

# SEPTEMBER

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Wednesday, September 1, 2021  
(Lec. 433)

- 1) Colossians 1:1-8
- 2) Luke 4:38-44

WEDNESDAY OF  
22<sup>ND</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: God draws us into his love when we intercede for one another.

Paul speaks of praying for the Colossians today. We pray for one another not because God does not know our needs, but rather because through this intercession we are bound to one another more fully in God's love. We lift one another toward God in our prayer, and that lifting draws us up in its wake.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Saint Paul tells of his prayers for the Colossians, and also that the Gospel they have heard *is bearing fruit and growing*. In the Gospel, Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law before curing many others. He then departs because he has been sent to proclaim the Good News to other towns.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that our God longs to heal us, we offer him our prayers today.

- 1) For the Church, may God strengthen all its members in proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civic leaders, may God grant them wisdom in working for peace among nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who feel alone, and for those who have no one else to pray for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the community of faith gathered here, may God draw us closer to one another through intercessory prayer, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died marked with the sign of faith, may they rejoice in the peace reserved for them in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of healing, we know you draw near to us today. We ask that you hear our prayers and answer them according to your will. Through Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, September 2, 2021  
(Lec. 434)

- 1) Colossians 1:9-14
- 2) Luke 5:1-11

THURSDAY OF  
22<sup>ND</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: No worldly success can match the joy of following Jesus.

The Gospel tells us that Simon catches so many fish that his nets begin to tear. What success! How remarkable, then, that Simon turns his back on his fishing enterprise, content instead to follow a stranger named Jesus. Simon's boldness teaches us that there is no joy greater than that which comes from a life of authentic discipleship.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading, Paul tells the Colossians that God has delivered them from the power of darkness and *transferred [them] to the Kingdom of his beloved Son*. The Gospel recounts Jesus' first meeting with Simon the fisherman, who, after catching a *great number of fish*, leaves behind his boat to follow Jesus and become a fisher of men and women.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With one voice, let us offer our prayers to our merciful and gracious God.

- 1) For the universal Church, may the Holy Spirit guide her in spreading the love of Christ in every corner of the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For secular authorities, may God bless their efforts to end violence and hatred, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit, may the touch of Jesus provide healing and consolation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of faith, may Jesus' radical call to discipleship inspire us to respond with eager hearts and minds, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have departed this world today, may God lead them into the eternal Kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Generous and loving Father, we thank you for the gift of your Son, who has redeemed us for a life of discipleship. Hear our prayers, we ask, through his holy name.

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Friday, September 3, 2021  
(Lec. 435)  
1) Colossians 1:15-20  
2) Luke 5:33-39

FRIDAY OF  
22<sup>ND</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Saint Gregory the Great,  
Pope and Doctor  
of the Church)

FOCUS: *Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God.*

Our readings today give us beautiful insights into what it means that Christ has come to earth, fulfilling God's promise of the Messiah. For us, it is a reminder that Christ's reign continues today and is everlasting, and that we are called to live our baptismal promises to be his witnesses in the world.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Saint Paul explains that Christ is the mediator of all creation and *the head of the Body, the Church*. In the Gospel, Jesus responds to the scribes and Pharisees, who note that his disciples do not fast. He explains that it is not the time for fasting because he, the bridegroom, will soon be taken away from them and then they will fast.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's loving presence in our lives, let us bring our prayers before him.

- 1) For the Church in the world, may God continue to guide her holy work of spreading the Good News of his Kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the world, may God bring peace to every place that is experiencing violence and war, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are experiencing grief or loss, may God comfort them in their sorrow, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those of us gathered here today, may God inspire us in sowing seeds that bear good fruit, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may God's light shine upon them and may he welcome them into eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we ask that you listen to our needs this day as we seek your will. Through your Son, Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, September 4, 2021  
(Lec. 436)  
1) Colossians 1:21-23  
2) Luke 6:1-5

SATURDAY OF  
22<sup>ND</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(Saturday in honor  
of BVM)

FOCUS: *Persevere in the faith.*

Paul tells the Colossians that they are reconciled to God *provided that [they] persevere in the faith*. These words, also meant for us, are a reminder that, by virtue of the new life we have been given through baptism, we are called to live as his disciples and listen to his will. For Christ is lord of the Sabbath, and faith in him is righteousness.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In his Letter to the Colossians, Paul tells the community that they have been reconciled to God through the death of Jesus. In the Gospel, Jesus is confronted by Pharisees because his disciples were eating grain on the Sabbath. Jesus responds that *the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath*.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in God's love and mercy, we gather our prayers together as one voice and lift them up to him.

