

January

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**YEAR A
CYCLE I**

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2017

(Lec. 18)

- 1) Numbers 6:22-27
- 2) Galatians 4:4-7
- 3) Luke 2:16-21

**THE OCTAVE DAY
OF THE NATIVITY
OF THE LORD;
SOLEMNITY OF MARY,
THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**

FOCUS: The Blessed Virgin Mary is the holy Mother of God, and our spiritual mother.

Today, the Church honors the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was chosen by God the Father to be the mother of his Son. As Jesus was both fully human and divine, the Church confesses that Mary is truly "Mother of God" (CCC 495). So may we join together this day in adoring Mary, who is the Mother of God and our spiritual mother.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the reading from Numbers, God gives Moses the blessing that Aaron and his sons are to use in blessing the Israelites. The reading from Galatians reveals how God sent his Son to be born of a woman so that we might all be children of God. In the Gospel, shepherds arrive in Bethlehem after being told by an angel that a Savior has been born.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's love and faithfulness, let us bring our petitions before him.

- 1) For the pope and the whole Church, that we may continue to share God's gifts of love, mercy and peace through our words and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that they turn to God for wisdom, and strive to govern with mercy and a spirit of peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are sick, that they experience hope and support through the prayers and presence of family, friends and caregivers, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For parish families, that they experience God's transforming love through reception of the Eucharist and reach out to share that love with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may come to know everlasting peace and joy in the kingdom of heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, please hear and answer our prayers according to your will. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

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Monday, January 2, 2017
(Lec. 205)

- 1) 1 John 2:22-28
- 2) John 1:19-28

(OBL MEM
Saints Basil the Great
and Gregory Nazianzen,
Bishops and
Doctors of Church)

FOCUS: The Holy Spirit gives us the gifts and strength to continue walking in the way of the Lord.

Throughout the course of our daily lives, we will experience obstacles that have the potential to throw us off track spiritually. We needn't fear these obstacles if our hearts are open and cooperative to the grace and action of the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit will give us the gifts and strength to persevere in faith and continue walking in the way of the Lord.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us of the importance of having our lives firmly rooted and grounded in Christ and the truths of salvation. In the Gospel, some Jews from Jerusalem ask John the Baptist, *Who are you?* John the Baptist replies by stating that he is not the Messiah, but one sent from God to prepare the way for the Messiah, who was in their midst.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Turning to our loving Father, let us humbly present our needs.

- 1) For those who work steadfastly to spread the truth of the Gospel throughout the world, may their voices be heard and their word accepted, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders and all elected officials, may their decision-making be guided by a spirit of integrity and collaboration, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who lack food or shelter, may their needs be met by concerned Christians and others of goodwill, and may they be encouraged by God's love for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our parish who feel isolated or are experiencing trials in their faith, may our prayers and outreach bring them strength and encouragement, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be welcomed into the new and heavenly Jerusalem, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, which we place humbly before you today. Through Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday January 3, 2017
(Lec. 206)

- 1) 1 John 2:29-3:6
- 2) John 1:29-34

CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY
(Opt. Mem. the Most Holy
Name of Jesus)

FOCUS: *We are God's children now.*

God the Father showed his love for us by sending his son, Jesus, to save and redeem us. He sent his Son that we might be sustained by the hope of eternal life, and live as his dearly beloved sons and daughters. Our lives give evidence that we are God's children now when we act in righteousness, avoid sin and serve the needs of others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Saint John writes that God the Father's love was revealed in Jesus, and by this love, we are called children of God. In the Gospel, we hear John the Baptist's testimony that at Jesus' baptism, the Spirit descended on him like a dove, and that Jesus is the Son of God.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As God's children, we entrust our prayers to his loving care.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may be blessed in our work of passing along our faith to all God's children, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, that they will encourage religious freedom and peace between people of different faiths and religious traditions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer attacks on their human dignity through physical or psychological abuse, may they be strengthened and supported by the knowledge that they are loved by God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish families, that spouses and children will learn patient sacrifice for the good of one another, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they 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: Loving God, trusting in your saving power, we offer these prayers through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, January 4, 2017
(Lec. 207)

- 1) 1 John 3:7-10
- 2) John 1:35-42

CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY
(OBL MEM
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton,
Religious)

FOCUS: We are to live in a way that invites others to know the joy, peace and salvation we have found in Jesus.

Christ begins his public ministry and invites those who are curious to *Come and you will see*. His followers immediately invite others to follow the Lord. Similarly, we are called to live in such a way that gives a faithful witness to the Gospel, and which invites others to know the joy and peace we have found in Jesus.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The reading from the First Letter of John affirms that those who are righteous belong to God, and that those who lead their lives according to sin and selfishness belong to the Evil One. In the Gospel, upon seeing Jesus pass by, John the Baptist declares, *Behold, the Lamb of God*. This prompts two of John's disciples to go and follow Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that our prayers will be heard and answered, we bring our intentions before God our Father.

