

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday, we celebrated the feast of Pentecost. Today we resume Ordinary Time of the Year with the eighth week in Ordinary Time. Weeks before the eighth have been celebrated before the season of Lent this year. "Ordinary" does not mean routine, dull, boring, or non-exciting time in the Church's life of prayer and worship. It is 33/34 weeks of Ordinary Time or "Tempus Per Annum" in Latin, meaning "Time throughout the year." This is the time between Christmas and Lent and between Easter and advent. They are called "Ordinary days" because they are ordered and numbered, since Sundays of Ordinary Time are expressed numerically.

The Liturgical Year follows the natural rhythms of Life - periods of intense concentration and celebration followed by times of quiet reflection and maturation. Ordinary Time challenges us to live the mysteries we celebrated during the great seasons in extraordinary ways as we continue our spiritual journey. We set aside the major anniversaries and remembrances of our Faith and concentrate on living the message of the Gospels in down to earth, practical ways as we go about doing our daily chores and fulfilling our responsibilities, with all our limitations, imperfections failures and shortfalls.

This year (2026), our Sunday liturgies follow Cycle A of the Lectionary and so, we meet Jesus through the Gospel of Mathew. Cycle B uses the Gospel of Mark and Cycle C uses the Gospel of Luke and Easter season uses the Gospel of John. I encourage you to start reading the Gospel of Mathew, perhaps a chapter a day, or at least, read the whole chapter referenced on Sunday rather than just the excerpt of the day, before coming to Mass on Sunday. You may remember that we read the first five chapters before we began the season of Lent.

Ordinary Time of the Year offers us many and varied opportunities to live our faith, test our hope and give ourselves to loving our God and our neighbor and to let our faith mature and let it become real and authentic. I encourage you take a few moments each day of this week to be still and to reflect on how your day has been, how you lived your faith, how you nurtured your hope and how you loved God and others. We live in a fast-paced world. Finding time to be still can be challenging. Bless yourself with a few quiet moments to be still and listen to the voice of God. Bless yourself, have a prayer in your heart for all and be a blessing to those around you.

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

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Eighth Week of Easter

May 25 - 30, 2026

Experience tells us that a world without God becomes a “hell”: filled with selfishness, broken families, hatred between individuals and nations, and a great deficit of love, joy and hope. On the other hand, wherever individuals and nations accept God’s presence, worship him in truth and listen to his voice, then the civilization of love is being built, a civilization in which the dignity of all is respected, and communion increases, with all its benefits.

(Pope Benedict XVI)

May 25 – Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church

Serenity comes from being happy where you are and with what you are doing and not wanting to be somewhere else and doing something else.

Genesis 3:9-15, 20

In the garden, man enjoyed an intimacy with God which was destroyed by disobedience. Ashamed and afraid, man and woman hid themselves from God. This excerpt tells us that through disobedience sin entered the world, and as a result, man and woman experienced separation, suffering, and ultimately death. Man and woman failed to be faithful to what God made them to be. Sin is a violation of what God made us to be.

Be faithful to what God made you to be.

Psalm 87

His foundation is on holy mountains,
The LORD loves the gates* of Zion
more than any dwelling in Jacob.
Glorious things are said of you,
O city of God!

John 19:25-34

This is a beautiful and inspiring story of how Jesus, even as he hung on the cross, was thinking of other's pain rather than his own. He stepped into the sorrow of others around him. The same chapter also tells us how those who loved him remained faithful and loyal to the one they loved as he suffered and eventually died on the cross. They stepped into and shared each other's sorrow.

This is what the sorrowful mother did. She stepped into the pain, rejection, loneliness, anguish, and passion of her son and that of his disciples, without going under. She stood strong and steadfast for her son and for his disciples. She became strength for the suffering, lonely, rejected and the sorrowful. She emerged from her pain and sorrow to become for us a fearless, powerful, courageous, and moving figure.

Let us be inspired by the example of the sorrowful mother and learn to be present to each other in times of disappointment, pain, suffering and sorrow.

Saint of the Day, May 25 - St. Bede the Venerable and 23 other saints are remembered this day.

