

MAY

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17

18 19 20 21 22

23 24 25 26 27

28 29 30 31

NOTE: When the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated on the following Sunday, the Second Reading and Gospel from the Seventh Sunday of Easter (see Lec. 61) may be read on the Sixth Sunday of Easter.

SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2016

**SIXTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

(Lec. 57)

- 1) Acts 15:1-2, 22-29
- 2) Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23
- 3) John 14:23-29

FOCUS: Jesus offers us a peace the world cannot give.

The peace of Christ is truly a precious gift, offering us the blessed assurance that Jesus walks with us every step of our journey of faith. Jesus leads and guides us along the path to everlasting life, giving us the strength and grace to overcome obstacles and difficulties along the way.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading describes how the early Church welcomed the Gentiles without burdening them with keeping the full law of Moses. The second reading offers a majestic vision of the new and heavenly Jerusalem. In the Gospel, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples before returning to his Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In trust and confidence, let us join together in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may extend the gift of the peace of Christ to others through love and service, giving glory to God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of our nation and all world leaders, that their actions may be guided by justice and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor, may they find strength in their faith and be assisted in their need by compassionate Christians and people of good will, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our parish who are seriously ill, that they may feel God's presence through the support of friends and family, and may experience God's healing through the compassionate care of medical professionals, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, that they may join all the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. We offer them to you through your son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Monday, May 2, 2016
(Lec. 291)

- 1) Acts 16:11-15
- 2) John 15:26—16:4a

MONDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER
(OBL. MEM. Saint Athanasius,
Bishop and Doctor
of the Church)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit bolstered the first Christians as the message of the Gospel spread.

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit from the Father to guide and strengthen the disciples in giving witness to the truth. This assurance would give the Christians courage when their witness to Christ led to persecution. We, too, must rely on the Holy Spirit so we may give a faithful and effective witness to the Gospel.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading recalls how Paul, after arriving in the city of Philippi, shared the Gospel message with a woman named Lydia. Lydia, upon hearing the message, believed and was baptized. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples that the *Advocate*, the Holy Spirit, will give them the strength and guidance needed to preach the Gospel.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence in the Father's love for us, we offer our prayers to him.

- 1) That our Church leaders may continue to defend religious freedom in times of persecution and that we, as a Church, will support and pray for those who face threats to their well-being because of their beliefs, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That government officials may take to heart Pope Francis' call to care for our common home, and will work together to implement measures to protect the planet for generations to come, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That the victims of human trafficking may find freedom from oppression and healing through the efforts of committed Christians and people of good will, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this faith community may have the courage to bear witness to Jesus in our daily lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may enter into the peace of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Good and gracious God, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers. We ask in the name of Jesus, our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, May 3, 2016
(Lec. 561)

**SAINTS PHILIP AND JAMES,
APOSTLES
- FEAST**

- 1) 1 Corinthians 15:1-8
- 2) John 14:6-14

FOCUS: Saints Philip and James are witnesses to the resurrection of Christ, and an example of faithful witness to the Gospel.

The Twelve Apostles knew that Jesus had truly risen from the dead. They saw him, touched him and had a conversation with him. He commissioned them to preach this Good News to the world. Today, we celebrate the feast of Saints Philip and James, whose example challenges us to give a courageous and faithful witness to the Gospel every day.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul states that he wants the people to recall the message he preached to them. He stresses that it was not his own message, but one he received from Jesus. The Gospel emphasizes that message by affirming that those who believe in the risen Christ will help bring salvation to the world.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Recognizing that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, let us join with trust and confidence in offering our prayers and petitions to the Lord.

- 1) That Pope Francis and our bishops may be blessed with the strength they need to preach the Gospel in those areas of the world most in need of its healing message, let us pray to the lord.
- 2) That government officials may recognize the needs of those who live in poverty and act in just and compassionate ways, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer and are persecuted because of their faith in Jesus Christ may continue to seek the help of God and be strengthened by the prayers of faith-filled Christians, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That all members of this faith community may continue to grow in their commitment to safeguard and protect the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may enjoy the banquet prepared for them in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful Father, hear our petitions. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, May 4, 2016
(Lec. 293)

WEDNESDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER

- 1) Acts 17: 15, 22—18:1
- 2) John 16:12-15

FOCUS: The Gospel message must be shared with all, with perseverance and faith.

Christians face many challenges when they proclaim the message of the Gospel. Many questions will be asked. It takes a great deal of prayer, patience and time to give witness the Gospel. Some people will receive the message and decide to become Christians. Others will reject it.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Paul arrives in Athens. Upon noticing the great amount of idolatry in the city, he proclaims the truth about God, who is not confined to sanctuaries made by human hands. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches the disciples that when the Holy Spirit comes, the Spirit will guide them to all truth.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Grateful for God's good gifts and manifold blessings, let us join in offering our prayers and petitions to the Father.

- 1) That our Holy Father, Pope Francis, will be given the grace and strength needed to continue to share the faith throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That public officials may be attuned to the virtue of tempering justice with mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are hungry or homeless may be assisted in their need by committed Christians and people of goodwill, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That each of us may continue to grow in our knowledge and love of the Lord, in order to lead lives that bear faithful witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died might come to enjoy perpetual peace and joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, which we offer through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

NOTE: Regarding the Ascension of the Lord, the ecclesiastical provinces of Boston, Hartford, New York, Newark, Omaha, and Philadelphia have retained its celebration on the proper Thursday, while all other provinces have transferred this solemnity to the Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 8. If transferred, Thursday, May 5, is observed as an Easter Weekday. The following readings are used: Acts 18:1-8/John 16:16-20 (Lec. 294).

