Wellspring
Fransalian Center for Spirituality
P. O. Box 440, Whitehouse, Texas 75791
www.wellspringcommunity.net **frgusmsfs@gmail.com**

August 30, 2026

Brothers and Sisters,

We have been making our journey with Jesus through the Gospel of Mathew. The following is what we have learned so far about being his disciples. We are sent into the world with a positive attitude to bless and befriend the world. We must nurture a blessing attitude and cultivate virtues of hospitality, fidelity, humility, gentleness, patience, generosity and a habit of listening to the voice of God, as well as listening and responding to those beyond family and friendship circles. Last Sunday, we heard a profound and challenging call to be the rock on which Christ would build his Church. Our Scripture readings today call us to reflect on the cost of being the rock on which Christ builds his Church…the cross, suffering, and death await all disciples who follow Jesus.

Jeremiah was a young man when he heard God's call. He didn't want to respond, and he had a good excuse of being young. The Lord persisted and Jeremiah finally accepted the Lord's call and began his mission as the Lord commanded. The response to his mission was hatred and rejection of his people and being thrown into a cistern to die. Jeremiah cried out his frustration (today's first reading). He cursed even the day of his birth. In spite of it all, he surrendered to God, "I say to myself, I will speak his name no more…then it becomes like fire burning in my heart…I must speak." He remained faithful. He took up his cross and carried it well.

In his desperate moment, as he cried out his frustrations to God, Jeremiah found the "spark within" and fanned it into a flame and he was on fire with the mission that God had given him. St. Paul reminds us as he reminded the Romans, "the love of God is poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5); "nothing will separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:39).

Saint Paul invites us, as he invited the Romans, to offer ourselves as a "living sacrifice." We, the disciples of Jesus cannot conform to this world and its values. We must be formed, shaped and transformed in Christ……become living sacrifices of praise in all we do (today's second reading).

Little Liz was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness. The doctor explained the situation to her little brother and asked the little boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. He hesitated for a moment, took a deep breath and said, "Yes, I'll do it, if it will save her."

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled seeing the color returning to her cheek. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?" Being young, the little boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood in order to save her.

The little boy offered himself as a "living sacrifice of praise" for his sister, as St. Paul advised the Romans (today's second reading). Total giving, unconditional surrender in love is the call of the Gospel and the challenge of the moment!

The Gospel reading of this Sunday calls us to accept suffering as an integral part of being a disciple of Jesus. Jesus told his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer and die and be raised on the third day. Peter could neither understand nor accept this type of Messiahship: "God forbid that such things would happen", he said. Jesus called Peter an adversary and challenged him to follow rather than get in the way.

Peter had to learn a new lesson, and we have to learn the same lesson today: you are either in the way or on the way…it is your choice!

We know the shape of the Cross that Jesus carried but what is the shape of the crosses in our lives? We have our own crosses to carry, such as health issues, age-related diminishment, financial reversals and relational or emotional setbacks. We did not choose them. Rather, they chose us. Life's crosses cannot be avoided and there are enough of them to go around. Yet how we embrace the crosses that befall us will make all the difference in the quality of our Christian discipleship. We can complain and blame our God, our parents, our government, our past mistakes, etc. or bear the crosses gracefully and find meaning in the crosses that come our way.

As the Son of God, Jesus could certainly have saved us by other means than the Cross. But he chose the cross! He wanted to embrace all that we must embrace, the good and happy events as well as life's setbacks and sufferings. We, his disciples, must be willing to accept the cost of discipleship and accept the suffering and the hardship that come with following Jesus. Salvation and peace will be brought about through the cross, suffering, and death and not through avenging armies or rituals and pious ceremonies. Those who commit themselves to Jesus must learn to live in conflict and tension and accept the suffering that comes with discipleship.

I encourage you to take a few moments each day of this week to be still and to reflect on your readiness to support a person with a heavy burden to carry. Pray for those who are carrying heavy burdens and pray that you may never become a burden to another.

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

Scroll down to read the reflections on the Scripture readings of todays' mass….

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 30, 2026

**Christian faith is not only a matter of believing that certain things are true,
but above all a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
It is an encounter with the Son of God that gives new energy to the whole of our existence.
When we enter into a personal relationship with him, Christ reveals our true identity
and, in friendship with him, our life grows towards complete fulfilment.**
(Pope Benedict XVI)

Collect

God of might, giver of every good gift,
put into our hearts the love of your name,
so that, by deepening our sense of reverence,
you may nurture in us what is good
and, by your watchful care,
keep safe what you have nurtured.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

When you lose serenity within, you lose touch with yourself and the world around you.