Bede was born in the year 673 near the English town of Jarrow. At an early age, his parents entrusted him to the care of the abbot of the Monastery of St. Paul, Jarrow. The abbot and a group of other monks instructed Bede not only in scripture and theology, but also in sacred music, poetry and the Greek language.

Recognizing his remarkable devotion to prayer and study, Bede was ordained a deacon at the age of 19 and ordained a priest at the age of 30. After becoming a priest, he began working on farming, baking, and other works of the monastery, besides celebrating Mass. He gave priority to prayer, fasting and charitable hospitality. He showed excellence in a wide range of subjects.

Bede declined a request to become abbot of his monastery. Instead, he concentrated on writing and produced more than 45 books – primarily about theology and the Bible, but also on science, literature, and history. He also taught hundreds of students at the monastery and its school, which became renowned throughout Britain. Bede died in Jarrow on May 26, 735 praying his favorite prayer, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As in the beginning, so now, and forever" shortly after finishing an Anglo-Saxon translation of the Gospel of John. Pope Leo XIII canonized and declared him a Doctor of the Church in 1899.

May 26 – Tuesday, Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Want to be serene? Nurture joyfulness.

1 Peter 1:10-16

Peter encourages his readers to live sober lives, attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. He challenges all his readers to live lives of holiness in every “aspect of your conduct, after the likeness of the Holy One who called you”.

Psalm 98

**Sing to the Lord a new song,
For he has done wondrous deeds;
His right hand has won victory for him,
His holy arm.**

Mark 10:28-31

Jesus had talked about the difficulty of a person to enter the kingdom when his trust is in himself and his possessions. Peter was quick to raise the question about what was in it for those who gave up family and possessions. Jesus’ response to Peter was that sacrifice for the sake of the “Good News” will bring a hundredfold reward now and in the eternal life.

Following the way of Jesus involved renunciation, sacrifice, loss of home, friends, loved ones. But the follower was brought into a larger and wider family and circle of friends. Renunciation for the sake of the kingdom brought the person into a new relationship beyond family and the circle of friends.

Jesus warned them that following him would involve suffering and persecution. Jesus was definitely taking away the idea of a material reward for a material sacrifice. He called for sacrifice for the sake of the Kingdom and not for the sake of material reward.

Jesus did not offer a material reward or honor or important position. Jesus offered eternal life and nothing less. And eternal life is worth all the sacrifice.

Jesus also warned them that those who are first the world’s eyes, those with honor and praise in the world, are not necessarily first in the Kingdom. God alone knows the motives of our hearts.

Saint of the day, May 26 - St. Philip Neri and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

Philip was born into a noble family in Florence, Italy, on July 21, 1515. He received his early education from the friars at San Marco, the famous Dominican monastery in Florence.

At the age of 18, Philip was sent to his uncle, Romolo, a wealthy merchant at San Germano to assist him in his business, and with the hope that he might inherit his uncle's fortune. He gained Romolo's confidence and affection, but soon after coming to San Germano Philip had a religious conversion. From then onward, he no longer cared for things of the world and decided to live in Rome and began to talk to people on the streets about Jesus. For thirteen years Philip ministered on the streets and had a following of many, including the rich and the poor. So great was his ministry that he formed a group of laypersons that would meet for prayer, faith sharing, and service.

Philip had studied philosophy and theology for three years, but he had given up the idea of being a priest. However, at the urging of his confessor, he was ordained in 1551. Some of his followers also became priests, and they lived together in community. This was the beginning of the Oratory, the religious institute he founded. The Oratory was finally approved after suffering through a period of accusations of being an assembly of heretics, where laypersons preached and sang vernacular hymns!

As a priest, Philip was an outstanding confessor, and his advice was sought by many, including royalty and the clergy. He was influential in converting many of the influential people within the Church itself to personal holiness. Philip's advice was sought by many of the prominent figures of his day. He is one of the influential figures of the Counter-Reformation, mainly for converting to personal holiness many of the influential people within the Church itself.

