

# Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday, the fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we reflected on the call of the Scripture readings to be faithful and steadfast on our journey. The Scripture readings of the daily mass this week reflects on the challenges of being faithful. It is not difficult to recite a creed, but to live the Christian life is demanding and challenging and often difficult. Jesus was once asked whether only a few would be saved (Luke 13:22-30). Behind this question was the belief that only the Jews would be saved and not the gentiles. Jesus responded by telling them that entrance into the kingdom was not automatic...membership in the Jewish community or any faith community did not guarantee entrance into the kingdom. He called them to make difficult choices and make the difficult journey.... "The door is narrow," he said. At this time, he himself was making his way to Jerusalem to face rejection and eventual death.

We are all familiar with expressions like "a narrow escape," "a tight squeeze" and so on which suggest that we have accomplished something difficult, something that required taking risk. Even as children, some of us had narrow escapes from the bullies in the school, from major accidents on a bike, from major failures in sports, etc. As adults many of us can recall the narrow escapes we had from serious injuries, conflicts with others, major car accidents, etc. We know how narrow the path forward can be when we face life-altering decisions. We are often confronted with situations where all our options must give way to one choice. No one else can make the decision for us and no one else would suffer the consequences of that decisions. All our choices will come to this narrow "gate" that will define who we are, how we live and even define us into the future. We must walk through the narrow gate and enter the kingdom.

From the beginning of scriptures, we read about great men and women being called to make difficult choices and they in turn called their people to make hard choices. Moses and the prophets and finally Jesus offered people choices between life and death; way of the just and way of the wicked; the way of foolishness and the way of wisdom and the way of the kingdom and the way of the world. We must make difficult choices and be faithful to the choices we make. Let us strive to be true to ourselves, to be authentic in all we say and do, to be steadfast in living our faith as we go about doing our daily chores and fulfilling our responsibilities.

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

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

## **Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**July 13 – July 18 , 2026**

**Dismiss all anxiety from your minds.**

**Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of gratitude.**

**Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding,  
will guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.**

**(Philippians 4:4-7)**

### **July 13 – Monday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**From serenity comes gentleness and gentleness nurtures serenity.**

#### **Isaiah 1:10-17**

Isaiah challenges his people to change their ways. He tells them that sacrifices are worthless without proper inner dispositions. It is not enough to wash hands...must "wash yourselves clean...put away misdeeds...cease doing evil...learn to do good.... learn to be just in your ways..."

#### **Psalm 50**

**Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you,  
For your burnt offerings are before me always.  
I take from your house no bullock,  
No goats out of your fold.**

#### **Mathew 10:34 – 11:1**

Jesus talks about the cost of discipleship with startling honesty. Being a disciple could mean division, separation even from loved ones because loyalty to Christ has to take precedence over the dearest loyalties of this world. To choose Christ could mean denial of other things and other loyalties! The disciple must be ready to take up the cross, to be regarded as a criminal and to die – no glory, no fame, no name, no wealth.....no pretenses!

**Be prepared to welcome and accept the pain and the loss that come with being faithful to your call.....**

The disciple is called to invest his life into the master's way of living and not hang on to it. Invest all of life into loving and caring and serving and giving.....to total giving. To help, even in small ways, is to gather wealth into the eternal. Life is worth investing, worth the sacrifice. Nothing can be given in exchange for life!

**Give life and love all you have .....Invest yourself into loving God and God's people! Give graciously and generously!**

## **Saint of the day, July 13 - St. Henry and 13 other saints are remembered this day**

St. Henry was born in 972 to Duke Henry of Bavaria and Princess Gisela of Burgundy. During his youth, Henry received both an education and spiritual guidance from bishop Wolfgang of Regensburg who was, eventually, canonized a saint. Henry took on his father's position as Duke of Bavaria in 995, one year after St. Wolfgang's death. The Church supported his accession to the throne as King of Germany in 1002. As king, Henry encouraged the German bishops to reform the practices of the Church in accordance with canon law. In 1014, the German king journeyed to Rome where Pope Benedict VIII formally crowned him as head of the Holy Roman Empire. The emperor demonstrated his loyalty to the Pope by confirming Benedict VIII's authority over the city of Rome. Henry made his journey from Rome back to Germany into a pilgrimage of sorts, stopping at various monasteries along the way.

Henry became a great patron of churches and monasteries, donating so much of his wealth to them that his relatives complained that he was behaving irresponsibly. He was also a great patron of the poor, making enormous contributions for their relief. His extraordinary generosity was made possible in part by his lack of an heir. He was married to a woman who was later canonized as a saint, St. Cunigunde of Luxembourg. For the last several years of his life, Henry had to deal with serious illness, and an additional ailment that crippled his left leg, along with his imperial responsibilities. He found support in prayer during these trials and seriously considered resigning his imperial leadership in order to become a monk. After several years of illness, St. Henry II died in July of 1024. Pope Eugene III canonized him in 1146.