- 1) That during this Christmas season, Pope Francis and all our bishops may be blessed with the grace to continue working to foster unity amongst all Christians, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That lawmakers may place the protection of the most vulnerable in society, especially the unborn, at the forefront as they craft laws and policies, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That victims of violence, as well as their loved ones, may find healing through faith and the support of our prayers and their communities, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our Catholic school and faith formation teachers may take inspiration from Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton as they work to lead their students in growing in their faith and love for the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may experience the joy of seeing God face to face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we ask that you look upon our failings with mercy and love. Grant these prayers in the name of Jesus, your son.

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Thursday, January 5, 2017
(Lec. 208)

- 1) 1 John 3:11-21
- 2) John 1:43-51

CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY
(OBL MEM
Saint John Neumann,
Bishop)

FOCUS: Love one another.

When we live in the light, we are expected to be responsible for our actions. Therefore, we need to grow morally and virtuously – doing good, seeking forgiveness and praying. We must form our consciences to act justly, as Abel, and not wickedly, as Cain. We must strive to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the poor and visit the sick.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The message in today's first reading is precise: *Let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.* In the Gospel today, we hear how Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael. Jesus tells Nathanael he *will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith and trust in our Father who knows our hearts, let us offer our prayers of petition.

- 1) That the Church may continue to shepherd her people in faith and charity as she honors the memory of Saint John Neumann today, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That those recently elected to public office may remember that their position is a sacred calling and gift to serve and safeguard the people they represent, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That the struggles of immigrants may be eased through the support, help and prayers of right and just people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our faith community may help children and adolescents to discover and develop their gifts and talents to grow our Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That the faithful departed may be welcomed into the light of God's glory, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear our prayers and continue to lead us along the path of peace, justice and kindness. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, January 6, 2017
(Lec. 209)

- 1) 1 John 5:5-13
- 2) Mark 1:7-11 or
Luke 3:23-28 or
3:23, 31-34, 36, 38

CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Andre' Bessette,
Religious)

FOCUS: *Whoever possesses the Son has life; whoever does not possess the Son of God does not have life.*

Throughout so much of Scripture, we are shown that there is a way of life, and a way of death. Covenant and relationship with God, and belief in Jesus Christ, is the way of life – and we are called to that life through our baptism. Let us make faith in Jesus the number one priority in our lives each day so that we might be judged worthy of eternal life in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading instructs us in the victory gained by Jesus Christ over death and sin. With God the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus offers eternal life for those who believe. Today's reading from the Gospel of Luke tells us that Jesus began his public ministry when he was about thirty years old.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in Christ's victory over sin and death, let us offer our petitions to the Lord.

- 1) For Church leaders, may the Holy Spirit continue to give them the grace and strength they need to spread the Good News to those who have not heard, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of authority throughout the world, that their actions may be guided by the pursuit of the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are sick, may the healing grace of Christ be upon them, and may they be comforted by the care of compassionate people, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that during this Christmas season we may bring the light of Christ to all those we encounter, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may they experience eternal joy in the presence of the angels and saints, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, hear our prayers and grant us the grace we need to persevere in faith and share your light and love with others. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, January 7, 2017
(Lec. 210)

- 1) 1 John 5:14-21
- 2) John 2:1-11

CHRISTMAS WEEKDAY
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Raymond of Penyafort,
Priest)

FOCUS: God hears and answers all of our prayers according to his most holy will.

Today's first reading reminds us of the blessed assurance given to us by Jesus that God hears and answers all of our prayers. This should lead us to pray to the Lord each day in confidence and trust that our prayers will be answered by God in God's time – which is for our greatest good and for the good of others.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading, we are reminded that we can pray confidently, for God hears and answers all our prayers according to his will. The responsorial psalm exhorts us to rejoice and be glad, for God takes delight in his people. Today's reading from the Gospel of John tells of Jesus changing water into wine at a wedding feast in Cana.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us turn to our loving Father, who hears us when we call.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we forever sing the Lord's praises and witness to the world through our joy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all civil leaders, may the Spirit guide them to discern the best way to help the most vulnerable of those under their care, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those facing a terminal illness, may they be comforted by the loving care of those who minister to them in the name of Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of our parish, may we be good stewards and build up our community through prayer, volunteering and generous giving, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and all who have died, may they come to enjoy perfect happiness in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear our prayers and grant us the grace and strength to do your will, so your kingdom of love and peace may be built up more fully on earth. We ask this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2017

(Lec. 20)

- 1) Isaiah 60:1-6
- 2) Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
- 3) Matthew 2:1-12

**THE EPIPHANY OF
THE LORD
- SOLEMNITY**

FOCUS: God lavishes upon us gifts beyond our merit.

Today's readings demonstrate the gratuitous nature of God's love for humanity. Recognizing this benevolence, we, along with the Magi, prostrate ourselves and pay homage by offering our supreme gifts – our faith, hope and love – in the service of our generous, loving God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the prophet reminds Israel that God's glory will shine on them. They will be a people to be admired by nations and kings. Saint Paul recounts for the Ephesians that Gentiles are co-heirs and co-partners in the promise of Jesus Christ in the Gospel. The Gospel recounts the Magi's visit to pay homage to the newborn baby Jesus.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that we are loved beyond measure, let us, with confidence, offer our prayers of petition for the Church and our world.

