

Wellspring Fransalian Center for Spirituality

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Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday, we celebrated the feast of “The Most Holy Trinity.” We reflected on our vision of God as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Our vision of God is formed and shaped by what our parents, pastors, and teachers shared with us about God. What they have shared can be life giving, inspiring, comforting, and appealing or it can be disturbing, confusing, and scary.

If our vision of God is “steadfast love,” “loving kindness,” “all-embracing love,” “Unconditional love” and other similar concepts, our life will reflect the “freedom of the children of God” as Saint Paul teaches us (Romans 8:21). If we believe God to be angry, vengeful, and judgmental that will form us and shape us in a whole different way.

Psalm 86:15 proclaims, “But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” The Psalmist and his people had experienced this steadfast love during their exile in Babylon. Through the heart of the city of Babylon, ran a spacious boulevard. At one end of it was the temple of Baal and at the other end was the temple of Nebo. Once a year, the position of these gods was interchanged in a great ceremony. Their big statues were put on wagons and moved to their new site through the bumpy long cobbled street. The prophet, second Isaiah, was among the exiles who would be given a holiday on that day. He must have stood on the sidewalk, watching the proceedings and listening to the comments of his fellow exiles. Isaiah 46 speaks of the gods themselves going into exile.

These exiles returned to Jerusalem and the new temple was dedicated. The Psalmist (85-86) thanks God with his whole heart that he is not guided by these gilded Babylonian gods. They couldn’t even save themselves from falling of a wagon. Unlike the Babylonian gods who could only fall off wagons, our God has revealed himself as steadfast in loving kindness by carrying his people to safety (Isaiah 46:3-4). The exiles gained a new and amazing vision of God, “Our God carries us in the palm of his hands while the Babylonians have to carry their gods on their weak shoulders.” This new vision gave the exiles freedom and joy. The Psalmist says that he and his people have experienced the steadfast love of God. This is the vision that gives us freedom and joy. Let us strive to deepen our vision of God as steadfast, unfailing, and unconquerable Love.

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

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Ninth Week of Easter

June 1-6, 2026

God loves us. This is the great truth of our life; it is what makes everything else meaningful.

**We are not the product of blind chance or absurdity;
instead our life originates as part of a loving plan of God.**

(Pope Benedict XVI)

June 1 – Monday, Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

**Begin your day with gratitude, continue through the day with a blessing attitude
and you will find serenity and peace.**

2 Peter 1:2-7

God has given us the means and the grace for leading a holy, virtuous life.

This is reason enough to live a life of virtue and self-control.

This will lead us to perseverance and to the care of others in love and concern.

Psalm 91

**You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High,
Who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
Say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress,
My God in whom I trust."**

Mark 12:1-12

In this excerpt, we have the parable of the tenant farmers. This parable teaches us many things. Take a moment...prayerfully reflect on the following thoughts:

- We are trusted stewards of God's gifts. Be responsible! Be trustworthy!
- We are trusted to cultivate the gifts that God has given to us. How have you been cultivating the gifts that God has given to you?

- God has been gracious to us and so gifted us with all necessities. Be grateful! Be gracious! Share your gifts with others.
- Abuse of God's gifts brings disaster.
- Respect your gifts and the gifts of others – they are God-given!
- Use your gifts wisely and appreciate the gifts of others!

Saint of the day, June 3 - St. Charles Lwanga & Companions and 61 other saints are remembered this day.

Charles Lwanga was a member of the Baganda tribe, born on January 1, 1860 in the Kingdom of Buganda, the central and southern part of modern Uganda, and served as chief of the royal pages and later major-domo in the court of King Mwanga II of Buganda. He was baptized by Pere Giraud on November 15, 1885.

Catholic priests from the Missionaries of Africa arrived in Uganda around 1879 and began their missionary work, converting many to the Catholic Faith. A major barrier to the work of the missionaries was the ruler of Uganda, pagan King Mwanga. Mwanga himself practiced an immoral lifestyle and used his pages for his own pleasure. Charles Lwanga protected his fellow pages, aged 13 to 30, from the homosexual demands of the Bagandan ruler, Mwanga, and encouraged and instructed them in the Catholic faith

Mwanga did not want his subjects influenced by the Christian missionaries, and he was intent on finding Christian converts among his people to eliminate them. In November 1885, one of his subjects, a Catholic convert, Joseph Mkasa, admonished Mwanga for his immoral acts with the pages. This enraged Mwanga and Joseph was beheaded. Protestant missionaries were slaughtered, as well.