Thursday, May 5, 2016

(Lec. 58)

- 1) Acts 1:1-11
- 2) Ephesians 1:17-23
or Hebrews 9:24-28; 10:19-23
- 3) Luke 24:46-53

**THE ASCENSION
OF THE LORD
- SOLEMNITY**
(Holy Day of Obligation)

FOCUS: Trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It is easy to trust that which we can see, hear or otherwise tangibly sense. Trusting in someone or something in their absence can be difficult. When our hearts are awakened to faith in Jesus Christ, it is through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. This gift of faith enables us to see that we can trust the Spirit's guidance.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles recounts how Jesus commissioned the disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations. He then ascended into heaven. Suddenly, two men in white garments appeared to the disciples, urging them to stop staring at the sky and instead prepare themselves to preach the Gospel. In the Gospel, Jesus blesses and commissions the disciples to preach his message to all the nations before he ascends into heaven.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, let us offer our petitions to the Lord.

- 1) For all who minister in the Church, may they be blessed with the grace and strength to continue in their work of helping others to know God's healing and saving grace and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in positions of authority, may they turn to God for guidance for making good and just decisions for those they serve, for the greater glory of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who live with the cross of chronic illness, may they be blessed with the support and assistance needed to help them heal and recover, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each of us, may we continue to strive to be more attentive and responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in order to lead lives that bear an effective witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of mercy and forgiveness, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers. We offer them in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

* * *

***Optional Commentary for May 5, 2016**

Thursday, May 5, 2016

(Lec. 294)

- 1) Acts 18:1-8
- 2) John 16:16-20

THURSDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER

FOCUS: When we are struggling in life, God is our great hope.

When things in our lives are dark or confusing, it is especially important that we trust God and rely on him to be our strength. God alone gives us the grace and strength needed to persevere in faith. God will lead us to the light of a brighter day, and gives us the grace and gifts needed to keep our feet firmly planted on the path to life.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul leaves for Corinth and begins preaching to the Jews and Greeks there. Rejected by the Jews, he focuses on the Gentiles and brings many to salvation. In the Gospel, the disciples fail to understand what Jesus means when he tells them they will not see him for a little while and then, in a little while, they will see him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's goodness, let us present to him these petitions for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For the Church, that her members may strive to trust Jesus in all aspects of their lives, especially when they are in difficult situations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those working with people suffering in the midst of war, terrorism or economic crises, that they may help protect their human dignity, as well as their physical well-being, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are in turmoil or sorrow, may they trust in God's love, and may their faith sustain them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, that we may offer comfort to those who are grieving, helping to reassure them of God's love and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may come to experience everlasting peace and joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear and answer our prayers according to your holy will. We offer them through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

Friday, May 6, 2016
(Lec. 295)

FRIDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER

- 1) Acts 18:9-18
- 2) John 16:23b-28

FOCUS: When people are doing the work of the Lord, they are given signs of encouragement.

Proclaiming the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is hard work. The Lord knows this and gives us his support in many ways, some of them unexpected. His care and encouragement provide us with the strength needed to deal with what lies ahead.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of Paul receiving a message from the Lord in a vision that he was to take courage and continue preaching the Gospel in Corinth, for the Lord was with him. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples that their grief will be turned to joy.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In humility, trust and confidence, let us join in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) That all bishops and clergy may be blessed and strengthened as they proclaim the faith throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That leaders of nations, in this Year of Mercy, may govern with fairness and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are feeling discouraged because of unemployment may be strengthened by their faith and persevere in their search for work, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our faith community may warmly welcome all those inquiring about the Catholic faith and encourage their inquiries, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may experience the joy and peace of the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, which we offer through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Saturday, May 7, 2016
(Lec. 296)

SATURDAY OF
SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER

- 1) Acts 18:23-28
- 2) John 16:23b-28

FOCUS: Christian community is crucial for growing in faith.

Emboldened by a profound experience of Christ, we often desire to share the joy of the Gospel with all those we meet. Seeking wisdom and counsel is imperative. Just as Priscilla and Aquila assisted Apollos in deepening his understanding of the faith, Catholic doctrine and tradition guide us in learning and understanding the faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul continues to travel extensively to spread the Good News. Apollos, new in the faith, ardently preaches and teaches in Ephesus. Priscilla and Aquila assist him in deepening his knowledge of the faith. In the Gospel, Jesus encourages the disciples to ask the Father for anything in his name. He assures them that the Father loves them because they love Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As a community of faith-filled disciples, Jesus assures us that because of our love for him we can seek what we desire by asking the Father. We do so now as we offer our petitions.

- 1) For the Church, the body of Christ, may she continue to extend hospitality, compassion and mercy to those who are seeking the truth that will set them free, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all those in civic leadership, may they set aside any desire for power and notoriety and defer to the wisdom and counsel of the Holy Spirit to inform their leadership, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor and marginalized, may faith-filled Catholics in their communities, especially in this Year of Mercy, seek to alleviate their suffering through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community engaged in the ministry of faith formation, may they continue to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and the teachings of the Church to strengthen their ministry, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the deceased members of this faith community, may they be wrapped in the loving embrace of Jesus, forever at peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God almighty, graciously hear the prayers offered to you today by your faithful. Grant them according to your divine will. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

NOTE: In those places where the observance of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord has been transferred to this day, the Mass and readings of the Ascension are used: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23 or Hebrews 9:24-28; 10:19-23; Luke 24:46-53.