- 1) For the Holy Church and her ministry in the world, may God continue to lead her sacred work, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all of those in civic leadership, may God strengthen their efforts in promoting the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all of those who hunger, may God provide for their every need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all of us joined in prayer today, may God inspire our prayer and transform our hearts, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may God's peace be with them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty Father, you provide for our every need. Hear our prayers today and answer them, we ask, through your Son, Christ our Lord.

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2021**

(Lec. 128)

- 1) Isaiah 35:4-7a
- 2) James 2:1-5
- 3) Mark 7:31-37

**23<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FOCUS: God comes to heal his people.

Looking at the world, there is no doubt about the need for healing. The people in *the district of the Decapolis* knew that the deaf man needed healing, and so they brought him to Jesus. As those who also know the healer – who know our Lord – let us bring our needs and those of others to him.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Lord says that he has come to save his people, including making the deaf hear and the blind see. In the second reading, James tells the Christian community not to show partiality to those who are rich, nor to discriminate against the poor. In the Gospel, Jesus heals a deaf man to the great astonishment of the crowd near the Decapolis.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us bring our prayers before the Lord, who desires to give us what we truly need.

- 1) For Pope Francis and all bishops, may God bless them with unity and fortitude, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the whole world, may the peace given by Christ come to rest on all nations and peoples, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing, may God extend his hand to them and make them well, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our community of faith, may the Lord shower us with the grace to listen to and do his will, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who will die this day, may God welcome them into his eternal peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, thank you for hearing our prayers, and we ask that you answer them according to your holy will. Through Christ our Lord.

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Monday, September 6, 2021  
(Lec. 437)

- 1) Colossians 1:24–2:3
- 2) Luke 6:6-11

MONDAY OF  
23<sup>RD</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: By uniting our suffering to Christ, it is made holy, and we are made holy.

Sometimes, preaching the word of God will result in suffering, as we heard from Paul in the first reading. Nevertheless, it is God's will that all people – Jews and Gentiles – learn of Jesus and his love for us. By uniting our suffering to Christ, it is made holy, and we are made holy.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

Paul joins his sufferings on behalf of the fledgling Church to Christ's suffering. He says God has sent him to bring the Gospel to them and Paul wants them to be encouraged, even though they have not seen him. In the Gospel, Jesus heals a man's hand on the Sabbath, which angers the Pharisees. They then discussed *what they might do to Jesus*.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Uniting our sufferings with Christ, let us turn to God our Father and offer him our needs.

- 1) For Pope Francis, may God continue to bless his efforts to spread the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may the Holy Spirit guide them according to his will, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those struggling with homelessness, may God provide the means for them to find shelter, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the community gathered here, may God help us grow in knowledge and appreciation of each other's gifts and talents in our efforts to spread the Good News, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our beloved dead and the souls of all the faithful departed, may they rest in the peace of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we thank you for hearing our petitions. Look kindly upon these prayers we bring before you in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Tuesday, September 7, 2021  
(Lec. 438)

- 1) Colossians 2:6-15
- 2) Luke 6:12-19

TUESDAY OF  
23<sup>RD</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: We are called to reflect God's presence today.

In sending his Son, Jesus, God walked with us and showed us the way to him. We know that he is the way, the truth, and the life. We are called to continue to build the Church he founded with the Twelve, following their example of discipleship by reflecting God's presence in the world today.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the Letter to the Colossians, Saint Paul warns the community about false teachers. Christ is the true fulfillment, bringing us to life in him. In the Gospel from Luke, Jesus chooses the Twelve Apostles after spending a night *in prayer to God*. He then speaks to a great crowd, healing and curing those tormented by unclean spirits.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Mindful of God's healing power, let us place our prayers together before him.