## **July 14 - Tuesday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Great tranquility of heart is his who cares for neither praise nor blame.**

**(Thomas A. Kempis)**

### **Isaiah 7:1-9**

Isaiah tells Ahaz, the king of Judah that he should stand strong, unafraid and remain tranquil. Damascus and Samaria will fall...Ephraim will no longer be a nation. The prophet says to Ahaz, "unless your faith is firm, you shall not be firm".

### **Psalm 48**

**Great is the Lord and wholly to be praised,  
in the city of our God.**

**His holy mountain, fairest of heights,  
is the joy of all the earth.**

## **Mathew 11:20-24**

Jesus reproached the towns where most of his miracles were worked because they did not respond to his call for conversion, change and reform. He said to the people of these towns that places like Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah would have reformed if they had heard what he said and seen what he did. They were blessed and they were privileged.... They saw what others before them only dreamed of.... but they did not respond. With blessing and Grace and privilege comes responsibility. Their guilt was not just “no response”, but open rejection of the good news they heard.

**Reflect on how privileged and blessed and graced you are. Be Grateful! Be responsible!**

**Saint of the day, July 14 - St. Kateri Tekawitha and 12 other saints are remembered this day.**

Kateri was born in a village near Auriesville, New York in 1656. She was the daughter of a Mohawk chief and her mother was a Christian Algonquin. She was four when her mother died of rubella. She also contracted this disease which disfigured her face. After this event that marked all her life, Kateri was adopted by her two aunts and her uncle. Kateri converted to Catholicism during her adolescence. She was baptized at the age of twenty and this caused great hostility towards her on the part of her tribe. Although she had to suffer greatly for her faith, she stood firm in her beliefs.

Because of her conversion, she was treated as a slave among her own people. Her life was in danger because of her faith, so she fled on foot 200 miles to a Christian Indian village near Montreal, Canada. She lived only four more years, but in that time, she developed a deep spirituality and devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. She devoted herself to teaching prayers to the children and helping the sick and elderly. She prayed for hours every day and practiced strenuous fasting for the conversion of her nation. She died in 1680. Pope Benedict XVI canonized Saint Kateri Tekakwitha on October 21, 2012. She is the first canonized Native American saint.

**July 15 - Wednesday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**You want peace and serenity? Do the good thing, the right thing  
and the wise thing and keep doing it.**

**Isaiah 10:5-7, 13-16**

Isaiah prophesies a time when God would come to the aid of his people, free them from oppression and remove the foreign rulers. Powerful kings will become powerless before God. God is in control.

## **Psalm 94**

**The LORD does know human plans; they are only puffs of air.  
Happy those whom you guide, LORD, whom you teach by your instruction.  
You give them rest from evil days, while a pit is being dug for the wicked.  
You, LORD, will not forsake your people, nor abandon your very own.**

## **Mathew 11:25-27**

Jesus praises his heavenly Father for revealing himself to the simple and the humble. The message and the wisdom of God are not understood by human wisdom and understanding, but by the revelation of God... "No one knows the Father but the son and anyone to whom the son wishes to reveal him."

The learned, the clever and the intelligent men of the time did not accept Jesus and his message. They had no use for him. The simple people welcomed him and his word. Jesus praised his heavenly father for this wonderful gift of revelation to the simple and the humble. God is known through God's self-revelation.

**Be simple! Be humble! Be open and listen to God as he reveals himself to you!**

## **Saint of the Day, July 15 - St. Bonaventure and 35 other saints are remembered this day.**

St. Bonaventure was born in 1221 at Bagnoregio in Umbria, then part of the Papal States. Almost nothing is known of his childhood. He was baptized John but received the name Bonaventure when he became of a Franciscan. He entered the Franciscan Order in 1243 and studied at the University of Paris. After having successfully defended his order against the reproaches of the anti-mendicant party, he was elected Minister General of the Franciscan Order. On November 24, 1265, he was selected for the post of Archbishop of York; however, he was never consecrated and resigned the appointment in October 1266.

Bonaventure was instrumental in securing the election of Pope Gregory X, who rewarded him with the title of Cardinal Bishop of Albano, and insisted on his presence at the great Second Council of Lyon in 1274. There, after his significant contributions led to a union of the Greek and Latin churches, Bonaventure died suddenly on July 15, 1274 and in suspicious circumstances. There is a theory that he was poisoned. He was canonized on April 14, 1482

He steered the Franciscans on a moderate and intellectual course that made them the most prominent order in the Catholic Church until the coming of the Jesuits. His theology was marked by an attempt completely to integrate faith and reason. He thought of Christ as the "one true master" who offers humans knowledge that begins in faith, is developed through rational understanding, and is perfected by mystical union with God.