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Jeremiah had the mission of proclaiming something that his people did not want to hear, “repent and turn to your God”. He didn’t want the job, he protested that he was young, and he accepted his call, reluctantly. Once accepted, he remained faithful to his calling. He wouldn’t give up in spite of rejection of his people, even of his friends. In this excerpt, we read about Jeremiah crying out his frustration. His enemies seemed more powerful than ever, and he found himself in a helpless situation. He cursed even the day of his birth: “the word of the Lord has brought me derision and reproach all day”. With all the disappointments and frustrations, he surrendered to God: “I say to myself, I will speak his name no more…then it becomes like fire burning in my heart…I must speak”.

Get in touch with the spark in your heart and fan it into flame.

Psalm 63

Imagine the Greeks thirsting for "Zeus" or the Canaanites thirsting for "Baal" or the Babylonians for "Nebo" or the Hindus thirsting for "Kali" or any other blood thirsty god!!! Our poet thirsts…his whole being thirsts for God, the living God and not huge, monstrous, fierce gods whom men have to carry on their shoulders. The Psalmist has known the living God who carries his people in His arms. What an amazing discovery!

Our Psalmist has found the "loving kindness", "steadfast love" or "covenant love" better than life itself! The "love" of God is better than the gift of life itself!!! So, lips will praise and hands will bless…. the whole being will bless God. So, he praises, meditates, contemplates "God" day and night. Remembering "Covenant love" he can only shout for joy. In the middle of the night, in deep darkness, sleeping in a mud hut with the domestic animals around…. when all kinds of demons could be lurking around, our poet says, "my soul clings to thee and thy right hands upholds me" –what an affirmation of faith.

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.

Romans 12:1-2

Paul has been proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus, the gift of God's Grace. In this chapter, he begins to open for his readers the ways of responding to this grace of God. The way we live as Christians is our response to what God has done for us in Christ. He invites his readers to offer themselves as "living sacrifice". Christians cannot conform to the world. They must be transformed in Christ…...become living sacrifices of praise in all they do.

Mathew 16:21-27

Jesus and Peter defined each other and affirmed each other in lasting relationship. Peter had affirmed Jesus as the Messiah and Jesus affirmed Peter as the "rock" on which he would build the Church. (Mt. 16:13-20) Jesus also affirmed that this confession and commitment were not born of reason or logic but of Grace, "flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my heavenly father, "Peter's confession is affirmed and proclaimed as a gift of Grace. (Mathew 16:13-20). Jesus also points out that those of us who confess and commit ourselves to him must learn to live in conflict and tension…. that the father will gift us with the power to live our commitment… "the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail…"

Jesus taught the disciples to accept the suffering and the hardship that come with following his

way. Salvation and peace will be brought through suffering, death and the cross and not through avenging armies. Peter could neither understand nor accept this type of Messiahship: "God forbid that such things would happen…." Jesus called Peter an adversary and challenged him to follow rather than get in the way. Peter had to learn a new lesson, and we have to learn the same lesson today: You are either in the way or on the way…it is your choice. He had to learn to give up his own ideas and surrender to God's way, God's plan and God's will. We must be willing to accept the cost of being disciples of Jesus.

Saint of the Day, August 30 - St. Jeanne Jugan and 21 other saints are remembered this day

Jeanne Jugan was born October 25, 1792, in the port city of Cancale in Brittany. She grew up during the political and religious upheavals of the French Revolution. Four years after she was born, her father, a fisherman, was lost at sea. Her mother struggled to provide for the young Jeanne and her siblings, while also providing them secretly with religious instruction amid the anti-Catholic persecutions of the day.

Jeanne Jugan worked as a shepherdess while still very young and learned to knit and spin wool. She could barely read and write. At the age of 16, Jeanne became a kitchen maid for a family that not only cared for its own members, but also served poor, elderly people nearby. At age 18, and again six years later, she declined marriage proposals from the same man. She told her mother that God had other plans and was calling her to "a work which is not yet founded". At age 25, the young woman became an Associate of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary founded by St. John Eudes (Eudists).

After six years she became a servant and friend of a woman she met through the third order. They prayed, visited the poor, and taught catechism to children. After her friend's death, Jeanne and two other women continued a similar life in the city of Saint-Sevran. In 1839, they brought in their first permanent guest. They began an association, received more members, and more guests. Mère Marie of the Cross, as Jeanne was now known, founded six more houses for the elderly by the end of 1849, all staffed by members of her association, the Little Sisters of the Poor. By 1853, the association numbered 500 and had houses as far away as England. At the time Pope Leo XIII gave her final approval to the community's constitutions in 1879, there were 2,400 Little Sisters of the Poor. Jeanne died later that same year, on August 30, 1879, and was canonized in 2009.

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

What counts is not the fulfilment of my desires, but of his will.
In this way, life becomes authentic.
(Pope Benedict XVI)