- 1) For the Church, the Body of Christ, may she, as a recipient of God's gratuitous glory and grace, continue to be a beacon of faith, hope and love throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of nations throughout the world, may they, inspired by the Holy Spirit, demonstrate a generosity and compassion toward all those they govern – fostering peace in their nation and peace among neighboring countries, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those who suffer from poverty and homelessness, may they find solace through caring actions of Christians, and consolation in the safety of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For members of this faith community, may we continue to find daily opportunities to proclaim the love of God to all those who doubt or lack belief, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved deceased family and friends, may they be welcomed into the loving embrace of Christ in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, we trust in your boundless love, mercy and compassion. Please hear our prayers and answer them according to your will. Through Christ, our Lord.

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Monday, January 9, 2017
(Lec. 21)

**THE BAPTISM
OF THE LORD
-FEAST**

- 1) Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7 or
Acts 10:34-38
- 2) Matthew 3:13-17

FOCUS: Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist inaugurated his public ministry.

Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist was an important event in his life. After he was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and a voice was heard from the heavens declaring, *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.* It was also important in that it officially marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Isaiah speaks of the suffering servant as one who comes in peace to save the world. Today's Gospel from Matthew recalls Jesus being baptized by John in the Jordan river.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: In confidence and trust, let us bring our prayers before our loving Father.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we continue to be strengthened through our baptismal promises to live as witnesses to the teachings of Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of all nations, may they seek dialogue and peaceful solutions to conflicts before resorting to war, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For women who face unplanned pregnancies, may they choose life for their unborn children, and may they receive the care and support they need for a successful delivery, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us gathered here today, may we pledge to live a deeper commitment to our baptismal promises by serving others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died marked with the sign of faith, may perpetual light shine upon them and may they be granted eternal rest in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, giver of all good gifts, hear our prayers and answer them according to your plan for us. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

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Tuesday, January 10, 2017
(Lec. 306)
1) Hebrews 2:5-12
2) Mark 1:21-28

TUESDAY OF
FIRST WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Our sufferings offer us the opportunity to deepen and strengthen our relationship with Christ.

Suffering can make us more aware of human weakness, and of our need for Christ who is our strength and salvation. When we choose to join our sufferings to those of Christ's for the salvation of the world, we are in a mysterious way drawn closer to him. We are given the opportunity to deepen our relationship with him.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading from Hebrews, we are reminded that Jesus chose to become fully human and live among us – *lower than the angels* – but now he is crowned with glory. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus casts out a demon, and the people are amazed that he has power over unclean spirits.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us offer our prayers to God on behalf of those assembled here, and all those in need.

- 1) For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, that he may continue to lead our Church by his example of loving pastoral care and concern for the poor, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all elected officials, that they may work toward the common good by listening and responding to the needs of the people they were elected to serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are persecuted for their Christian faith, that they may remain steadfast, and find strength in Christ's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our community who are seeking employment, that they may find meaningful work that allows them to use their God-given talents to support themselves and their loved ones, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they come to see God face to face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, we lift our prayers to you in faith. We ask that you grant these petitions in the name of your son, Jesus Christ.

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Wednesday, January 11, 2017
(Lec. 307)

- 1) Hebrews 2:14-18
- 2) Mark 1:29-39

WEDNESDAY OF
FIRST WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Jesus fully understands our human struggles, and is always ready to strengthen us if we turn to him.

Jesus took on human flesh to save and redeem us. Through his life, passion, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, he defeated the power of sin and death and opened the way to eternal life. He was also tested in every way, like us in all things but sin. Because of this, Jesus fully understands our plight and is ready to help us if we ask.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Our reading from Hebrews reminds us that Jesus shared in our humanity – suffering and dying so we might live. In the Gospel, Jesus shows his readiness to respond to the needs of everyone he meets, drawing on intimate prayer with his Father to give him the grace and strength he needs.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that the Lord lovingly watches over us and provides for our needs, let us offer our prayers to our Father in heaven.

- 1) For all priests, that God may give them the grace and strength needed to shepherd, teach and guide all those entrusted into their care, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of troubled nations and cities of the world, that they may continue to seek ways to bring about a just and lasting peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who are experiencing mental illness, that they might receive the help they need and be treated with dignity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the young people in our parish who are discerning God's call in their lives, may their hearts be open to serving in the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they come to enjoy perfect peace and joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of all creation, we thank you for all of your gifts, and ask that you hear and answer our prayers. For we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, January 12, 2017
(Lec. 308)

- 1) Hebrews 3:7-14
- 2) Mark 1:40-45

THURSDAY OF
FIRST WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: The mercy of the Lord never fails us.

A leper asks for healing and Jesus does not hesitate. But the leper cannot keep quiet and begins telling everyone of the work Jesus has done. What have we asked of Jesus lately? He can and will make our lives better if we ask him; and when he does, our shouts of joy will help bring more people to know the goodness of the Lord.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Today's first reading is from the New Testament but quotes a psalm, calling on believers to remain open to God, and not allow the deceit of sin to harden their hearts. In the Gospel, Jesus cures a leper but tells him not to tell others. He does, nevertheless, and the news brings crowds to Jesus for healing.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With faith in God's never-failing mercy, let us bring our petitions to him, praying for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) That all those who participate in Church ministries may emulate the Lord by their lives of love and service to others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That missionaries and aid workers in countries torn by war and violence may have the strength and grace to persevere, and bring the joy of God's love to others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those suffering with long-term or debilitating illnesses may experience God's love through the compassionate care of healthcare professionals, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That each of us assembled here, may search our souls to find new ways to show mercy to those around us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may have eternal rest in the loving care of God in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and grant that which will bring us closer to you and your kingdom. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ.