## **July 16 – Thursday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Serenity comes from the ability to say “Yes” to being here now.**

### **Isaiah 26:7-9, 12, 16-19**

Isaiah speaks of the longing of the heart for God. He affirms again that it is God who accomplishes everything. We cannot bring forth our salvation, “Salvation we have not achieved for the earth, the inhabitants of the world cannot bring it forth”.

**God will bring us to life. So, learn to walk in the way of justice and peace.**

### **Psalm 102**

**You, O Lord, abide forever,  
and your name through all generations.  
You will arise and have mercy on Zion,  
for it is time to pity her.**

### **Mathew 11:28-30**

Come to me all who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest.....Take my yoke upon you and learn from me.....I am meek and humble of heart.....

My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.....

**My yoke is easy - The word “easy” should be translated “well-fitting”. This simply means that the yoke is “tailor-made” to fit well. The discipline, the way, the life that Jesus offers is made to fit well, “tailor-made” for us - it won’t hurt us, it won’t burden us.**

Jesus came proclaiming good news.....love, forgiveness, healing, peace.....not as an avenging ruler, but proclaiming the triumph of compassion..... Jesus came.....meek, humble.....inviting all to turn to him with their burdens!.

**To rest in Jesus is to dwell in him.....to drink fully of his spirit.....to be refreshed and renewed for life and ministry.....as St. Augustine says, “our hearts are restless until they come to rest in you.”**

**Saint of the Day, July 16 - Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and 12 other saints are remembered this day.**

Our Lady of Mount Carmel is the title given to the Blessed Virgin Mary in her role as patroness of the Carmelite Order. The first Carmelites were Christian hermits living on Mount Carmel, near the Fountain of Elijah, in northern Israel from the late 12th century. They built in the midst of their hermitages a chapel which they dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. By the 13th century they became known as "Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel." They soon celebrated a special Mass and Office in honor of Mary. In 1726, it became a celebration of the universal Church under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. For centuries the Carmelites have seen themselves as specially related to Mary. Their great saints and theologians have promoted devotion to her.

Since the 15th century, popular devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel has centered on the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, also known as the Brown Scapular. Traditionally, Mary is said to have given the Scapular to an early Carmelite named Saint Simon Stock (1165-1265). The scapular is a modified version of Mary's own garment. It symbolizes her special protection and calls the wearers to consecrate themselves to her in a special way. The solemn liturgical feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was probably first celebrated in England in the latter part of the 14th century. Its object was thanksgiving to Mary, the patroness of the Carmelite Order, for the benefits they received through her during their difficult early years.

## **July 17 – Friday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Serenity comes from accepting and respecting that everything  
and everybody has value and purpose.**

### **Isaiah 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8**

Hezekiah was seriously ill and near death. Isaiah, the prophet asked him to put everything in order before he died. Hezekiah prayed for healing and he experienced the healing power of the Lord.

**Remember those who need healing and bless them with your prayer today.**

### **Isaiah 38:10-11**

Once I said, "In the noontime of life I must depart!  
To the gates of the nether world I shall be consigned for the rest of my years."  
I said, "I shall see the LORD no more in the land of the living.  
No longer shall I behold my fellow men among those who dwell in the world."

## **Mathew 12:1-8**

This excerpt tells us the story of the disciples plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath Day. The scribes and the Pharisees became more suspicious of a teacher who allowed his disciples to violate the Sabbath law. This kind of thing could not be allowed to spread unchecked. The problem was that the Sabbath law was broken. Jesus used this occasion to teach certain basic values: The claim of human need must take precedence over all other claims; The claims of worship, the claims of ritual, the claims of liturgy are important, but prior to any of them is the claim of human need. Jesus insisted that the greatest ritual service is the service of human need. Steadfast love takes precedence over ritual sacrifice.

What God desires far more than ritual sacrifice is kindness, the spirit which knows no law other than that it must answer the call of human need. Man is not at the service of the law. The law is at the service of man. Jesus called his disciples to go beyond rituals service, church service, synagogue service, to the service of human need. In fact, the Gospels tell us of only one synagogue service that Jesus conducted. But we have an abundance of events of Jesus at the service of human need.

**Christian service is involvement in the demands and problems and tragedies of the human situation.**

## **Saint of the Day, July 17 - Saint Francis Solano and 50 other saints re remembered this day**

Francis Solano was born on March 10, 1549 in Montilla, Spain. He was educated by the Jesuits but felt drawn to the poverty and penitential life of the Franciscan friars. At the age of twenty, he joined the Order of Friars Minor at Montilla, entering the novitiate at St. Lawrence Friary. The community there belonged to the Reformed observance within the Order, following a very strict routine of prayer, silence and fasting. Francis followed this regimen rigorously, always going barefoot, abstaining from meat, and wearing a hairshirt throughout that entire year. As a result, however, his health was permanently affected, leaving him sick and fatigued.