Philip Neri died on May 25, 1595, the Feast of Corpus Christi that year, after having spent the day hearing confessions and receiving visitors. He was canonized by Pope Gregory XV in 1622

May 27 – Wednesday, Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Craving for more and better takes away your peace.

Be content with what you have and are and you find peace and serenity.

1Peter 1:18-25

In this excerpt, Peter reflects on a Christ-filled life as life of deep reverence for God and God's personal presence. The reason for this reverence is that we are on our journey to God who is both father and judge. We must live in deep reverence also because we have been redeemed by the death of Jesus. Christ-filled life also demands that we live in brotherly love, in fellowship with others.

Psalm 147

**Glorify the Lord, O Jerusalem; Praise your God, O Zion.
For he has strengthened the bars of your gates;
He has blessed your children within you...**

Mark 10:32-45

Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem. He began to tell them about what was waiting for him in Jerusalem: judgment, condemnation, rejection, abuse and death, but resurrection three days later.

When Jesus and his disciples were poorly treated in a Samaritan town, James and John suggested that they ask God to strike the town with fire from heaven. Jesus rebuked the two and called them to be tolerant. Now as they hear about what would happen to their master in Jerusalem, they came to the defense of the master and now they want to know whether they could sit beside Jesus in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus told him that “sitting beside” was a gift from the father. It was up to them now to surrender themselves in service. First rank goes to ALL who surrender themselves in service!!!

“Anyone among you who aspires to greatness must serve the rest and whoever wants to rank first must serve the needs of all”

Pray that you may have the courage and the wisdom to surrender yourself in service.

Pray that you may be gifted by the father with his gift of “sitting beside” him in His Kingdom.

Saint of the day, May 27 - St. Augustine of Canterbury and 6 other saints are remembered this day

Augustine's date of birth and the details of his early life are not known. Most likely born in Rome to a noble family, he entered monastic life as a young man. The community he joined had been recently founded by a Benedictine monk named Gregory, who would go on to become Pope and eventually be known as St. Gregory the Great. The friendship between Gregory and Augustine had great historical consequences, as it was the Pope who would eventually send his fellow monk to evangelize England

In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine, by then a Benedictine monk, and 39 other monks to England as missionaries. As they passed through Gaul, the locals convinced the monks that the Anglo-Saxons were savages, and they warned them that the English Channel was too

dangerous to cross. Augustine decided that the danger was too great, and they returned to Rome. Pope Gregory allayed their fears and strengthened them to resume their journey.

Augustine and his monks landed in the Kingdom of Kent that was ruled by the pagan king, Ethelbert. Ethelbert was married to a Christian woman, and so he was familiar with the faith. The king provided the monks with hospitality, and within a year the king himself was baptized. In 597, Augustine was appointed Bishop of Canterbury. Because England was a pagan land, Augustine faced many obstacles converting the people. However, Pope Gregory had given him the missionary principle that helped him change hearts and minds. Instead of destroying pagan temples, he transformed them into churches. Pagan rites and festivals were transformed, as much as possible, into Christian ones. He died on May 26, 604 in Canterbury, United Kingdom.

Augustine achieved limited success in his eight years as Bishop, but his work and successes planted the seeds of Christianity that would eventually lead to the conversion of all of England by the year 680 A.D.

May 28 – Thursday, Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

It is inner stillness that will save and transform the world.

(Eckhart Tolle)

1 Peter 2:2-5, 9-12

Peter reminds us that the kindness of God is an incentive and an obligation to make sincere efforts to live a good Christian life. God has called us out of darkness into light, out of fear into mercy and out of slavery in sin into the freedom of grace. We have a noble calling and we must be faithful to that calling.

Psalm 100

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

Mark 10:46-52

The blind man, unaffected by the demands of the crowd to keep quiet, called out, “Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!” Nothing could stop Bartimeus – he was determined to meet the one person who, he believed could do something about his problem – he persisted.

A blind man had an insight! He saw Jesus for what and who he was and called him "Jesus, Son of David". The prophets and the wise men of old had prophesied: "the blind will see, the deaf will hear..."

Jesus saw the inside of the man...he saw the "inside story" of the man and he called this blind man's vision, "faith" and he said, "Go on your way; your faith has saved you." Bartimeus, the blind man had a new vision.....he saw...he believed and he followed Jesus.