SUNDAY, MAY 8, 2016

**SEVENTH SUNDAY
OF EASTER**

(Lec. 61)

- 1) Acts 7:55-60
- 2) Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20
- 3) John 17:20-26

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit will strengthen us with courage in times of trouble.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen was faithful to his Lord even as he lay dying. Hatred did not consume him; rather forgiveness was on his lips and in his heart. May we pray often to Saint Stephen for his intercession as we struggle to be forgiving when faced with dissension and conflict.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Acts recalls the martyrdom of Stephen. As he dies, he sees Jesus in heaven with God. Stephen asks forgiveness for his murderers. The second reading gives us hope that the day of the Lord's return is near. In the Gospel, Jesus prays that all people may be united with him and with God the Father.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Because we are assured that God loves us in good times and in times of trial, we offer these prayers for our needs, and the needs of the Church and our world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may Christian love and forgiveness fill our hearts, even in times of difficulty and trial, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For citizens throughout the world, may we live out the Gospel message through acts of charity and justice, as we promote peace among neighbors and nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who suffer persecution because of their faith, may God's love give them strength and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may we nurture strong family life in our activities and programs and foster the spiritual development of our children, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they experience the light and peace of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Lord God, hear the prayers of your people and help us recognize your love in all the events of our lives. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, your son.

* * *

Monday, May 9, 2016
(Lec. 297)

MONDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER

- 1) Acts 19:1-8
- 2) John 16:29-33

FOCUS: Jesus extends his mercy, even in times of sinfulness.

A sentence during the Sign of Peace at Mass implores the Lord, "Look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church." These words resonate with today's Gospel. Jesus, knowing that his disciples will abandon him during his passion, does not look on their sinfulness. Rather, he encourages them so that they may have peace. In Jesus' mercy, he looks on their faith, not their flaws.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul meets disciples in Ephesus who have not received the Holy Spirit. They are then baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples, *Behold, the hour is coming and has arrived when each of you will be scattered to his own home and you will leave me alone.* He assures them that he will not be alone because his Father will be with him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With praise and gratitude we celebrate being made worthy, through the sacrifice of Christ, to share in his peace and glory. With confidence, let us offer God our Father these prayers of petition.

- 1) For members of the Church, clergy and lay, may we continue to follow Christ's example and be a sign of God's mercy in the world through our corporal and spiritual works, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of nations, may they, inspired by the Holy Spirit, perform the duties of their office in a manner that extends mercy and protects the sanctity of human life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are imprisoned, may they find renewed hope in life and ongoing conversion through the mercy of God and the care and concern of Christians dedicated to visiting them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may we recognize that we are recipients of God's mercy in all moments of our lives and in turn extend mercy to all those we encounter, especially those whom we struggle to forgive, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they, through God's mercy and tenderness, be welcomed into the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, your mercy is boundless and your generosity without measure. Hear the prayers offered to you today, and, in your compassion and love, answer them according to your divine will. Through Christ, our Lord.

Tuesday, May 10, 2016
(Lec. 298)

- 1) Acts 20:17-27
- 2) John 17:1-11a

TUESDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Damien de Veuster,
Priest)

FOCUS: In order to imitate Jesus and his saints, we are called to place our lives in the hands of God.

We are meant to live our lives in imitation of Christ. Our callings and circumstances may differ, but our need to place our lives in the hands of God is universal. Jesus committed himself into the care of his Father, and every saint thereafter has done the same.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In our first reading, Paul addresses disciples and presbyters at Miletus as he prepares to travel to Jerusalem, where he will be tried and then sent to Rome, where he will be martyred. In today's Gospel, Jesus addresses his Father in prayer, entrusting his life and the lives of his disciples into his Father's care.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that our heavenly Father lovingly watches over us and provides for our needs, we turn to him in humble petition.

- 1) That all members of the Church may strive to lead their lives in greater accord with the will of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That those who have not yet heard the Gospel may receive it with openness and joy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That all who face persecution for the practice of their Christian faith may be strengthened in courage and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That all members of our faith community may grow in wisdom and become more receptive to the grace offered by Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all who have died might share in the joy of the heavenly kingdom, where the saints and angels never cease to praise God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, in your goodness and love, hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, May 11, 2016
(Lec. 299)

WEDNESDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER

- 1) Acts 20:28-38
- 2) John 17:11b-19

FOCUS: We are called to pray, support and encourage others in growing in their faith and love for Jesus.

In today's first reading, Saint Paul gives instructions to those whom he entrusted with leading the Church at Ephesus. They are to be wary of those who would lead others astray, and to work hard to assist all members of the Church in growing in their faith. Similarly, we are called to pray and support others as they grow in faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles is a farewell speech given by Paul to the leaders of the Church at Ephesus. Today's Gospel recounts Jesus turning to his Father in prayer. He asks his Father to protect all those who believe in him from the Evil One, and to consecrate them in truth.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In gratitude for all the gifts and blessings that God bestows upon us each day, let us join in offering our prayers to the Lord.