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Friday, January 13, 2017
(Lec. 309)

- 1) Hebrews 4:1-5, 11
- 2) Mark 2:1-12

FRIDAY OF
FIRST WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

(Opt. Mem.
Saint Hilary,
Bishop and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: Jesus hears the prayers of the faithful.

In Hebrew, Jesus means, "God saves." We are saved through Christ. Whether our intentions are expressed in words or held in the silence of our hearts, Jesus knows the miracles we seek in our lives. He hears the prayers of the faithful. He heals us, body and soul, and promises us eternal peace in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The reading from Hebrews advises listeners to stay on guard and united in faith so they may enter into eternal life in heaven. In today's Gospel, a paralyzed man and his friends seek a miracle from Jesus. They lower him through the roof in hopes of healing. Jesus forgives the man's sins and commands him to walk again.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that God hears and answers our prayers, let us join in offering our petitions for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may we work cooperatively with people of all faith traditions to foster peace and justice in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who serve in government, that they may respect the dignity and sanctity of all human life from conception until natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For doctors, nurses and all medical professionals, that God may bless them in their work, and may their comfort and care provide healing to those in need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that through our words and actions we may warmly welcome newcomers and visitors, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may enjoy perpetual light and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving Father, you heal us in body and soul. Hear and answer our prayers according to your most holy will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ.

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Saturday, January 14, 2017
(Lec. 310)

- 1) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 2) Mark 2:13-17

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

FOCUS: Jesus invites us to place our trust in God, who abounds in mercy and loves us beyond measure.

In today's Gospel, Jesus states, *I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.* Understanding this, we can seek the Lord with confidence. For he loves us unconditionally, forgives us and will give us the grace we need to overcome our faults and failings. This will allow us to lead lives of Christ-like love and service more and more each day.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that the word of God is living and effective. In the Gospel, the Pharisees question why Jesus eats with sinners and tax collectors. Jesus responds that he has come to call sinners, not the righteous.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Understanding that the law of the Lord is perfect and refreshing to our souls, let us join in offering our prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For Church leaders, that they may continue to be a sign of God's mercy, leading all people to our loving God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders throughout the world, may they approach the pressing problems we face with a spirit of collaboration, and act to solve them with fairness and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick, that their faith in God may bring them comfort and healing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of our parish, that we support one another and place our trust in Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they may rejoice in the heavenly kingdom for all eternity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, our rock and shelter, hear and answer our prayers according to your will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2017

(Lec. 64)

- 1) Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
- 3) John 1:29-34

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: As disciples, we have been called to witness to Christ before others and to be his holy presence in the world.

As we move back into ordinary time after our Christmas celebrations, we are invited to continue to reflect on the great mystery of God's presence in our world through Christ, whose birth we have just celebrated. That invitation challenges us to conform our lives to his so that we might bear witness to the truth and hope he brings to us, as individuals and as a community of faith.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading speaks of how God chose Israel to serve as a light to the nations so the message of salvation may reach the ends of the earth. Saint Paul greets the community in Corinth by reminding them of their vocation to holiness and prayer. In the Gospel, John the Baptist testifies that Jesus is the Son of God.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With confidence and trust, let us bring our prayers and petitions before our merciful Father.

- 1) For Church leaders, may they continue to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit as they guide and lead the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all civil leaders, may they work to promote a spirit of cooperation among businesses, schools and local governments in order to foster caring and generous communities, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who are persecuted for their faith in Christ, may God's Holy Spirit uphold and strengthen them and assure them of the prayers and support of their Christian brothers and sisters, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the sick and all who suffer, may God's Holy Spirit restore them to the fullness of life and health and liberate them from all afflictions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead, may they receive the reward of a life well-spent and come to share in the fullness of Christ's glory in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal God, our salvation comes from you alone. As you watch over the lives of your people, let us once again experience the transforming and strengthening power of your Holy Spirit. We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord.

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Monday, January 16, 2017
(Lec. 311)

- 1) Hebrews 5:1-10
- 2) Mark 2:18-22

MONDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: As disciples of Jesus, the high priest, let us align our lives with the will of the Father.