After Joseph's death, Charles Lwanga became the chief religion teacher and protector of the Christian pages. Six months later, instigators prodded the king to continue persecuting Christians and informed Mwanga that a page named Denis Sebuggwawa was teaching the Catholic religion to other pages. Brought to the Mwanga, Denis admitted that what was said about him was true. In an act of rage, the Mwanga picked up a spear and thrust it into his neck and then ordered the deaths of all Christian pages, catechists, and followers of Jesus.

Twenty- two Ugandans including Charles Lwanga were captured and began a 37-mile walk to the site of the execution. When they reached the place, all but three who were killed on the road were placed in a prison while the executioners prepared the site of the fire. Three days later, on Ascension Sunday, June 3, 1886, all were burned alive. They were canonized on October 18, 1964 in Uganda by Pope Paul

June 2 - Tuesday, Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

**The trees, the flowers, the plants grow in silence. The stars, the sun,
the moon move in silence. Silence gives us a new perspective.**

(Mother Teresa)

2 Peter 3:12-15, 17-18

The author of this letter advises the readers to wait patiently, blamelessly and in peace for the coming of the new heaven and the new earth where justice of God will dwell. He encourages them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

Be patient! Cultivate peace! Live blamelessly! Grow in grace!

Palm 90

**Fill us at day break with your kindness,
That we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.
Let your work be seen by your servants
And your glory by their children.**

Mark 12:13-17

In response to a trick question from the Herodians, Jesus revealed a great truth. They sought his opinion on paying tax to the emperor. He invited them to look at the coin and identify the image on the coin. The image on the coin indicated ownership.

The coin belonged to the emperor since his image was on it. "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's". Pay him what is due to him.

Then he taught another great truth: "give to God what is God's". The coin has the image of the emperor...you have the image of God...give yourself to God. We are made in God's image and likeness and we must be faithful to that image.

Loyalty to God takes priority over all else. Loyalty to God is fidelity to what God made you to be, obedience to what God wants you to do, striving to become what God wants you to become and faithfulness to all that is of God and from God.

Saint of the Day, June 2 - St. Francis Caracciolo and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

St Francis Caracciolo was born on October 13, 1563 in Villa Santa Maria in the Abruzzo region, in the Kingdom of Naples. From a young age, he had a reputation for gentleness and uprightness. At age 22, he developed a troublesome skin disease resembling leprosy, one of the most dreaded diseases of the day. So serious was this attack that he was considered hopeless. With death so near, he made a vow that if he regained his health, he would spend the rest of his life in the service of God and his fellow men. He recovered so quickly after this vow that his cure was considered miraculous.

Eager to fulfil his promise to God, he went to Naples to study for the priesthood. There he befriended a man who wanted to establish a new religious community that would focus on both the active and the contemplative life. Francis helped draw up Rules for the new Order of the Minor Clerks Regular. Members of the Order agreed among themselves never to seek leadership within the group, though Francis was elected many times to serve in such positions.

Even in his capacity as superior of the Order, he insisted on sharing simple tasks: sweeping rooms, making beds, washing dishes. As a priest, Francis spent many hours in the confessional. He also begged in the streets for the poor and gave away most of his possessions to the needy. Francis died on June 4, 1608 and was canonized on May 24, 1807 in Rome by Pope Pius VII

June 3 - Wednesday, Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

**The self-controlled soul, who moves amongst sense objects,
free from either attachment or repulsion, he wins eternal peace.**
(Bhagavad Gita)

2 Timothy 1:1-3, 6-12

Paul begins this letter with a profound prayer: "May grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord be with you" "I thank God.... whenever I remember you in my prayer...night and day".

Make this prayer your prayer today.

He encouraged Timothy to "stir into flame the gift of God....and never be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord..." and to bear hardship for the Gospel...

Fan into flame the spark that is within you!

Palm 123

**To you, I lift up my eyes,
who are enthroned in heaven,
Behold, as the eyes of servants
are on the hands of their masters.....
So are our eyes on the Lord our God.....**

Mark 12:18-27

Mark tells us of another trick question that the Sadducees asked Jesus. Even a trick question became an opportunity to proclaim eternal truth: "God is the God of the living and not of the dead". Jesus declared his Jewish ancestors to be alive with God.

Use every opportunity, even unpleasant ones, to give witness to truth.