- 1) For all who serve in the Church bringing others to Christ, may he bless their work with abundance, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all nations and peoples of the world, may the Lord rescue them from the perils of war and evils of oppression, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are oppressed in any way, may they be strengthened by God's love for them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For married couples in this faith community, may the love of God strengthen their resolve to practice forgiveness and understanding with one another, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may God's radiant light be with them in everlasting life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of mercy, you sent your Son to heal the world. Hear the needs we bring before you, we ask through Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, September 8, 2021  
(Lec. 636)

- 1) Micah 5:1-4a  
or Romans 8:28-30
- 2) Matthew 1:1-16, 18-23 or 1:18-23

**THE NATIVITY  
OF THE  
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY  
- FEAST**

FOCUS: We celebrate Mary because she is the mother of our Lord God.

Today we remember Mary's fundamental role in cooperating with God's plan to bring salvation to the world. By calling to mind Jesus' mother and genealogy, we are reminded that Jesus, although fully divine, was indeed fully human, born to a fully human mother. We also recognize God's eternal plan for Mary, as foretold by the prophets.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul tells the Romans that those who are called by God are *conformed to the image of his Son*. The Gospel passage lists the genealogy of Jesus and then tells of *how the birth of Jesus Christ came about*.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With joyful hope, we gather our prayers and concerns for the world and offer them to the Lord.

- 1) For the Church, may her unity in Christ shine brightly as an example of God's peace, hospitality, and love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who hold political office, may God bless their efforts in protecting life in all its stages, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For families and communities in need of healing, may Christ restore peace in their hearts and bring about reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For students, educators, and catechists, may God's grace infuse this new school year, allowing them to grow in knowledge and piety, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died in the light of Christ, may they find eternal joy with God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful God, hear and answer the humble prayers that we offer to you. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

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Thursday, September 9, 2021  
(Lec. 440)  
1) Colossians 3:12-17  
2) Luke 6:27-38

THURSDAY OF  
23<sup>RD</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
USA: Saint Peter Claver,  
Priest)

FOCUS: Forgiveness is the mark of a Christian community.

Today's readings are packed with instructions for Christian living. Jesus subverted expectations of the Messiah, and he invites his followers into a similarly radical way of life. We are to go beyond expectations when it comes to forgiveness, generosity, and love. How we treat one another is the measure of our love for the Father through Christ.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul writes to the Colossians, encouraging them to be people of peace and gratitude who *do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus*. In today's Gospel passage, we hear Luke's Sermon on the Plain, in which Jesus teaches his disciples that they must love their enemies.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: United in God's love, we now offer these petitions for ourselves and for the whole world.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may the Holy Spirit strengthen us in unity in our witness to the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may God give them the grace to work together cooperatively so that all nations may know Christ's peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For an end to racial injustice and an increased respect for the dignity of all God's people, through the intercession of Saint Peter Claver, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of faith, may we be strengthened with the gifts of the Spirit to exemplify compassion, patience, and love in our daily lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may God's light shine upon them as they enter the kingdom of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, in your mercy, hear and answer our prayers according to your will. We ask through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Friday, September 10, 2021

(Lec. 441)

1) 1 Timothy 1:1-2, 12-14

2) Luke 6:39-42

FRIDAY OF  
23<sup>RD</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: *The grace of our Lord has been abundant.*

The Scriptures are filled with examples of God's mercy toward his people. We are called to extend that same mercy to others. It begins by recognizing our own faults and working to improve ourselves. We are called to first *remove the wooden beam from [our] eye* before we criticize or judge others.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

Paul writes to Timothy about God's mercy. In this letter he expresses his gratitude that God called him to ministry despite the fact that he had once persecuted the followers of Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus uses parables to instruct us not to be judgmental of others, but rather look to improve our own failings.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that God is merciful and kind, we join our voices in prayer as we ask the Lord to answer our needs.

- 1) For Church leaders, may God grant them wisdom and mercy in shepherding their flock, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in positions of authority, may God show them the way of peace and justice, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those burdened by hardships, may God's healing grace come upon them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all in this faith community who dedicate themselves to lives of service, may God imbue them with the strength and commitment they need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may God welcome them into their eternal home as they rejoice in his presence, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we offer these prayers in love, filled with hope for your generous mercy. Through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Saturday, September 11, 2021  
(Lec. 442)  
1) 1 Timothy 1:15-17  
2) Luke 6:43-49

SATURDAY OF  
23<sup>RD</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(Saturday in honor  
of BVM)

FOCUS: *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

The Good News – that Jesus came to save sinners – is radical proof of God’s love for us. This love demands a response, not just in word but also in deed. Following God ensures not an easy life free of suffering, but rather a steady life in which we can unite our suffering to God’s and give witness to the world of the truth that God became man to save us – sinners in need of a savior.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the First Letter to Timothy, Paul writes that Jesus came to save sinners and that God deserves all glory and honor. In today’s Gospel, Jesus teaches with parables. He compares people to fruit-bearing trees, noting that every tree is known by its fruit – good or bad. Jesus then reiterates the importance of following his commands, saying that those who do not follow his commands are like people who build their houses without a foundation.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in our merciful God, we lift up our prayers to him.

