cares for me, personally as an individual and not just another person in the crowd.

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## **October 3– Thursday, Twenty Sixth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Forbearance is a gift of God that we must accept and nurture.**

### **Job 19:21-27**

After a series of painful searches, doubts and questions and having lived through great suffering, Job comes to realize that everything is in the hands of God. He finally, surrenders and expresses his deep desire to see his God: “my inmost being is consumed with longing”.

### **Psalm 27**

The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
whom should I fear?  
The LORD is my life’s refuge;  
of whom should I be afraid?

### **Luke 10:1-12**

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.....**

The disciples were given a God-directed mission and not a self-fulfilling, self-directed mission. There was an urgency about fulfilling this mission because the mission was the proclamation of the presence of the Kingdom of God – it was about the rich harvest waiting to be gathered in and not about some future reality.

**So Disciples of Jesus were 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, October 3 - Saint Theodora Guérin and 14 other saints are remembered this day**

Anne-Thérèse Guérin was born on October 2, 1798, in the village of Étables-sur-Mer in Brittany, France, near the end of the French Revolution, which led to the Reign of Terror and the establishment of the French First Republic. This period of significant change also caused a crisis within French Catholicism, when schools and churches were closed, and many Catholic priests chose exile over death from the guillotine.

When she was fifteen, tragedy struck the family. Bandits robbed and killed her father as he was traveling home to visit his family. The grief proved to be too much for Isabelle Guérin, who already had lost two children, and she fell into a deep depression. The teenaged Anne-Thérèse accepted the responsibility of caring for her mother and sister, as well as the family's home and garden. Around the age of twenty, she asked for her mother's blessing to join a religious order, but Isabelle was still unable to cope with her loss and refused.

Five years later Isabelle recognized the depth of Anne-Thérèse's devotion to God and permitted her to leave home to join a convent. She entered the Sisters of Providence in 1823, taking the name Sister Saint Theodore. An illness during novitiate left her with lifelong fragile health, but that did not keep her from becoming an accomplished teacher.

At the invitation of the bishop of Vincennes, Indiana, Sr. Saint Theodore and five sisters were sent to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, in 1840, to teach and to care for the sick poor. She was to establish a motherhouse and novitiate. Only later did she learn that her French superiors had already decided the sisters in the United States should form a new religious congregation under her leadership.

Mother Theodore and her community persevered despite fires, crop failures, prejudice against Catholic women religious, misunderstandings, and separation from their original religious congregation. She once told her sisters, "Have confidence in the Providence that so far has never failed us. The way is not yet clear. Grope along slowly. Do not press matters; be patient, be trustful." Another time she asked, "With Jesus, what shall we have to fear?"

Mother Theodora died on May 14, 1856 at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, U.S.A. and was buried in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, now the Shrine of St. Mother Theodore, in Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana. She was canonized as Saint Theodora Guérin eight years later by Pope Benedict XVI on October 15, 2006.

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## **October 4 – Saint Francis of Assisi**

**Forbearance doesn't just happen. We must choose, be deliberate, intentional and steadfast in cultivating this virtue.**

### **Galatians 6:14-18**

It means nothing whether one is circumcised or not. All that matters is that one is created anew. Peace and mercy on all who follow this rule of life

### **Psalm 16**

**Keep me O God, for in you I take refuge;  
I say to the Lord, "My Lord are you"  
O Lord, my allotted portion and my cup,  
You it is who hold fast my lot.....**

### **Mathew 11:25-30**

Jesus praised his heavenly Father for revealing mysteries of the kingdom, not to the clever and the intellectual, but to the simple and humble. Heart is the home of the Gospel. Jesus said to his listeners, 'Come to me if you find life burdensome, I will refresh you....learn from me, I am gentle and humble of heart.... My yoke is easy and burden is light.'

**The life and discipline that Jesus offers is made to fit you well - not to burden you, but to free you and keep you steady and faithful on your journey of life.**

**Saint of the day, October 4 - St. Francis of Assisi and 11 other saints are remembered this day.**

Francis was born in Assisi, Italy in 1182. A man who loved pleasure, fine clothes and all that wealth could offer, renounced his wealth and became one of the most extraordinary saints of the Middle Ages. Francis listened to the voice that called and said, "repair my house, which is falling into ruin".

Francis ended up repairing (renewing) not a small chapel, but the "Church". Francis moved from the glory of wealth to the glory of poverty. He celebrated the unity of creation, "harmony" in

the universe. The beauty of creation filled him with joy. Everything that God created was brother and sister to him. He treated everything with “reverence”. He died on October 3, 1226 in Assisi, Italy and was canonized on July 16, 1228 by Pope Gregory IX.

**Pray with St. Francis today: Make me a channel of your peace.**

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## **October 5 – Saturday, Twenty Sixth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Forbearance enables us to wait patiently, keep trying as we wait  
and doing the best we can.**

### **Job 42:1-3, 5-6, 12-16**

In this excerpt, we find Job acknowledging his pride and confessing that God’s ways and plans are infinitely far beyond his understanding. He came to realize that God’s plans cannot be hindered but must be fulfilled. Job has come to a new and more joyful vision of God and God’s ways. This excerpt concludes by giving us the details of how Job was blessed in his later years after he had surrendered himself to God.

**God has a plan and a purpose for us. Keep discerning His plan and find joy in fulfilling that plan he has for you.**

### **Psalm 119**

**Teach me wisdom and knowledge,  
for in your command I trust.  
It is good for me that I have been afflicted,  
that I may learn your statutes.**

### **Luke 10:17-24**

The seventy two disciples went on their first mission and they were excited about their accomplishments....the devils became subject to their power....who wouldn’t be exited!!! They returned and told their master about all the wonderful things they did. The master told them to rejoice, not in their accomplishments, but in their being accepted into the kingdom.

**The joy of a disciple is in being a disciple and not in doing the work of the disciple. All that is done is only an expression of discipleship. Being a disciple is reward and joy in itself.**

Jesus praised the heavenly father for revealing himself through the simple and the ordinary. It was the simple and the ordinary that recognized Jesus – the learned and the clever had no use for him.

**Be humble and simple and remain open to God's self-revelation.**

**Saint of the Day, October 5 – Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska and 23 other saints are remembered this day.**

Helena Kowalska was born in what is now west-central Poland on August 25, 1905. She was the third of 10 children to a poor and religious family. She worked as a housekeeper in three cities to support her family. She approached many different convents but was turned away every time. Finally, the mother superior for the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy decided to take in Faustina on the condition that she could pay for her own religious habit. Working as a housekeeper, Faustina began to save her money and make deposits to the Convent.

On April 30, 1926, at the age of 20, she finally received her habit and took the religious name of Sister Maria Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament and in 1928, she took her first religious vows as a nun. She worked as a cook, gardener and porter in three of their houses. On February 22, 1931, Faustina was visited by Jesus, who presented himself as the "King of Divine Mercy" wearing a white garment with red and pale rays coming from his heart. She was asked to become the apostle and secretary of God's mercy, a model of how to be merciful to others, and an instrument for reemphasizing God's plan of mercy for the world. Sister Maria Faustina died of tuberculosis in Krakow, Poland, on October 5, 1938 and was canonized in April 30, 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Simplicity leads us to tell things candidly, and just as they exist in our hearts.  
(St. Vincent de Paul)**