Try to make this your prayer this week: "Master, I want to see".

Open yourself to the Lord. Let him open your eyes...the eyes of your mind and your heart.....let him help you see yourself better, see the world more positively and creatively and the Lord more fully....

Saint of the day, May 28 - Venerable Pierre Toussaint and 13 other saints are remembered this day.

Venerable Pierre Toussaint (1766-1853) was born into slavery in 1766, in present day Haiti, and in 1853 he died a free man in New York City. His life journey between these dates demonstrated his love and compassion for his neighbor as he embraced Christ's commandment to love one another.

In 1787 Pierre and his sister arrived in New York City with his master and his wife when they emigrated there from Haiti. Pierre was about 21 years old at the time, and his master sent him to a hairdresser as an apprentice. Pierre soon became a talented hairdresser and was in great demand. In 1791, Pierre's master died, and his widow Marie was left without much income. Filled with compassion for her, Pierre decided to stay and care for her. His substantial income was enough to purchase his sister's freedom and pay the household bills. Just before she died in 1807, Marie gave Pierre his own freedom.

This was the time when he took the last name "Toussaint" in honor of a hero of the Haitian revolution. Toussaint was a faithful Catholic and attended daily Mass regularly. He freely and generously gave most of his earnings to the poor of New York. He married in 1811, and he and his wife bought a large house and opened it to many black orphans whom they educated and taught trades. Pierre donated to various charities, generously assisting blacks and whites in need. They purchased the freedom of many slaves and aided French refugees. They cared for the sick, including those taken ill in the yellow fever epidemics. In his later years, Toussaint would not retire, as he said, "I have enough for myself, but if I stop working I have not enough for others." Toussaint died in 1853. An admirer called Toussaint, "God's reflection in ebony." Pope John Paul I declared Pierre Toussaint venerable in 1996.

May 29 – Friday, Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Want to be serene? Nurture peacefulness.

1 Peter 4:7-13

Peter advises his readers to remain calm and prayerful. Let your love be constant, he says. He encourages us, his readers to live noble, generous and self-sacrificing lives and give glory to God.

Psalm 96

**Let the heavens be glad and earth rejoice;
Let the sea and what fills it resound;
Let the plains be joyful and all that is in them!
Then shall all the trees of the forest exult!**

Mark 11:11-26

In this excerpt Mark tells us about the fruitless fig tree that met with disaster. The tree with leaves promises fruit. This excerpt speaks of promise without fulfillment and profession without practice, which brings disaster. Be faithful. Fulfill your promise.

Jesus cleanses the temple which had been turned into a market place. Place of worship had become place of abuse and exploitation, especially of the poor and the marginalized in the community. The house of God was being used to exploit the worshippers. Jesus was moved with a passion for justice, honor, respect - for real worship, which means giving God God's worth and giving God's people their worth.

Reflect on being called to deeply respect and revere the temple of God – all that we know as the temple, the house of God; all that we know as God's dwelling place.

You are the temple of...so is your brother and your sister - respect and honor yourself and your brother and your sister and that's a sure way of honoring God!

Saint of the day, May 29 - St. Madeleine Sophie Barat and 28 other saints are remembered this day.

Madeleine Sophie was born on December 12, 1779, in Joigny, France, next door to a house on fire. The stress and terror of the fire caused Sophie's mother, Madame Madeleine Fouffé Barat then pregnant with her third child, to go into labour. Born two months premature, Madeleine

Sophie was considered so fragile that she was baptised early the next morning. Although her parents had arranged godparents in advance, there was no time to call them to the church and so, at five o'clock on the morning of December 13, 1779, Louise-Sophie Cédor, a local woman on her way to early Mass, and Sophie's older brother, Louis, stood in as her godparents.

Madeleine Sophie was born into a financially comfortable family. Her father, Jacques Barat, was a cooper and vine-grower. The Barats were Jansenist Catholics, and Jansenism is often said to have shaped Sophie's spirituality profoundly. She was always willing to help people in need and to pray for others.