- 1) For the Church, may the gifts of the Holy Spirit continue to unite us in his faith and love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For peace in our world and in our hearts, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick, may God’s love bring them comfort and healing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those gathered here, may God give us the fortitude and wisdom needed in building our lives with him as our foundation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enter the fullness of the Kingdom with all the angels and saints, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, we thank you for your goodness and love. Hear these and all of our prayers that we humbly bring before you, we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ.

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021**

(Lec. 131)

- 1) Isaiah 50:4c-9a
- 2) James 2:14-18
- 3) Mark 8:27-35

**24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FOCUS: To be a disciple is to have faith and follow Jesus.

After Christ asks, *Who do you say that I am?* Peter answers, *You are the Christ.* Let our profession of faith be the same. And then, as James implores us, let us demonstrate that commitment to our faith by our words and actions.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Isaiah declares his trust in God to uphold him. In the second reading, James explains the necessity of works to accompany and demonstrate faith. In the Gospel, Peter confesses his faith in Jesus as the Christ. Jesus predicts his passion, then explains to Peter and the disciples that they must follow him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: May the Lord incline his ear to us as we raise our voices in supplication and prayer.

- 1) That Pope Francis – like the first pope, Saint Peter the Apostle – may be guided by Christ in his papacy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That the Lord may deliver all nations from turmoil and unrest, and bring all to him in Christ's name, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That God may relieve the burdens of all who are suffering from physical, spiritual, or financial ills, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the Holy Spirit may enrich the faith of this community that we might endure through every trial, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have died may be welcomed by Christ into his heavenly paradise, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, hear our prayers as we call upon your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Monday, September 13, 2021  
(Lec. 443)

- 1) 1 Timothy 2:1-8
- 2) Luke 7:1-10

MONDAY OF  
24<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Saint John Chrysostom,  
Bishop and Doctor  
of the Church)

FOCUS: Jesus Christ extends his blessings to both Jews and Gentiles.

Today's readings make it clear that Gentiles can be subjects of God's favor. Saint Paul asks for prayers for all authorities, including Gentile rulers. In the Gospel, Jesus is impressed with the faith of the Gentile centurion, and grants him the healing of his slave.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Saint Paul tells the community that Christ is our one mediator and redeemer, and that his (Paul's) own mission is to the Gentiles. In the Gospel, a centurion asks Jesus to heal his slave. Feeling unworthy to have Jesus visit him, he expresses faith that Jesus can heal with just his word. Amazed, Jesus does so.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Knowing that God welcomes our petitions, we humbly bring them before him.

- 1) For our Holy Mother Church, may she be blessed with an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all who govern in the civil sphere, may God's grace enable them in their servant duties, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who suffer from mental or physical illness, may God grant them healing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may we be strengthened and sanctified through God's word and the sacraments, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they know the peace and comfort of God's loving embrace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God our Father, we bring you these supplications, confident that you will hear them through our one mediator, your Son, Jesus Christ.

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Tuesday, September 14, 2021  
(Lec. 638)  
1) Numbers 21:4b-9  
2) Philippians 2:6-11  
3) John 3:13-17

**THE EXALTATION  
OF THE  
HOLY CROSS  
- FEAST**

FOCUS: Christ is lifted up on the cross so that all might be healed and have life.

The great paradox of the cross is that what was once seen as the most accursed of all deaths has become for us the means of our salvation. As we honor the cross, we proclaim our belief that Jesus' self-sacrifice is both atonement for our sins and the way by which we are restored to right relationship with God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading the Israelites, bitten by serpents in the desert, are healed when they look upon the bronze serpent fashioned by Moses. In his Letter to the Philippians, Saint Paul recalls how Christ emptied himself, died on the cross, and was raised to glory by the Father. In the Gospel, Jesus uses the image of the serpent in the desert and tells Nicodemus that to believe in him is to have eternal life.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, we bring our prayers and petitions to the Father.