- 1) For the Church throughout the world, may its many works of mercy rest on the hearts of all who suffer, bringing them peace and comfort, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders throughout the world, may the light of Christ guide them to work for justice and peace on behalf of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those whose hearts are burdened by bitterness and resentment, may they open their hearts to God's mercy and know the healing and peace that comes from forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each of us, may we continue to pray, support and encourage one another in growing in faith and holiness of life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we know you have called all of us to be your disciples. We ask that you continue to grant us grace and peace as we seek to serve you and others. In Jesus Christ, we pray.

* * *

Thursday, May 12, 2016
(Lec. 300)

- 1) Acts 22:30; 23:6-11
- 2) John 17:20-26

THURSDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem. Saints
Nereus and Achilleus, Martyrs;
Saint Pancras, Martyr)

FOCUS: The Church is the universal sacrament of salvation.

The main work of the Church, from the very beginning to our own day, is mission – to preach Jesus Christ to the world and to bring him to people through the sacraments. Those engaged in missionary work need courage. It also takes courage to receive the message of Christ and accept it. Let us pray for courage for both those preaching the Gospel and those hearing it.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of Paul receiving a message from Jesus that, just as he has borne witness to the Gospel in Jerusalem, he also must do so in Rome. In the Gospel, Jesus prays for all who will come to believe in him through the preaching and teaching of the Apostles.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Jesus shows us the perfect example of humble, selfless and trusting prayer. In that spirit, we present our needs and petitions before our heavenly Father.

- 1) For Pope Francis, our bishop, N., our pastor, N., and all the clergy, that their faith and courage in continually bringing Christ to others may never waver, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in seminaries and houses of religious formation, that they may be one with the Lord as they continue to prepare for a lifetime of service to his Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are persecuted for their faith; like Paul, may they be encouraged and strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is with them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, that we be a place where faith, courage and love is clearly evident to all who come to us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they find eternal peace and joy in the presence of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Friday, May 13, 2016
(Lec. 301)

- 1) Acts 25:13b-21
- 2) John 21:15-19

FRIDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK OF EASTER
(Opt. Mem. Our Lady of Fatima)

FOCUS: Our commitment to trust and love the Lord requires that we attend to the needs of others.

It is easy to reduce the command *feed my sheep* to performing only the corporal work of mercy of feeding the hungry. But living as a disciple requires more. Being a disciple requires a willingness to bear one's share of hardship for the sake of the Gospel, and to place the needs of others before one's own.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading recounts how Paul, in the city of Caesarea, refuses to return to Jerusalem to be tried on charges brought against him by some of the Jewish leaders. He instead appeals that he be held in custody until the emperor can render a decision in his case. In the Gospel, Jesus instructs Peter to lovingly tend to the needs of the flock of believers who would soon be entrusted into his care as the chief shepherd of the Church.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to live more fully and faithfully as disciples of Jesus, let us join in offering our prayers to the Lord.

- 1) For the newly baptized, confirmed, and those who recently entered into full communion with the Church, may they continue to grow in faith and holiness of life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who serve our nation in the armed services, may God guide and protect them as they work and fight to preserve and protect our rights and liberty, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those imprisoned, may they admit the nature of their wrongs and receive the help and assistance needed to chart a better course for their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each of us, may we seek to live out more fully the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they join the angels and saints in heaven in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear our prayers and grant us the grace needed to lay down our lives more fully in love and service to others. We ask this and all things through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Saturday, May 14, 2016

SAINT MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

(Lec. 564)

- FEAST

- 1) Acts 1:15-17, 20-26
- 2) John 15:9-17

FOCUS: We are commanded to love one another as Jesus loves us.

Jesus' commandment in today's Gospel is not easy to obey. But the more we root our lives in the love of Christ and share his love with others by treating them how we want to be treated, the more we will experience an abundance of joy. So, yes, this commandment is a challenge, but there are great rewards for obedience to the commandment and true discipleship.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Everything we know about Saint Matthias is in today's first reading from Acts. He was chosen to take Judas' place in a most peculiar way – casting lots. In today's Gospel, we are challenged to love all people, not just those with whom we agree. Jesus did not suggest that we love one another, he commanded that we do.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Gathered as a community of believers, let us ask for the grace we need to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel message, and lift our prayers to our heavenly Father.

- 1) For all who proclaim the Gospel in our Church, may they continue to shepherd us as faith-filled heralds of God's word, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may they further economic opportunity for all people through just laws and fair wages, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer any form of persecution, may they be wrapped in the love of Jesus, who shed his own blood for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who will graduate this spring, may they know God's love and blessing and let their light shine forth in their new endeavors, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perfect happiness in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, hear our prayers and grant us the grace to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2016

(Lec. 63)

- 1) Acts 2:1-11
- 2) 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
or Romans 8:8-17
- 3) John 20:19-23
or John 14:15-16. 23b-26

PENTECOST SUNDAY - SOLEMNITY

FOCUS: We are to use the unique gifts and talents given to us by the Spirit to further the work and mission of the Church.