Sophie was brought up in strict but loving home. Her older brother Louis, a seminarian, homeschooled Sophie and brought her to Paris with him when she was 16. He was overbearing and made all decisions for her for the next five years. Sophie became emotionally lost and anxious, but it was during this time that God awakened her to the truth of his divine love.

In 1800, Sophie met Father Joseph Varin who asked her to head an order of teaching nuns dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She accepted and professed her vows that same year. The number of convents and schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart grew quickly. Her leadership was centered on the love of God, a life of prayer, and reflection.

Sophie was elected Superior General for life in 1806. By 1857, the Society had spread from France to 13 other countries in Europe, Africa, and North and South America. At the time of her death, her community consisted of 3,359 women. Today, there are over 2000 schools operated by the Society of the Sacred Heart in 41 countries. Madeleine Sophie Barat died on May 25, 1865 in Paris, France and was canonized in 1925 by Pope Pius XI.

May 30 – Saturday, Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Free from all thoughts of 'I' and 'mine', a man finds absolute peace.
(Bhagavad Gita)

Jude 17:20-25

Jude advises his readers to pray in the holy Spirit and to persevere in the Love of God. He encourages us to correct one another and be a support to one another. God will protect us and we must protect those in our care.

Psalm 63

**O God, you are my God whom I seek,
For you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts;
Like the earth parched, lifeless and without water.**

Mark 11:27-33

A delegation of chief priests, elders and experts in the law came to Jesus and asked him about the source of his authority. They had hoped to catch him making some statement that could incriminate him. If he said he acted on his own authority they could arrest him for being delusional and if he said he acted on God's authority they could arrest him on blasphemy. They thought, either way, they had him trapped.

Instead of answering their questions, Jesus confronted them with a set of his own questions. He asked them where the baptism of John the Baptist came from. If they said John's Baptism had divine origin, they would have to explain why they rejected him. If they said it was of human origin, they would have to fear the people who had accepted him as a martyr. Their answer was that they did not know. Jesus refused to answer misguided, stubborn people.

This excerpt challenges us to remain open and docile to the Holy Spirit; to remain open to accepting the truth as it is being revealed to us; be to honest in our search for truth; to be cautious of those who are misguided; to be aware of those who ask tricky, dishonest questions and to be fearless in the face oppositions.

Saint of the day, May 30 - St. Joan of Arc and 15 other saints are remembered this day.

Joan of Arc was born in the year 1412 into a peasant family at Domrémy in northeast France. She is nicknamed "The Maid of Orléans" and is considered a heroine of France for her role during the Lancastrian phase of the Hundred Years' War. Joan claimed to have received visions of the archangel Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine of Alexandria instructing her to support Charles VII and recover France from English domination late in the Hundred Years' War.

The unanointed King Charles VII sent Joan to the Siege of Orléans as part of a relief army. She gained prominence after the siege was lifted only nine days later. Several additional swift victories led to Charles VII's consecration at Reims. This long-awaited event boosted French morale and paved the way for the final French victory.

On May 23, 1430, she was captured at Compiègne by the Burgundian faction, a group of French nobles allied with the English. She was later handed over to the English and put on trial by the

pro-English bishop Pierre Cauchon on a variety of charges. After Cauchon declared her guilty, she was burned at the stake on May 30, 1431, dying around nineteen years of age.

In 1456, an inquisitorial court authorized by Pope Callixtus III examined the trial, debunked the charges against her, pronounced her innocent, and declared her a martyr. In the 16th century she became a symbol of the Catholic League, and in 1803 she was declared a national symbol of France by the decision of Napoleon Bonaparte. She was beatified in 1909 and canonized in 1920. Joan of Arc has remained a popular figure in literature, painting, sculpture, and other cultural works since the time of her death, and many famous writers, playwrights, filmmakers, artists, and composers have created, and continue to create, cultural depictions of her.

Gus Tharappel, msfs

**The strength of a family, like the strength of an army,
lies in its loyalty to each other.**



To be kind is
more important
than to be right.
Many times, what
people need is not
a brilliant mind
that speaks but a
special heart that
listens.