- 1) For the Church, as the Body of Christ, may the Lord continue to bless her and protect her from all disunity and evil, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those in authority, may God bless them with the virtues of wisdom and compassion, let us pray to the Lord
- 3) For all who bear the burden of sickness, may they come to share in the healing and restoration brought by the cross of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For abundant vocations to the priesthood and religious life in this faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all our beloved dead, may they receive the gift of eternal life won for all by the cross of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we ask that you hear our prayers and in your mercy, answer them according to your holy will. Through Christ our Lord.

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Wednesday, September 15, 2021  
(Lec. 445)  
1) 1 Timothy 3:14-16  
(Lec. 639)  
2) John 19:25-27  
or Luke 2:33-35

WEDNESDAY OF  
24<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Our Lady of Sorrows)

FOCUS: Jesus gives us Our Lady of Sorrows as our Mother, to stand with us in grief and draw us into her hope.

When we are faced with brokenness, it may be difficult to see that Christ is King – to trust the end of this story to be good. But it is at the foot of the cross that Jesus gives us his holy Mother, who stands with us and wraps us in her embrace so as to draw us into her hope.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In his Letter to Timothy, Saint Paul reminds him of Christ's glory. In the Gospel Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is at the foot of the cross with other women and the beloved disciple. Jesus gives Mary to the disciple as his Mother and gives the disciple to her as a son.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that Christ sees our need and reaches out to care for us, we bring these prayers to the Father.

- 1) For all bishops, priests, and deacons, may the hope our holy Mother shares with them give them strength and vibrancy for their ministry, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For safety and peace in our communities and nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those suffering from loneliness or depression, may the Holy Spirit fill them with hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of faith, may the graces offered in the Blessed Sacrament unite us more closely to one another, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they rejoice with God and the Blessed Mother in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of power and healing, we bring you these prayers today, knowing of your infinite love for us. Hear and answer them according to your will, through Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, September 16, 2021  
(Lec. 446)

- 1) 1 Timothy 4:12-16
- 2) Luke 7:36-50

THURSDAY OF  
24<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Saints Cornelius, Pope,  
and Cyprian, Bishop,  
Martyrs)

FOCUS: Our whole lives can witness to the love of Christ we have received.

The sinful woman, Paul, and Timothy, all knew the love of Christ, and so became powerful witnesses to that same love for the world. When we, too, know the love Christ has for us, we must set an example in *speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity* by living as his disciples.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Saint Paul advises Timothy to set an example of faith throughout his life despite his youthfulness. In the Gospel, a Pharisee questions why a sinful woman washes Jesus' feet, and Jesus tells him a story about forgiveness and love.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in the love that empowers us to bear witness in the world, we bring our petitions to God.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may Christ conform us ever more closely to himself, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civic leaders, may God open their hearts and lead them to greater compassion and selflessness in their service, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who struggle to trust in God's love, may they encounter the mercy and tenderness of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of faith, may we have the grace to know God's will and follow it freely, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have passed away, may they rest in the peace of God's embrace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: God of mercy, hear these prayers we offer you today, through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, September 17, 2021  
(Lec. 447)  
1) 1 Timothy 6:2c-12  
2) Luke 8:1-3

FRIDAY OF  
24<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(Opt. Mem.  
Saint Robert Bellarmine,  
Bishop and Doctor  
of the Church)

FOCUS: Faithfulness to Christ and his teachings brings lasting joy.

As we heard in our responsorial psalm and first reading, those who are *poor in spirit* are secure in the kingdom of heaven, whereas those who trust their riches or use their religion as a means of gain are, in fact, deluding themselves. Let us strive to emulate those in the Gospel who followed Jesus from town to village, and use our energy and resources to witness to the Good News.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul exhorts Timothy not to view religion as a means of gain; rather, true religion involves the pursuit of *righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness*. In the Gospel, Luke recounts Jesus' journeys from town to town, accompanied by the Twelve and by women who provide for them out of their own resources.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in the providence of God, let us bring him our petitions and needs.