Jesus was sent to bring a message of God's love, and to give his life as ransom for our sins. In his total obedience to the will of the Father, Christ's message was often at odds with the culture around him, even Judaic traditions. Jesus asks us, too, to align our lives with the will of the Father and to challenge cultural norms that are contrary to the Gospel.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Hebrews reminds us that every high priest is called by God to offer sacrifices for sins. Jesus, too, was called by God and, *Son though he was*, was obedient even through his suffering. By this, *he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him*. The Gospel reminds us that you cannot pour new wine into old wineskins.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in the love of the Father, let us turn to him with our petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church may strive to listen to and obey God's will in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That those who lead nations, states and cities will always remember their duty to serve the least among us, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are ill and who share in the suffering of Christ, may they be healed by his grace and comforted by the compassionate care of our community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For young people in our parish discerning a call to religious life, may we prayerfully support them as they seek to answer and be faithful to God's will and plan for their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they rest in the arms of Christ whose sacrifice won our eternal salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we stand in the presence of your Son, the bridegroom. We rejoice at his feast and give thanks for the salvation which his obedience won. Hear our prayers and answer them according to your will. We ask this through that same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

* * *

Tuesday, January 17, 2017
(Lec. 312)
1) Hebrews 6:10-20
2) Mark 2:23-28

TUESDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM
Saint Anthony, Abbot)

FOCUS: Saint Anthony, along with contemplative religious women and men, reminds us we are to love God above all things.

The Church honors Saint Anthony of Egypt today. Saint Anthony and contemplative men and women who have followed in his footsteps remind us that the true treasure of our lives – first and foremost – is to place our faith in the Lord and to love him above all things. Contemplatives do this by dedicating their whole life to prayer and detachment from the pleasures of this world.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us that our faith and love for Jesus and his promise of salvation is to be the anchor for our lives. The anchor helps us stay the course and keep our feet firmly planted on the path of salvation. In today's Gospel, Jesus speaks about the true meaning of the Sabbath.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us come before our provident God, trusting that he will provide for us in our need.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may have hearts open to grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit so we may give a more faithful and effective witness to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of power, may they work to end divisions among people due to ethnicity, religious beliefs or social status, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For people suffering in body, mind or spirit, that Christ might be their constant companion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, that the Holy Spirit empowers us to help lead more people closer to Christ and the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that the Lord may welcome them this day into paradise, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we thank you for hearing our prayers. Answer them according to your will, which we trust is always for the greatest good. We ask this through Christ, the Lord.

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Wednesday, January 18, 2017
(Lec. 313)

- 1) Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17
- 2) Mark 3:1-6

WEDNESDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Jesus is our eternal and great high priest, who sits at the right hand of the Father interceding on our behalf.

Our Faith has mysteries that are beyond our understanding, such as Jesus being our eternal high priest who intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father. In order to be at peace with such a mystery, it can prove helpful to take to heart these words of Jesus: *Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me* (Jn 14:1).

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us that Christ Jesus is a priest forever according to the line of Melchizedek. In today's Gospel, the Pharisees condemn Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. That same day, they began planning to put him to death.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With our faith and trust in the Lord's providence, let us present our prayer requests.

- 1) That the Church will continue to call all people to repent and place their faith in Jesus, so many will be saved and experience Jesus' healing power in their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That all of the newly elected public officials in our country will turn to the Holy Spirit for wisdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That refugees, and all those who have been forced to leave their homes because of violence or unrest, may be blessed to find places of safety so they can begin the process of healing and rebuilding their lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That all members of our parish community will strive to use their God-given gifts, and give glory and honor to God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That our departed loved ones, and all who have died, will enjoy eternal peace, joy and bliss in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, in your loving kindness we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, for we offer them to you through Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, January 19, 2017
(Lec. 314)

- 1) Hebrews 7:25-8:6
- 2) Mark 3:7-12

THURSDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Jesus' ministry reveals God's love and continues to this day through his followers.

From his teaching to his miracles, passion, death and resurrection, everything Jesus has done and continues to do for us is an expression of God's love. To this very day he intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father, continuing to impart his grace through the sacraments, sacred Scripture and the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us that Jesus' once-and-for-all sacrifice on the cross won forgiveness for our sins and reconciled us to the Father. Today's Gospel tells of a great crowd of people gathering around Jesus and pressing upon him – that they might touch Jesus and be healed.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Grateful for the many good gifts and blessings God bestows upon us each day, let us now offer our prayers to the Lord.

- 1) For all members of the Church throughout the world, may we rely on the intercession of Jesus, our high priest, for guidance and strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders who work to bring about peace in the face of conflict, may their work be blessed and may their efforts be fruitful, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those suffering from physical ailments, may they turn to Jesus, the Divine Physician, for healing, comfort and peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, may we be united in faith around Jesus, our eternal high priest who continually intercedes on our behalf at the right hand of the Father, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they see the face of God and rejoice in his glory forever in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear our humble petitions, for we ask them in faith through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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Friday, January 20, 2017
(Lec. 315)

- 1) Hebrews 8:6-13
- 2) Mark 3:13-19

FRIDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM. Saint Fabian,
Pope and Martyr;
Saint Sebastian, Martyr)

FOCUS: Jesus Christ, our high priest, is the only perfect and true mediator of the new covenant.

Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, is truly human and truly divine. Therefore, he seals the new covenant for us through his sacrificial death and resurrection. Through such a selfless gift, Christ reveals God's love and mercy to us. Throughout our lives, he continues to intercede for us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Hebrews speaks about a new covenant. It is a call to a new way of living the Mosaic covenant. It requires an internal change of heart rather than a rigid external conformity to the law. The Gospel tells of Jesus summoning the Twelve Apostles to himself. Their lives became the foundation upon which Jesus built his Church.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us offer our prayers to God, who hears and answers them according to his will.