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The question they asked made the idea of the resurrection sound ridiculous. The response Jesus gave made the idea of the resurrection not only a reality but the idea of the absence of an afterlife even more ridiculous. God is the God of living persons and not of dead bodies. Living God is the God of living beings. Jesus used this opportunity to teach the Sadducees how wrong they were and to teach them that resurrection is a reality.

Eventually, Jesus would teach them and he teaches us today that he is the resurrection and the life....he who believes in him will never die.

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June 4 – Thursday, Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Meet this transient world with neither grasping nor fear, trust the unfolding of life and you will attain true serenity.

(Bhagavad Gita)

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Paul encouraged Timothy to keep reminding people: "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him. If we hold out to the end, we shall reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us. If we are unfaithful, he will still remain faithful, for he cannot deny himself." Therefore try hard to make yourself worthy of God's approval, following a straight course in preaching the truth.

Psalm 25

Your ways O Lord, make known to me,
Teach me your paths,
Guide me in your truth and teach me,
For you are God my savior.

Mark 12:28-34

One of the Scribes asked Jesus about which of the commandments was the first. Jesus presented the first as loving God above all else with heart, mind, soul and strength, loving God with all you are and all you have and the second as loving "neighbor as yourself". The Scribe welcomed this insight and added that it was even worth more than any burnt offering or sacrifice. Jesus affirmed the Scribes insight and told him that he was "not far from the kingdom".

Jesus would teach, eventually, that we can be and belong in the kingdom and not just "not be far from the kingdom". To really belong in the kingdom, we must learn to "love one another as I have loved you". We must learn to love as Jesus loved.

This is our challenge. It is this "LOVE" - unconquerable benevolence that will make us "sons of God", godlike persons. That is WHO GOD IS: LOVE. We are to image HIM - His Love, His Benevolence - seeking the highest good of all.

God makes his sun rise on the good and on the wicked; He sends his rain on the just and the unjust. We are called to love others as Jesus loves us with unconditional, invincible, unconquerable, unwearied, benevolent love.....

Saint of the Day, June 4 - St. Francis Caracciolo and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

St Francis Caracciolo was born on October 13, 1563 in Villa Santa Maria in the Abruzzo region, in the Kingdom of Naples. From a young age, he had a reputation for gentleness and uprightness. At age 22, he developed a troublesome skin disease resembling leprosy, one of the most dreaded diseases of the day. So serious was this attack that he was considered hopeless. With death so near, he made a vow that if he regained his health, he would spend the rest of his life in the service of God and his fellow men. He recovered so quickly after this vow that his cure was considered miraculous.

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June 5 – Friday, Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

**Movement is good for the body. Stillness is good for the mind.
Serenity is good for the spirit.**

2 Timothy 3:10-17

Paul encouraged Timothy to be faithful to what he had learned and believed and to trust the Scriptures because Sacred Scriptures are sources of wisdom, inspired by God and offer direction for growing in holiness and for becoming competent in every good work.

Turn to the Sacred Scriptures for wisdom, inspiration and direction for growing in holiness and for becoming competent in every good work.

Psalm 119

**I wait for your salvation, O Lord,
And your commands I fulfill.
I keep your precepts and your decrees,
For all my ways are before you.....**

Mark 12:35-37

The title “Son of David” often referred to the idea of a conquering, warrior Messiah. It implied the political and nationalistic hopes and dreams and ambitions of the Jews at the time of Jesus. Jesus has been trying to correct this notion. He had to help his disciples and all his followers understand that he came not with political ambitions, but with serving and self-sacrificing love. He had to help them understand that he did not come to found an earthly kingdom. His purpose was the Kingdom of God.

In this excerpt, we meet Jesus trying to change the idea of a conquering, warrior Messiah who would found an earthly empire. He tried to give them a new idea of a Messiah who would be a servant of God, who would bring to people the love and compassion of God through service and surrender.

Reflect on your call to service and surrender.

Saint of the Day, June 5 - St. Boniface and 37 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Boniface was born in the year 675 in Crediton, Devon, England during very difficult circumstances. People were afraid of leaving their homes because of the vandals, warrior tribes raiding their villages. Boniface became a Benedictine monk and later a priest. He felt called to preach the Gospel to the vandals. In 719 Pope Gregory sent Boniface to Germany as a missionary and later to Holland to work with the vandals who had settled there.