We are reminded by Saint Paul in today's second reading that we were baptized in one Spirit into the one body. The Spirit has bestowed unique gifts and talents upon each of us, and we are to use these gifts to help further the work and mission of the Church and to help build up God's kingdom on earth. Like the Apostles, we are to boldly proclaim our faith and use our gifts to serve others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, filled with the Holy Spirit, the Apostles speak to the crowd. Those present hear the message in their native tongue. In the second reading, Paul explains that it is through the Holy Spirit that one can profess Jesus as Lord and receive gifts. In the Gospel, Jesus appears to the disciples. He breathes on them saying, *Receive the Holy Spirit*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to be more attentive and responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, let us join together in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we, empowered by the Holy Spirit, carry out the mission of evangelization by professing boldly – in our families, workplaces and civic communities – that Jesus Christ is Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of all nations, may the Holy Spirit inspire them to overcome barriers such as language, culture and ideology in order to work together to bring about peace throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those who are experiencing a crisis of faith, may they be emboldened by the Holy Spirit to seek out faithful Christian disciples for support and companionship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may we, having received the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit – wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and reverence – use those gifts in our decision-making and the actions we take, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they be come to join the company of all the saints in heaven, offering their praises before the throne of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, in your goodness and love hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Monday, May 16, 2016
(Lec. 341)

- 1) James 3:13-18
- 2) Mark 9:14-29

MONDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Growing in our faith and love for Jesus is a process that requires humility and patience.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells a man who came to him seeking healing for his son that everything is possible for the one who has faith. The man responded to Jesus, *I do believe, help my unbelief!* These words remind us that growing in faith and love for Jesus is a process that requires patience and humility on our part. We seek, with God's help, to grow little by little each day.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading encourages and exhorts us to seek wisdom from above, so that as we grow in holiness and wisdom we may bear the good fruits of righteousness and peace. Today's Gospel recounts a man whose son was possessed by a spirit asking Jesus for healing. Jesus responds by telling the man, *Everything is possible to the one who has faith.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that God watches over us and provides what we most truly need, let us join in offering our prayers for our needs and those of the world to the Lord.

- 1) For bishops, priests and deacons, may their teaching and example continue to help Church members to walk in the light of God's truth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For national and state leaders, may they continue to work together to find solutions and strategies that prevent crime and violence and alleviate their causes, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are hungry or homeless, may they be assisted in this Year of Mercy by Christians carrying out the corporal works of mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those who feel isolated from family and friends, may they draw strength from their faith in Jesus and find comfort in our hospitality and outreach, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to enjoy perfect happiness in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, in your mercy and love we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, May 17, 2016
(Lec. 342)

- 1) James 4:1-10
- 2) Mark 9:30-37

TUESDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: We are called to promote peace in all that we do, especially for the world's children.

Conflict, war and violence affect the lives of many – especially children. Since Jesus asks us in today's Gospel to receive all children in his name, as his disciples, we must be especially committed to protecting children from suffering and violence.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading from James, we are asked to root out the causes of war and conflict from our lives. We are to choose a path that deepens and strengthens our relationship with God. In the Gospel, we are reminded to take on this same attitude of humility by laying down our lives in service to God and our neighbor.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Seeking to serve God with gratitude and humility of heart, let us join in offering him prayers for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they be blessed in their continuing efforts to proclaim Christ's message of peace in a world torn apart by conflicts and threats of terrorism, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders at all levels, may they work for the safety and well-being of all the world's children, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who have been victims of terrorism or violence, may they be blessed with places of safe refuge and receive the help they need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For each of us, may we continue to seek to root out sin and selfishness in our lives, thereby giving more effective witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they see the face of God in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, hear our prayers and grant us the grace and strength needed to lead lives that are holy and pleasing to you. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, May 18, 2016
(Lec. 343)

- 1) James 4:13-17
- 2) Mark 9:38-40

WEDNESDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem. Saint John I,
Pope and Martyr)

FOCUS: We cannot become complacent. Rather, we must strive to continually listen to God and do his will.

Who knows where life will take us? There are so many twists and turns. What we know for certain is that God's will shall be done in God's time, and through whatever events and people God wishes to use. The more we are open to God and his will, the more he can work in and through us to accomplish wonderful things.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us that we are to live one day at a time, striving to do the will of God above all things. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches the disciples that whoever is not against them is for them.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: We stand before the God of truth and ask him to hear our prayers.

- 1) That God may bless our pope, bishops, priests, deacons, religious and lay ministers with wisdom and courage to continue to announce the kingdom of God in all circumstances, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That leaders of nations may seek to uphold the dignity and sanctity of human life, from conception through natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those of us who have lost touch with God's will for us in the busy rush of our lives may take time to pray daily, knowing that God will sustain and guide us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our pastor, parish leaders, catechists, musicians and other ministers will be blessed in their efforts to help us grow in our knowledge and love of the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That our beloved dead, and all who have died, may come to enjoy perfect peace and happiness in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

Thursday, May 19, 2016
(Lec. 344)

- 1) James 5:1-6
- 2) Mark 9:41-50

THURSDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Our lives will become richer when we belong to Christ, putting our faith and trust in him before material things.

Today's readings offer us an examination of conscience of sorts. They challenge us to take a good hard look at our priorities and values. Often, the messages we receive in our daily lives can be alluring and distracting. Money, comfort and power can subtly occupy our attention and actions. These readings remind us that we need daily conversion.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the Letter of Saint James warns that the luxuries of this temporal world are fleeting and can become an obstacle to eternal life. In the Gospel, Jesus tells us to rid ourselves of anything that leads us to sin, including things we hold dear.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in God's mercy and compassion, let us offer him our prayers of petition.