- 1) That Pope Francis and all the ordained may continue to be blessed with the grace to shepherd and guide the Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That world leaders responsible for the distribution of resources in their nations may allocate food, energy and other provisions fairly and impartially, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That people who live with chronic pain may experience relief and the healing love of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That Saints Fabian and Sebastian, martyrs for the faith, may intercede for our community of faith so we may receive the strength needed to more courageously proclaim the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may rejoice with God in heaven forever, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious and loving God, we lift our voices in prayer, and ask that you hear and answer our petitions. We bring these prayers to you through Jesus Christ, your son.

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Saturday, January 21, 2017
(Lec. 316)

- 1) Hebrews 9:2-3, 11-14
- 2) Mark 3:20-21

SATURDAY OF
SECOND WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM Saint Agnes,
Virgin and Martyr)

FOCUS: We are to receive holy Communion with reverence, love and gratitude.

What is our disposition toward holy Communion? Do we receive it with reverence and love, or are we going through the motions? Today offers the opportunity to examine our attitude and come forward with reverence and love to receive our Lord, who gives us the gift of himself in the Eucharist.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Hebrews reminds us that Christ's sacrifice on the cross won forgiveness for our sins and reconciled us to God. The responsorial psalm speaks of the Lord being king over all the earth. In today's Gospel from Mark, some try to seize Jesus because they thought he was out of his mind.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As we prepare with grateful hearts to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we place our prayers before our loving Father.

- 1) For all bishops, priests and deacons, may they be blessed in their leadership and ministry, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may they put the needs of their people before their own, seeking to serve the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the unemployed and underemployed, may they find strength through prayer and assistance from people of goodwill as they seek a better future for themselves and their families, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish, may we strive to share Christ's love with others by treating them with kindness and charity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enjoy the peace and joy of eternal life in the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, in your goodness and love hear and answer our prayers. We offer them to you through your son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2017

(Lec. 67)

- 1) Isaiah 8:23–9:3
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17
- 3) Matthew 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Each and every day, Jesus calls us to make the choice to live as faithful disciples.

Today's Gospel tells of how Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James and John to come and follow him. All four respond immediately to Jesus' call by leaving everything behind to go and follow him. Similarly, Jesus calls us to follow him and live as his faithful disciples each day. Do we have the faith and courage to answer his call?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah proclaims a message of hope and joy, saying that *the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light*. Saint Paul in the second reading urges the Corinthians to put aside rivalries, and instead be united in their faith in Christ. Today's Gospel relates how Jesus calls Peter and Andrew to put down their nets and come and follow him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God who brought us from darkness to light through the gift of his Son, we present our needs.

- 1) For all who minister in the Church, may they be inspired by Simon Peter and all the Apostles to continue to put Christ first and spread the Good News through word and action, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For national and world leaders, that they may work to protect and defend the dignity and sanctity of all human life, from conception until natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are sick, may they find strength and healing through prayer and the support of caregivers and loved ones, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish families, may we be thankful for the good gifts we have received from the Lord, and share these gifts generously through stewardship and service, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they come to enjoy everlasting peace and joy in the company of the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father in heaven, we ask you to hear our prayers and grant what we ask in faith. We ask this through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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Monday, January 23, 2017
(Lec. 317)

- 1) Hebrews 9:15, 24-28
- 2) Mark 3:22-30

DAY OF PRAYER for the
LEGAL PROTECTION
of UNBORN CHILDREN

NOTE: Or for the Day of Prayer, any of the following readings: Gn 1:1—2:2 (41) or 2 Mc 7:1, 20-31 (vol. II, 499) or Is 49:1-6 (587) or Rom 11:33-36 (121) or Eph 1:3-14 (104) or Eph 3:14-21 (vol. III, 476) or Col 1:12-20 (162) or 1 Jn 3:11-21 (208)/Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 (414) or Mk 9:30-37 (134) or Lk 1:39-56 (622) or Lk 17:11-19 (144) or Lk 23:35-43 (162) or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14, 16-18 (755) or Jn 6:24-35 (113), or the *Lectionary for Ritual Masses* (vol. IV), the Mass "For Peace and Justice," nos. 887-891

FOCUS: Christ, as the mediator of the new covenant, calls us to stand strong in the face of sin.

While Christ came into the world to defeat the power of sin and death and open the way to eternal life, we are not immune to the daily temptation to sin. This is why daily prayer is so important, because Jesus intercedes on our behalf so we might have the grace to resist sin and enter into eternal life in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The letter to the Hebrews explains how Christ is the mediator of the new covenant: by his death and resurrection, he has conquered sin and brought salvation to the world. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Mindful of Jesus' command to love one another, we offer these prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all who serve the Church in her ministries, that their public witness to the sanctity of human life will embolden others to share in their mission, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of this nation, and all who hold public office, that they may work to support and defend the most vulnerable among us in a true respect for life at all stages, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all women and men who have been affected by the tragedy of abortion, may they turn to God for his healing love, mercy and forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that by our prayers and our acts of service we might demonstrate true compassion for those in need of healing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, that they might see God face to face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers, which we offer through your son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Tuesday, January 24, 2017
(Lec. 318)
1) Hebrews 10:1-10
2) Mark 3:31-35

TUESDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM
Saint Francis De Sales,
Bishop and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: Jesus' life and teachings demonstrate what it means to do God's will.

