

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Anxiety over imperfections creates tensions within.
Acceptance of imperfection and trying to overcome them gently
and patiently brings serenity and joy.**

Jeremiah 20:10-13

This excerpt speaks of Jeremiah expressing his frustrations to God. The Prophet was constantly surrounded by the wicked - even his friends turned against him. They were on the watch to catch him in a false word or action. But Jeremiah stood strong, even in desperate moments and affirmed his faith: "the Lord is with me like a mighty champion".

Be strong! Put your confidence in the Lord who walks with you and empowers you to face the challenges of life.

Psalms 69

The Psalmist laments the suffering of the innocent in metaphorical and literal language. He speaks of exhaustion, alienation from family and community, false accusation, etc. In the second part of the psalm, the psalmist prays that the enemies be punished for all to see. Despite the pain, the psalmist does not lose hope that all will be set right. He prays for a "time of favor" out of the "bounteous kindness" of the Lord. This psalm, which depicts the suffering of the innocent and just person vividly, is cited often by the New Testament especially in the passion accounts. The psalmist prays not so much for personal vengeance as for public vindication of God's justice.

**I pray to you O Lord, for the time of your favor, O God!
In your great kindness, answer me with your constant help.
Answer me, O Lord, for bounteous is your kindness;
in your great mercy turn toward me.**

Romans 5:12-15

Paul reflects on sin and its effects on the person and the community. He further reflects on the abundance of Grace. The grace of God and the gracious gift of Jesus overflow for

all people. Sin has come through disobedience. Grace has overflowed through the obedience of Jesus.

Reflect on how personal sin affects others in community. Reflect further on the power of Grace to transform your life.

Mathew 10:26-33

Mathew gives us a few disconnected sayings of Jesus and we need to reflect on each of them without searching for connections.

First, Jesus warned the disciples of the problems they will face. The disciple can not expect any more favors than the Master...the master was tested, rejected, condemned as a criminal, treated as a rebel, eventually crucified and put to death... the disciples have to be prepared to face testing times like their master. Jesus encouraged them to be fearless!

Be prepared to accept the hardship, the cost of being disciples of Jesus!

Truth is meant to be seen, not concealed. We try to hide certain things from ourselves, certain things from others and certain things, even from God! Jesus calls us to be honest, sincere - not hypocritical!

Jesus calls us to be fearless - not reckless.

God 's care is very personal. We are not lost in the crowd - God takes personal care. "Are not five sparrows sold for a few pennies? Yet not one of them is neglected by God."

God personally cares for you. So be fearless. You are worth more...

Saint of the Day, June 21 – St. Aloysius Gonzaga and 17 other saints are remembered this day.

Aloysius Gonzaga was born on March 9, 1568 in Castiglione delle Stiviere, Republic of Venice, Italy. He was sent to be a page in the Medici court in Florence when he was only eight years old. From about the age of seven he had an unusual sense of closeness to God. He became aware of a conflict in his early teens when he was sent to the royal court of Spain. It was a materialistic and immoral place. He needed self-discipline and courage to live as a Christian in these surroundings.

In 1584, Aloysius returned to Italy. He sensed that his society could not be reformed from within. The only way to survive was to get out completely. He decided to release

all his property rights to his younger brother and to become a Jesuit. He knew the Jesuits would treat him like everyone else, not like royalty. Also, he would be expected to take a vow of poverty. In 1591, an epidemic hit Rome. Victims died in agony in the streets of the city. The priests of Aloysius's order opened a hospital. Aloysius, who was 23, volunteered to serve the sick. On his back he carried the dying into the hospital. He washed them, made their beds, and cheered them. Then he caught the disease himself. Three months later he died on June 21, 1591 and was canonized in 1726.

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