Many of the Christian converts had returned to paganism, and for those who still called themselves Christian, their beliefs were not in line with all teachings of the Church. The priests themselves were lax or improperly trained. Boniface reported his findings to Pope Gregory, and Pope Gregory instructed him to reform the German Church. In 722, Boniface became Bishop. Over time, Boniface restored the obedience of the clergy to their bishops in union with the pope of Rome. He destroyed idols and pagan temples and built churches on those sites.

Many Benedictine monks and nuns followed him. He set up many prayer houses, seminaries and churches. On June 5, 754, as he was preaching the Gospel in Frisia, Boniface and several other companions were murdered by a group of local inhabitants.

May 6 – Saturday, Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Want Serenity? Care less about chaos and focus on creating and maintaining order.

2 Timothy 4:1-8

Paul encouraged Timothy to preach the good news at all times....correcting, reproofing, appealing....to stick to this task...constantly teaching and never losing patience, whether convenient or inconvenient....be faithful to fulfilling the mission. Paul says that he has fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith and is waiting for the reward...

Be faithful to the mission God has given you when convenient and inconvenient!

Psalm 71

**I give you thanks with music on the lyre,
For your faithfulness, O my God!
I will sing your praises with the harp,
O Holy One of Israel!**

Mark 12:38-44

The scribes and the Pharisees knew what was good, right and just. But they failed to live according to the knowledge they had. They said the right things but did not live them out in their lives. They made an impression on others as righteous people. They lived pretentious lives. Jesus challenged his disciples to live honest lives, to be faithful to the truth they have come to know, to place themselves at the service of others, to honor God rather than seek their own honor and glory, to find honor in serving others rather than being served.....

Honor God with your lives, not with your lips! Make every effort to practice what you preach and be faithful to what you have come to know as truth.

Jesus pointed to a poor widow who gave generously “from her want” as an example for all to follow. Her “two small copper coins” became a model of generosity for all generations because she gave from “what she had to live on” while many of the wealthy gave “sizable amounts from their surplus”.

Be gracious! Give and give generously! Don't wait for times of surplus!

Saint of the Day, June 6 - St. Norbert and 44 other saints are remembered this day.

Norbert was born in 1075 in Xanten, Germany. Through the influence of his family he obtained a financial subsidy from the parish church of St. Victor at Xanten when he accepted ordination to the subdeaconate. His only task was to chant the Divine Office at the Church, but he apparently paid someone a small fee to take his place in the choir, because he gained an appointment as a chaplain (religious counselor) to the emperor Henry V in Cologne. The salaries from the Xanten fund and the royal treasury were enough to equip him to live in the style of the nobility of the times.

He avoided ordination to the priesthood and even declined an appointment as bishop of Cambrai in 1113. One day in the spring of 1115, as he rode his horse to Vreden, a thunderbolt from a sudden storm struck at his horse's feet. After this near-fatal accident, his faith deepened, he renounced his appointment at Court and returned to Xanten to lead a life of penance, placing himself under the direction of Cono, Abbot of St Sigeberg, near Cologne. He was ordained to the priesthood soon afterward. Norbert was a great devotee of the Eucharist and Our Lady.

He visited Pope Gelasius II, who gave him permission to become an itinerant preacher and he preached throughout lands in what is now western Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and northern France. In settlement after settlement he encountered a demoralized clergy, lonely, often practicing concubinage and feeling that the official Church cared little about them.

At the Council of Reims in October 1119, Pope Calixtus II requested Norbert to found a religious order in the Diocese of Laon in France. On Christmas Day, 1120, Norbert established the Canons Regular of Prémontré. For a Rule of life, Norbert chose the Rule of St. Augustine as was common among communities of priests - 'canons'. In addition, he adapted some of the customs of the Cistercians. The whole idea was that his active priests needed an ascetic and contemplative haven.

The Order of Canons Regular of Prémontré was founded and the young community at first lived in huts of wood and clay, arranged like a camp around the chapel of Saint John the Baptist, but they soon built a larger church and a monastery for the religious who joined them in increasing numbers. In 1125, the constitution for the order was approved by Pope Honorius II.

In 1126 Pope Honorius II appointed Norbert to the Archbishopric of Magdeburg, where he put into practice the precepts that he instituted at Prémontré. Several assassination attempts were made as he began to reform the lax discipline of his diocese. He continued his work as Archbishopric of Magdeburg until his death on June 6, 1134.

Gus Tharappel, msfs

If you don't stand for something, you will fall for everything.