Jesus lived all of his life in perfect fidelity to the will of his Father. His teachings and example reveal to us what it means to be faithful to God and to do his will, so that we might live as brothers and sisters united in our love for Jesus and one day be judged worthy of eternal life in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Hebrews reminds us that humankind was saved and redeemed by Christ's perfect sacrifice upon the cross. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that all those who choose to follow him and do God's will are *brother and sister* to him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in the Father's love and concern for us, we present our prayers and petitions for our needs and the needs of others.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we generously respond to the needs of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters with prayer and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For public officials throughout the world, that they will work to ensure that all people are accorded the right to freely worship and practice the faith of their choosing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For police and firefighters, may God keep them safe and bless their efforts to protect those in harm's way, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, may we welcome all who enter here, whether they are visiting for the first time or returning to the active practice of the faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they know the joys of heaven and reside with the angels and saints forever, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petitions)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and grant us the patience and perseverance we need to do your will. We ask these things through Christ, our Lord.

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Wednesday, January 25, 2017
(Lec. 519)

- 1) Acts 22:3-16
or Acts 9:1-22
- 2) Mark 16:15-18

**THE CONVERSION
OF SAINT PAUL
the APOSTLE
- FEAST**

FOCUS: From the beginning, the Church's mission has been to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world.

We can see a connection between the first reading today from the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel reading from Mark. In Acts, Saul's conversion will bring about his missionary work among the Gentiles, which continues the work of the Apostles, who were commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the Good News to the whole world.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the Acts of the Apostles, we learn about the conversion of Saul that takes place on the road to Damascus. In the Gospel, the resurrected Lord Jesus appears to the Apostles and gives them their mission: *Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us come together with one voice to bring our needs to our loving God.

- 1) For missionaries throughout the world, that their proclamation of the Gospel will open hearts, and draw those who hear it nearer to Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the gift of wisdom to aid government leaders as they seek just policies for all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are alone or feel isolated, may the word of God bring them comfort and peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For catechumens as they journey to the Easter sacraments, may their conversion be heartfelt and their passion for the Gospel lifelong, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enter the loving embrace of the Father and experience eternal peace and joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, you are the giver of all good things. We pray that you will hear our prayers and answer them according to your will, through your son, Jesus Christ.

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Thursday, January 26, 2017
(Lec. 520)

1) 2 Timothy 1:1-8
or Titus 1:1-5

(Lec. 320)

2) Mark 4:21-25

THURSDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM

Saints Timothy and Titus,
Bishops)

FOCUS: Christ encourages us to shine the light of his love and truth in this world of darkness.

Jesus tells us to shine our light of goodness, kindness, faithfulness, love, peace, joy, gentleness, patience and self-control. These fruits of the Holy Spirit shine forth in those who have received the gifts of the Spirit, and who actively cooperate with the grace and action of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul speaks to Titus as a father to his son, encouraging him to continue the work of leading and building up the Church in Crete. In the Gospel, Jesus instructs his followers to let the light of their faith shine forth in the darkness. How they measure others is how they will in turn be measured themselves.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us bring our needs before God, our loving and merciful Father.

- 1) That all members of the Church recommit themselves to the work of evangelization, announcing the Good News of Jesus' saving love every day through their words and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That our nation's leaders may seek wisdom and understanding from God as they seek to form policies and enact laws which promote the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That refugees facing religious and political persecution may find strength in their faith and safe haven with the help of charitable organizations and people of goodwill, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our catechists and teachers be blessed in their efforts to share their love for Jesus with the young people they serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That our beloved dead, and all who have died, may enjoy perpetual light and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, and draw us closer to you. Through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, January 27, 2017
(Lec. 321)

- 1) Hebrews 10:32-39
- 2) Mark 4:26-34

FRIDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Angela Merici,
Virgin)

FOCUS: By cooperating with God's grace, our faith can grow strong and bear good fruit for the kingdom of God.

Today's readings remind us that while we do our part, it is the work of God that increases our faith. Our actions are like those of the farmer who plants the seed – what springs forth is not of the farmer's doing. Time and patience reveal what is sown. We put in our effort, and God brings forth the abundant harvest.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the letter to the Hebrews encourages hope and perseverance. The passage urges us to remain confident in our faith in Christ. Jesus uses the parable of the mustard seed to demonstrate that while we play our part, God produces the abundant harvest of faith.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in the abundant mercy of God, let us offer our prayers of petition for the Church and our world.

- 1) For Pope Francis, may his humble acts of service and powerful words of love continue to inspire faith-filled actions in people of goodwill throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civic leaders, may they be mindful that the measure with which they invest in their leadership will be returned to them, and may they be inspired through the Holy Spirit to lead with integrity and humility, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For women considering abortion, may they recognize the child they are carrying within them as a gift from God who has a right to life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all those gathered here today, may we open our hearts to God's grace and pray daily for the strength to live as disciples of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be welcomed into the heavenly banquet of abundant love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, the full measure of your abundant harvest is beyond even our wildest imagination. We offer these prayers trusting that, in your goodness and mercy, you will answer them according to your will. Through Christ, our Lord.