- 1) For those who shepherd our Church, both clergy and laity, may they continue to challenge the faithful to deepen their commitment to Christ through daily conversion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civic leaders, may they set an example for those they govern by demonstrating compassion and mercy in their leadership, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those seeking happiness and fulfillment in the things of this world only to come up empty, may they turn to Jesus and find lasting peace and joy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us gathered here today, may we pray for, support and encourage one another as we strive to grow in faith and love for Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they enter into the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. We offer them to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Friday, May 20, 2016
(Lec. 345)

- 1) James 5:9-12
- 2) Mark 10:1-12

FRIDAY OF
SEVENTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem. Saint Bernadine
of Siena, Priest)

FOCUS: Christian spouses who faithfully live out their marital vocation shine as a bright light before others.

The issues surrounding marriage and divorce are just as relevant for us today as they were two thousand years ago. Jesus reveals God's plan for marriage through sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church. Jesus' teachings offer a glimpse of the Lord's intentions for loving and stable families.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading reminds us of the importance of letting our "yes" mean yes and our "no" mean no. In the Gospel, the Pharisees question Jesus about divorce. He tells them that while the law permitted divorce, God established marriage from the beginning of creation to be a permanent bond that was not to be broken by any human being.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: The Lord promises compassion and mercy to all his people. With humble hearts, let us bring our prayers for our needs and those of the world before the Father.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they continue to boldly preach and teach the word of God, and witness to the Gospel by their words and deeds, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of civic leadership, may they, inspired by the Holy Spirit, seek the source of all truth as they make decisions that affect the welfare of their communities, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those suffering from troubled or broken marriages, especially children, may they be assured of our heavenly Father's unfailing compassion for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, may we continually seek to welcome newcomers and strengthen our community through our ministries, hospitality, outreach, educational opportunities and worship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they may enter into perpetual light, refreshment and peace in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving Father, hear and answer our prayers according to your will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

Saturday, May 21, 2016

SATURDAY OF

- (Lec. 346)
1) James 5:13-20
2) Mark 10:13-16

SEVENTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem. Saint Christopher
Magallanes, Priest, and
Companions, Martyrs
Saturday in honor of BVM)

FOCUS Christianity is a way of life, not just a belief.

Today's first reading from James reminds us that our faith in Jesus should be the most important thing in our lives and show forth in all we say and do. We must pray daily and be nourished and strengthened by the graces of the sacraments. When we do so, our words and actions will more consistently reflect the faith we profess in Christ.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us of the importance of daily prayer and the graces of the sacraments for growing in faith and holiness of life. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches, *whoever does not accept the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Grateful for the many gifts and blessings that God bestows upon us each day, let us join in offering our prayers to the almighty Father.

- 1) For bishops, priests, and deacons, may they be blessed and strengthened to continue preaching the good news of salvation throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of leadership, may they be guided by the Holy Spirit in times of unrest and trouble to help bring comfort and peace to their people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those doubting their faith, may the outreach of the Christian community give them encouragement to take the time to resolve their doubts and concerns, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For married couples and families in our community, may they continue to embrace and embody the love of Christ through their service and devotion to each other, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may see God face to face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. We offer them to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2016
(Lec. 166)

**THE MOST
HOLY TRINITY**

- 1) Proverbs 8:22-31
- 2) Romans 5:1-5
- 3) John 16:12-15

- SOLEMNITY

FOCUS: There is so much more to God than we can ever comprehend.

The Trinity – three persons in one God – is a mystery that the best minds of the Church cannot adequately explain. Still, we are blessed by this mystery. The Trinity offers us a model for living. Just as the three persons of the Trinity are united as one, we must strive to live in ever-greater unity with God and one another.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of the wisdom of God being beside God as his craftsman at the dawn of creation. The second reading reminds us that we have peace with God through our faith in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches the disciples that the Holy Spirit will guide them in the way of all truth.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us present our petitions to the Father, for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) That members of the clergy, religious and laity may continue to spread the Good News by word and example so more people may place their trust in Jesus and be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That world and national leaders may turn to God for guidance in resolving conflicts and disputes nonviolently, and allow greater peace to reign upon the earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who have been injured, physically or emotionally, may find healing and peace from their faith in God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we in this faith community may strive to open ourselves more to the workings of the Holy Spirit in our midst, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may join the angels and saints in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers and grant us the grace needed to lead lives that give you glory. We pray through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Monday, May 23, 2016
(Lec. 347)

- 1) 1 Peter 1:3-9
- 2) Mark 10:17-27

MONDAY OF
EIGHTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Despite our struggles, salvation is possible through the grace of God.

The path to holiness is fraught with tribulation. Friends or co-workers may pressure us to let go of what may be considered outdated beliefs and values. Such pressures and other trials we face in life are difficult, but we need not fear. God will give us the grace and strength to persevere in faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD:

The Letter of Saint Peter encourages Christians who remain faithful in a pagan world, reminding them that they can look forward to their eternal, heavenly inheritance. In the Gospel, a rich man asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus instructs him to sell what he has and give to the poor, so that he may have treasure in heaven.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that our God looks lovingly upon us, let us present to him our prayers and petitions.

- 1) That we, as members of the Church, may continue to use our resources to care for the poor among us, and in that way help build up God's kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That leaders of nations may make it a priority to care for the most vulnerable in society, especially the elderly and the unborn, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That married couples and families will be strengthened in their commitment to each other through participation in Sunday Mass and the sacraments, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our parish community may continue to reach out to the sick and lonely and share Jesus' love with them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may come to enjoy eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, in your goodness and love we ask that you hear and answer our prayers. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Tuesday, May 24, 2016
(Lec. 348)

- 1) 1 Peter 1:10-16
- 2) Mark 10:28-31

TUESDAY OF
EIGHTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: God's blessings are beyond our imagination.

