

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

**When you let go of anger and resentment from the past,
you will find peace and serenity in your heart.**

Exodus 19:2-6

Israelites came to the desert of Sinai three months after leaving Egypt. Once again God came into personal, intimate contact with Moses and directed him to prepare the people for a personal encounter with him. Moses was directed to tell his people how precious they were to God, “dearer to me than all other people” and how they were called to be a “holy nation”. In this excerpt, we read about the character of the people of Israel as being “holy” and Israel was being called again and again to be faithful to this character. God remained faithful to his covenant, remaining close to his people and his people were to remain faithful to God and to their God-given character.

Be faithful! Be faithful to your God-given nature! You are called to holiness of lame!

Psalms 100

**Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before him with joyful song.**

Romans 5:6-11

This excerpt may be better understood if we read it from the beginning of the chapter. In Verse 5, Paul says that Christian hope will never be disappointed because “the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us”. This excerpt goes on to say that we have “Peace with God” through this outpouring of the Spirit. We rejoice and we can even boast about it, because “this outpouring of the Spirit” happened even when we were still sinners. Christian hope is founded on this belief and knowledge and experience. This hope will never be disappointed.

Be men and women of hope!

Matthew 9:36 – 10:8

Jesus looked at the crowd with compassion. He saw a rich harvest and the need for

laborers to gather in the harvest. The spiritual leaders, at the time of Jesus, saw sinners to be condemned, Gentiles who do not follow the law, tax gatherers who were traitors to the nation, etc. But Jesus saw a rich harvest.....people to be gathered in and not kept out or destroyed.

Look beyond what you see! Be positive, optimistic about you and the world around you! See the goodness of God everywhere and in all people!

Jesus saw a rich harvest and the need for laborers to gather in the harvest. And he sent out an extraordinary mixture of very ordinary men with the most profound message: "The Kingdom of God is at hand".

In Jesus, the ordinary became extraordinary and the extraordinary became ordinary! The disciples of Jesus were and still are men and women on the move, on a journey with a mission to share the good news of the presence of God's kingdom.

In Jesus strangers and enemies were transformed into a people of "communion", of "fellowship". Jesus began with a small group – the message had to be lived out in fellowship. The way of the Pharisees was separation; the way of Jesus was fellowship.

People who ordinarily would not have stayed together became one in the spirit and mission of Jesus.

Jesus sent out his disciples, an extraordinary mixture of very ordinary men with the most profound message: "The Kingdom of God is at hand". They were sent to bring good news, heal the sick.... share the gift they had received freely and joyfully.

Bring the good news of Jesus to someone today.....share your gifts with others, graciously and generously.

Saint of the day, June 14 - St. Methodius I and 13 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Methodius I was born into a wealthy family around the year 788/800 in Syracuse, Sicily (Italy). He was sent as a young man to Constantinople to continue his education and hopefully attain an appointment at court. But instead he entered a monastery in Bithynia, eventually becoming abbot.

As a monk, Methodius embraced the position of the Iconodules, who supported the veneration of images, as opposed to the Iconoclasts, who denounced the veneration of images. The Iconoclastic Controversy arose in the 8th century as a reaction against pagan tendencies in Christianity. During the reign of the Iconoclast emperor Theophilus (829–842), Methodius was respected as a learned man and was allowed to live in the

palace in Constantinople despite his Iconodule beliefs. He found an ally in the wife of Theophilus, Theodora, who venerated icons and kept them in her room. After the death of Theophilus, Theodora became regent for their son Michael III. In 843 she named Methodius patriarch and with his help restored the legitimacy of venerating icons to the Byzantine Empire.

He was patriarch of Constantinople from 843 to 847. Throughout his short patriarchate, Methodius tried to pursue a moderate line of accommodation with members of the clergy who were formerly Iconoclasts. This policy was opposed by extremists, primarily the monks of the Stoudios monastery, who demanded that the former Iconoclasts be punished severely as heretics. To rein in the extremists, Methodios was forced to excommunicate and arrest some of the more persevering monks.

Methodios was indeed well-educated; engaged in both copying and writing of manuscripts. His individual works included polemica, hagiographical and liturgical works, sermons and poetry. He died on June 14, 847 in Constantinople.

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