Francis was solemnly professed in 1569. He was then sent to the friary of Our Lady of Loreto in Seville for his seminary studies. There he learned not only philosophy and theology but developed his musical talents. He was ordained a priest in 1576. He was then named Master of Ceremonies for the community. Still a lover of simplicity, Francis made a small cell for himself by the chapel of the friary, made of clay and reeds. After completing his final theological studies, he was assigned as an itinerant preacher to the surrounding villages of the region. He was eventually given a license as a confessor. During this period, he requested that he might be allowed to go to North Africa, with the hope of achieving martyrdom for preaching the Catholic faith. He was denied this request.

After the death of his father, Francis returned to his hometown of Montilla to care for his mother. During that time, he gained the reputation of a wonder worker, as a number of people were cured of their afflictions through his intercession. In 1583, he cared for the sick and the dying when a pestilence broke out at Granada. His care for the sick during this epidemic drew so much admiration that he became embarrassed and asked to be sent to the African missions. Instead he was sent to South America in 1589. While working in what is now Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay, Francis quickly learned the local languages and was well received by the indigenous peoples. His visits to the sick often included playing a song on his violin.

Around 1601, he was called to Lima, Peru, where he tried to recall the Spanish colonists to their baptismal integrity. Francis also worked to defend the indigenous peoples from oppression. He died in Lima in 1610 and was canonized a saint in 1726.

## **July 18 – Saturday, Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time**

**Rule your mind with serenity rather than with force and manipulation.  
(Lao Tzu)**

### **Micah 2:1-5**

In this excerpt, we read about the prophet Micah challenging the wealthy landowners who have been dispossessing the poor by illegal means. Men without values and morals abused and exploited the poor and the underprivileged.

**Be mindful of the poor and the less fortunate in your community.**

### **Psalm 10**

**Why, O Lord, do you stand aloof?  
Why hide in times of distress?  
Proudly the wicked harass the afflicted,  
Who are caught in the devices the wicked have contrived.**

### **Mathew 12:14-21**

Jesus had to withdraw from the crowd since the Pharisees began to plot against him. Many followed and found healing and new life. Jesus asked them not to publicize what he had done for them. Jesus was courageous, took risks and became vulnerable...but never reckless.

**Do all things with selfless love and not seeking approval, recognition and publicity.**

**May you be courageous and wise and never reckless in your ministry.**

This Gospel passage also tells us that Jesus came serving, caring for the suffering, healing the broken, bringing hope to the gentiles..... “bruised reed he will not crush; smoldering wick he will not quench.....in his name Gentiles will find hope.” For Jesus, to be the messiah meant selfless service, sacrificial love, healing the hurt.....and not controlling, crushing and overpowering.

**May you live your calling in selfless service and sacrificial love and not controlling, crushing and overpowering.**

### **Saint of the Day, July 18 - St. Camillus de Lellis and 17 other saints are remembered this day**

St. Camillus de Lellis was born May 25, 1550 at Bocchianico, Italy. His mother died when he was a child, his father neglected him, and he grew up with an excessive love for gambling. Camillus was ornery, rowdy, and quarrelsome from his youth. From age 16, he fought with the armies of Venice and Naples, and he sustained a wound on his leg that he would have for the rest of his life. Army life was over for him in 1574, at which time he gambled away everything he had - savings, weapons, literally down to his shirt.

At 17, in Rome, he entered the San Giacomo Hospital for Incurables as both patient and servant but was dismissed for quarrelsome behaviors after nine months. Penniless, he was able to find work at the Capuchin friary. One day, he was so moved by a sermon of the superior that he began a process of conversion. He became a Capuchin novice as a lay brother but was later rejected because of his leg wound. He then went to the Hospital for Incurables in Rome where he was both a patient and a caregiver. After another stint of service at San Giacomo, he came back to the Capuchins, only to be dismissed again, for the same reason.

Again, back at San Giacomo, his dedication was rewarded by his being made superintendent. Camillus observed that many of the caregivers neglected the needs of the patients, so he recruited virtuous men from the community to help him provide better care. It was then that he was inspired to form a community of men to help the sick. Feeling first the need to become a priest, he was allowed to enter the seminary and was ordained a priest in 1584. After ordination, Camillus founded the Ministers of the Sick, or Camellians, whose members served in hospitals, in prisons, on ships, and on the battlefield. He died in Rome on July 14, 1614 and was canonized a saint in 1746. He is the patron saint of hospitals, physicians, nurses, and the sick.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Only a life lived  
to the service of others  
is worth living.**

**(Albert Einstein)**