As disciples, we are called to be willing to give up everything to follow Jesus. When we let go of those things that give us a false sense of security and place our trust in God, we will be amazed at the designs he has for us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Peter encourages believers to *be holy in every aspect* of their conduct. In the Gospel, Peter tells Jesus that they have given up everything to follow him. Jesus assures Peter that anyone who has given up everything for his sake and *for the sake of the Gospel*, will receive a hundred times more in this present age.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In humility and trust, let us offer our prayers and petitions to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we answer the universal call to holiness through fervent prayer and generously serving others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of civic leadership, may they demonstrate leadership that serves the common good and fosters goodwill among those they lead, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those experiencing poverty, hunger or homelessness, may their sufferings be alleviated through the financial and material sacrifices offered for the sake of the Gospel by compassionate Christians, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the members of this faith community, may we look deep into our hearts to discern what we need to let go of in order to follow Jesus more closely, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they come to share eternal life in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers according to your holy will. Through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Wednesday, May 25, 2016
(Lec. 349)

- 1) 1 Peter 1:18-25
- 2) Mark 10:32-45

WEDNESDAY OF
EIGHTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem. Saint Bede
The Venerable, Priest and Doctor+
of the Church;
Saint Gregory VII, Pope;
Saint Mary Magdalene de 'Pazzi, Virgin)

FOCUS: Proclaim the Gospel by your life.

God's plan for us to enjoy true fulfillment and peace in life may require sacrifice because it runs counter to what the world perceives as success. Although humble service to others is rarely acknowledged or rewarded by the world, the blessing and graces promised and kept by God are unfathomable to the human mind, impossible for the world to give, and poured out in a love the world cannot comprehend.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading, Peter speaks of the *spotless lamb* Jesus, who gives his life to *ransom* us from our sinfulness. In the Gospel, while making his way to Jerusalem, Jesus pulls the disciples aside and tells them that when he reaches that city, he will be condemned to death, scourged, put to death and then on the third day, will rise from the dead.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In confidence and trust, let us join in offering our prayers to the Lord.

- 1) That the charitable work of the Church to attend to the physical and spiritual needs of others around the world may continue to flourish and draw others to Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That the leaders of nations may turn to God for guidance in enacting laws and policies that promote the good of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who suffer chronic pain from illnesses may be strengthened by their faith in Jesus and experience relief with the help of caring professionals, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our parish community may give generously of our time, talent and treasure to help build up God's kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may come to enjoy perfect happiness and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we ask that you hear and answer the prayers which we offer to you through Christ our Lord.

Thursday, May 26, 2016
(Lec. 350)

- 1) 1 Peter 2:2-5, 9-12
- 2) Mark 10:46-52

THURSDAY OF
EIGHTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL. MEM. Saint Philip Neri,
Priest)

FOCUS: It takes courage to have faith in Christ, but Jesus will bless us because of our courageous faith.

Bartimaeus boldly and courageously asked Jesus to be healed. His faith brought Jesus to cure him. Even when others rebuked him for calling out to Jesus, he persisted. Placing our lives into the hands of God takes courage and faith. Are we bold enough to strive each day to place our lives more fully into God's hands?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us of the importance of continually seeking to grow in holiness so we may more consistently give glory to God in all we say and do. In the Gospel, Jesus heals the blind man Bartimaeus, instructing him to go on his way for his faith had saved him. Bartimaeus, upon receiving his sight, immediately began following Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Brothers and sisters, let us humbly bring our intentions before the Lord.

- 1) For all members of our Church, that we may continually strive to give witness to our faith in all we say and do, and so help build up God's kingdom more fully on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our leaders and lawmakers, that they have the courage to uphold the dignity of life from conception until natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who have yet to believe in the Gospel, that their hearts may be softened by God's grace so they may place their faith in Jesus and be saved, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all the members of our parish, that we may seek purity of heart and glorify God through our good works and service to others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may see God face-to-face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, in faith we ask that you grant us these petitions through your son, Jesus Christ.

* * *

Friday, May 27, 2016
(Lec. 351)

- 1) 1 Peter 4:7-13
- 2) Mark 11:11-26

FRIDAY OF
EIGHTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem. Saint Augustine
of Canterbury)

FOCUS: With God, all things are possible.

Jesus reassures his disciples that if they believe that God will do as he promises, God will answer their prayers. He also reminds them to *forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance* when praying.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Along with Jesus' teaching that God will answer prayers, today's Gospel tells of Jesus cleansing the Temple, where thieves were cheating the people. He tells them it is written: *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples*. The first Letter of Peter reminds us above all to love one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that with God, all things are possible, let us approach him with trusting hearts that he will hear our prayers.

- 1) For Our Holy Father, all bishops, priests, and deacons, may they continue to be blessed with the grace needed to lead the faithful on the path of holiness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For elected leaders around the world, may they be servants of love and peace to those whom they serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are fearful and discouraged because of poverty, may their needs be met by Christians in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that we welcome newcomers and those who have recently returned to the Church, offering them comfort and hospitality, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may enter into the fullness of life and love in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petitions)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we come before you with thankful hearts. Grant us the grace we need to grow in holiness, and hear our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Saturday, May 28, 2016
(Lec. 352)

- 1) Jude 17, 20b-25
- 2) Mark 11:27-33

SATURDAY OF
EIGHTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Saturday in honor
of BVM)

FOCUS: Like Jesus, we need to be courageous in spreading the Good News.

