

## **CELEBRATE SABBATH**

### **Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Life is filled with unanswered questions, but it is the courage to seek those answers that continues to give meaning and purpose to life.**

#### **Genesis 18:1-10**

Abraham was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the “heat of the day” and saw three strangers approaching. Despite the “heat of the sun”, he rushed out to greet them and poured out his generosity at the feet of three total strangers. He bowed low before these strangers, showing them the same reverence as to his God. And He met messengers of God in three strangers and heard the promise of God again that he would become a Father and a new nation would be born.

**Be hospitable! Be generous! Welcome the strangers treat them with respect!**

#### **Psalms 15**

These verses of Psalm 15 are extracted from the Law of Moses. True faith does not mean just keeping the commandments. True faith bears fruit, changes the person and touches every aspect of his/her life. A person of such faith, of integrity, can “never be moved” (last line of the psalm). The law of the Lord is “written in his heart” (Jeremiah 31:33)

**Yahweh, who has the right to enter your tent,  
or to live on your holy mountain?  
Those whose way of life is blameless,  
who always do what is right,  
who speak the truth from their heart,**

#### **Colossians 1:24-28**

Paul taught the Colossians that all things were reconciled and brought together in Christ; that Peace and Harmony had come in and through Christ; that Christ is the image of the invisible God; all things were created and are held together in and through Christ; and that Christ is both the beginning and the head of the church. In this excerpt, Paul tells the Colossians that it is a privilege and honor to suffer in the service of Christ. Sufferings would come as a disciple tries to bring the Gospel to people beyond the borders and boundaries.

Paul saw his mission as bringing the message of the Gospel of Jesus also to the gentiles and to change the idea that God's love and mercy were the private property of any particular nation or people. The suffering that may come in this process is an honor and a privilege. Paul says that he finds joy in such suffering.

**Learn to see it as a privilege and an honor to suffer in the service of Christ!**

### **Luke 10:38-42**

Martha had lots to do. There were no cans to open, no frozen foods, no freezers, no fast food places to go, no 800 numbers to dial.....Martha had lots to do. Guest had come and the guest was her friend, her brother's friend and her sister's friend and a Rabbi, a Prophet and much more. Martha wished that if Jesus could just get Mary into the kitchen, together they could finish the work and spend time with the guest. But Jesus invited Martha to discern what was necessary.

The way this story has been passed on to modern readers of the Gospel is disappointing. Christians through the ages have misunderstood the whole episode. Many have thought that the struggle was in trying to keep a good balance between contemplative prayer and active ministry and that Jesus was encouraging us to choose the former over the latter.

While every disciple feels the tension of wanting to pray more, while being pulled to respond to the urgent needs, Jesus would never have preferred one over the other (if you know Jesus, that is). In fact, he told us over and over that a good disciple is one who hears the word and then puts it into practice (Lk.8:15; 11:28). We also know, in spite of his busy schedule and the pressures of those who needed him, he withdrew into quiet places to be alone with his Father, to discern his Father's plans, to draw strength and courage and wisdom and to surrender to his Father's will.

**As you reflect on your ministerial demands, let the words and example of Jesus and his first women followers inspire you to follow the Spirit's lead.**

### **Saint of the day, July 20 - St. Appollinaris and 14 other saints are remembered this day**

We do not have any historical information about St. Apollinaris. According to traditions and legends, Appollinaris was a native of Antioch in the Roman Province of Syria. Saint Peter sent Apollinaris to Ravenna, Italy, as its first bishop. As the first Bishop of Ravenna, he faced nearly constant persecution under Emperor Vespasian (Nero, according to some tradition). His preaching of the Good News was so successful that the pagans there beat him and drove him from the city. He returned, however, and was exiled a

second time. After preaching in the area surrounding Ravenna, he entered the city again. After being cruelly tortured, he was put on a ship heading to Greece. Pagans there caused him to be expelled to Italy, where he went to Ravenna for a fourth time. He died from wounds received during a savage beating at Classis, a suburb of Ravenna. A beautiful basilica honoring him was built there in the sixth century.

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