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Saturday, January 28, 2017
(Lec. 322)

- 1) Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19
- 2) Mark 4:35-41

SATURDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM

Saint Thomas Aquinas,
Priest and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: Trust in the Lord's presence, and turn to him in prayer.

As we encounter storms and choppy waters in our lives, we must trust in the Lord's presence and turn to him in prayer. Today, we celebrate the memorial of the early Church doctor, Saint Thomas Aquinas. His writings teach us that although faith may seem to contradict reason at times, it transcends what human intellect will ever "know."

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Hebrews highlights the many ways Abraham demonstrates his faith, even when it challenges logic and the realities of the natural world. Today's Gospel describes a terrifying scenario as the Apostles' boat is tossed by the sea. Jesus commands the wind to cease, and then he questions the Apostles' faith.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As disciples navigating the stormy seas of this world, let us turn to the Lord with our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may be witnesses to Christ's mercy by practicing charity and promoting justice in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who serve in public office, that courage and wisdom, and a spirit of cooperation, may guide their decision-making, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For couples who are facing difficulties in their marriage, may they turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and seek help from Church ministries, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that we continue to work to defend the dignity and sanctity of human life from conception until natural death through our service and advocacy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they come to receive the promised reward of eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, you know the needs of your people. Look favorably upon these petitions, and grant them according to your will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2017

(Lec. 70)

- 1) Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- 3) Matthew 5:1-12a

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: God's ways are not our ways.

Today's readings make clear that God's ways are not the status quo. Each reading demonstrates God's glory in the most unlikely of people – the weak, the humble, the lowly. Conventional wisdom is rendered moot by God. These readings challenge us to reflect on our own biases as to who is worthy and who is to be admired. Whose ideals are we striving to live by?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading explains that those who live by God's ways will be protected. In the second reading, Saint Paul reminds the Corinthians that God used their lowliness to demonstrate Christ's glory. The Gospel shares the beatitudes given by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that God hears and answers all of our prayers, let us join in offering him our petitions for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For the Church, may she continue to be a beacon of hope to all by boldly proclaiming the Gospel message and assisting those in need with kindness and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of nations, may they, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, establish laws that safeguard the sacredness and value of all human life from conception to natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those in our society who are vulnerable or marginalized, may they find a sense of solidarity with caring Christians and may they be strengthened through prayer, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of this faith community, may we seek out those who need to hear the Good News and assure them of God's love and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our loved ones who have died, may they be welcomed into the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, your ways overturn conventional wisdom. We offer our prayers today in the hope that, in granting them, your glory will prevail and penetrate even the most desperate of situations. We offer them through Christ, our Lord.

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Monday, January 30, 2017

MONDAY OF

(Lec.

323) FOURTH WEEK

1) Hebrews 11:32-40

2) Mark 5:1-20

IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: *Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you.*

Sin can turn us in on ourselves and rob us of the fullness of life that God desires us to have. One consequence of sin is separation from family and community. When we turn to Jesus to be freed from bondage to sin, Jesus works to heal and deliver us so we are reconciled to God, set on course to experiencing abundant life in God's love, and in God's time are reconciled with loved ones.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us that it is faith in Jesus, and Jesus alone, which offers new life and the promise and hope of eternal life in heaven. In the Gospel, Jesus encounters a man who was possessed by a number of demons among the tombs near the Sea of Galilee, and he casts the demons into a herd of swine.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's mercy, we place our prayers before him.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we will give witness to our faith in Jesus by striving to treat all those we encounter with kindness and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our nation, that we work to ensure that those who suffer from mental illness receive the care they need to lead healthy and meaningful lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those burdened by guilt and regret, that they will open themselves to God's healing love and mercy so they can learn from their mistakes and move forward, walking in the light of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the sick of our parish, that our prayers and God's grace will bring them healing and strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, that they may enter into eternal rest and peace in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, hear and answer these, our prayers, which we offer you through Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, January 31, 2017

(Lec. 324)

- 1) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 2) Mark 5:21-43

TUESDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM
Saint John Bosco, Priest)

FOCUS: Turn to Jesus, the leader and model of faith.

Today's Gospel recalls a woman suffering with hemorrhages who turns to Jesus for healing. As a result of turning to him and trusting that he could help, she was healed of her affliction. In the same way, Jesus desires to bring about healing in our lives. We need to turn to Jesus in prayer with the things that weigh us down.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Hebrews, Christians are reminded to look to Jesus as the leader and model of faith. The suffering he endured for the salvation of sinners inspires his followers to persevere in running the race before them. The Gospel describes two miracles that occurred when a man and a woman turned to Jesus in their time of suffering.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Living in the light of God's love, let us turn to him with our prayers and petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church may persevere in the race before us by looking to Jesus to perfect our faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That world leaders may be inspired by the Holy Spirit to seek and find nonviolent solutions to the problems and conflicts that plague their nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That families of special needs children may find strength in Jesus to face the challenges that each new day brings, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That all who minister in our parish may experience a deepening of faith as they carry out their mission of serving our faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have fallen asleep believing in Christ may be welcomed into God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear our prayers, both spoken and those held within the silence of our hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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