Even Jesus met opposition in his mission. Like him, we need to expect and appropriately respond to criticism by standing up for what is right without succumbing to animosity.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's Gospel, Jesus does not respond with anger when the chief priests, scribes and elders ask him about the source of his authority. He calmly quiets their objections by cleverly turning their questions back upon them. The first reading counsels us to follow the example of Jesus by respectfully loving our critics, while not hesitating to stand up for truth.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us join in offering our prayers to our loving and merciful God.

- 1) That the leaders of our Church may continue to courageously stand up for what is right and tirelessly spread the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That our national leaders may be good stewards of the earth's resources under their care, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those who are oppressed by human trafficking may find strength and hope in their faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our students and recent graduates may be blessed in their endeavors, and seek ways to use their gifts to serve others and help build up the kingdom of God on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all who have died may come to enjoy eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, we ask that you hear and answer the prayers which we offer you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

SUNDAY, MAY 29, 2016

(Lec. 169)

- 1) Genesis 14:18-20
- 2) 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- 3) Luke 9:11b-17

**THE MOST HOLY
BODY AND BLOOD
OF CHRIST
(Corpus Christi)
- SOLEMNITY**

FOCUS: Today we celebrate the truth that Jesus left us an immeasurable gift, that of his sacred body and blood, which is made present for us in every Mass we attend.

At times, we may find it hard to comprehend that Jesus is truly here and present with us. Each time we receive holy Communion, we truly receive Christ. Nourished and strengthened by Jesus, we draw closer to him. Our participation in holy Communion allows us to live in greater love and unity with one another and gives us the strength we need to share Christ's light and love with others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading tells of Melchizedek, *a priest of God Most High*, who brought out bread and wine and gave a blessing to Abram. Abram gave him a tenth of everything. The second reading recalls Jesus' words at the Last Supper, that when we eat this bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes again. In the Gospel, Jesus feeds a crowd of five thousand with only five small loaves of bread and two fish.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in God's loving care, we place our petitions before him.

- 1) For the Church, the people of God, that we may grow in our devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and in our appreciation of this wondrous gift, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of nations, that they work to ensure that people of all religions are free to practice their faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the innocent victims of wars and refugees from war-torn lands, that they will find a safe haven and be comforted by good people in their new locations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our parish who are discerning a vocation to religious life, may they feel the support and strength of this faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they join the angels and saints in singing God's praises for all eternity in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, which we offer to you through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Monday, May 30, 2016
(Lec. 353)

- 1) 2 Peter 1:2-7
- 2) Mark 12:1-12

MONDAY OF
NINTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: To God alone belongs true power.

Both readings today refer to power. We can, at times, live our lives like the tenants in the Gospel parable, as if we wield the power to bring forth the harvest and its terms of usage; as if we are the source of our life. However, the first reading reminds us, *His divine power has bestowed on us everything that makes for life.*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading states that God bestows promises to the faithful. They, in turn, are to foster lives of virtue to overcome the allure of worldly treasures. In the Gospel, *Jesus began to speak to the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders in parables.* In doing so, he challenges their use of authority. His parable demonstrates that power belongs to God alone.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: We gather as God's faithful, trusting in his promises. Confident in his compassion and mercy, we offer our petitions.

- 1) For all the members of the Church, may we reject worldly allurements and deceptive power by continuing to place our trust in God's power and promises, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of nations, may they exercise their positions of authority through the prudent practices of virtue and self-control in all their actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the marginalized members of our community, may they be comforted by the works of mercy offered by faithful Catholics and encouraged in the knowledge of God's promises at work in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, that we persevere in our efforts to protect life from conception until natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they enter into eternal life in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

YYYYY: Gracious God, knowing that your power is at work in all your creation, we ask that you grant our petitions according to your will. Through Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, May 31, 2016
(Lec. 572)

**THE VISITATION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

- 1) Zephaniah 3:14-18a
or Romans 12:9-16
- 2) Luke 1:39-56

- FEAST

FOCUS: *The Almighty has done great things.*

Our liturgical calendar, in celebrating today's feast day, perpetually reminds us: *The Almighty has done great things and holy is his name.* Both Elizabeth's greeting and Mary's Magnificat demonstrate an authentic human response to God's saving grace, which we are called to express daily – wonder and awe, joy, hope, surrender and thanksgiving.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Israel is reminded that God has found favor with them and is indeed in their midst. The Gospel recounts the visitation Mary makes to her cousin Elizabeth. Both women, pregnant through God's plan of salvation, profess praise and thanksgiving for being granted such a gift.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: We, like Mary and Elizabeth, trust that God has found favor with the prayers of thanksgiving and praise we offer today. Let us turn to him now and offer our prayers of petition.

- 1) For those who shepherd our Church, that they will continue to inspire the faithful to speak out for the protection of the unborn and the vulnerable, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all who hold positions of authority, that they might use their power and influence to advocate for those who are most in need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For mothers and fathers expecting a child and those raising children, that they might continue to rejoice and treasure their sons and daughters as blessings from God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of our faith community, that we continue to share the good news of God's saving grace and mercy with our families, friends, coworkers and the wider civic community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, that they may enter into eternal life in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, with gratitude, joy and humility we ask you to grant, according to your divine will, the prayers we offer today. Through Christ, our Lord.

* * *