- 1) For our Holy Mother Church, may God continue to bless her with fortitude in her mission to spread the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For national and local leaders, may God grant them wisdom in pursuit of justice and peace, especially in places filled with conflict, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the sick and those in chronic pain, may Christ, the Divine Physician, have mercy on them and bring them the healing they need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may God's Spirit prompt us in living more faithfully as his disciples, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they find rest and peace with all the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, we entrust our prayers to you in the holy name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, September 18, 2021  
(Lec. 448)

- 1) 1 Timothy 6:13-16
- 2) Luke 8:4-15

SATURDAY OF  
24<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(Saturday in honor  
of BVM)

FOCUS: Let us cultivate holiness in order to be open to God's grace.

How have we prepared our hearts to receive the word of God? How can we cultivate a *generous and good heart* that can *bear fruit*? Just as a gardener prepares good soil with compost and conditioning, so must we cultivate virtues with intentionality, practice, and discipline so that we might be ready to embrace the Word as it takes root.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

Paul writes to Timothy, exhorting him to be holy as he waits for the second coming of Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches the parable of the sower and explains its meaning: *The seed is the word of God.*

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With one voice, let us lift up our prayers to our merciful Father.

- 1) For the Church throughout the world, may she, by God's power and grace, grow in holiness and unity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the world, may violence and hatred yield to the love and charity of God's kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For respect of life, may every man, woman, and child be looked upon as a child of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in this faith community beginning their journey to enter the Church, may the Holy Spirit continue to prepare their hearts for the sacred mysteries, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enter fully into God's loving presence, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, we ask that you hear our prayers this day and answer them according to your divine will. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2021**

(Lec. 134)

- 1) Wisdom 2:12, 17-20
- 2) James 3:16-4:3
- 3) Mark 9:30-37

**25<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FOCUS: Jesus calls us to humble service.

A common thread in today's readings is that the marks of faithfulness are humility, peacemaking, and service to the lowliest among us. In the midst of cynicism, which is so often the reality of our modern world, how can we better witness to the world the peace of Christ?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Wisdom, the wicked speak of testing *the just one* until he sins or until God intervenes. In the second reading, James says that *the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace*. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus teaches about his passion but the disciples do not understand; he then demands humble service of his followers.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting God in all things, let us seek his help for our Church and our world.

- 1) For all of the baptized in the Church, may God strengthen us in proclaiming the kingdom of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For government leaders, may God bless them with strength and wisdom in supporting policies that uplift families, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who mourn the loss of a loved one, may God's enduring love and mercy and the gift of faith bring them consolation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For those in our midst who are struggling financially, may the Lord grant them relief and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they soon be brought to eternal peace with the Lord in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, hear our prayers and grant us what we need. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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Monday, September 20, 2021  
(Lec. 449)

- 1) Ezra 1:1-6
- 2) Luke 8:16-18

MONDAY OF  
25<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM

Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn, Priest,  
and Paul Chŏng Ha-sang,  
and Companions,  
Martyrs)

FOCUS: When we embrace and understand God's word, we become a beacon to shine God's light.

Jesus is the light that penetrates the darkness. When we accept his teachings, we become a lamp designed to bring God's light to others – to brighten the path necessary for others to find the Lord. A lamp should be placed where everyone can benefit from its light.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In today's first reading from Ezra, the Lord inspired Cyrus of Persia to free the Israelites who had been exiled to Babylon after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., and allow them to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the crowd to be a light on a lampstand, illuminating his word for others.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us humbly offer our petitions to the Father.

- 1) For the Church, may the Holy Spirit bring forth in all the baptized a sustained commitment to the vocation of holiness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may God bless their work in protecting the sanctity of human life at all stages, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the poor and the rejected, may the Lord bring them refuge and hope, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For students in this community of faith, may the Holy Spirit increase in them the gifts of wisdom and understanding this school year, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the recently deceased, may God welcome them into his eternal banquet, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious Lord, we ask you to accept our petitions and answer them according to your will. Through Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, September 21, 2021  
(Lec. 643)  
1) Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13  
2) Matthew 9:9-13

**SAINT MATTHEW,  
APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST  
- FEAST**

FOCUS: The Lord invites us to follow him and to bring others to him.

When Jesus tells Matthew to follow him, Matthew does so. Not only does he become a disciple, he invites Jesus to his home and invites others to meet him. Jesus calls us to follow him as well. How do we do so in our own lives? Are we willing to embrace Matthew's example and not only become a disciple but to bring others to him?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Saint Paul urges the Ephesians to live in accordance with their call – striving for unity, making evident the fruits of the Spirit, and exercising their ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ. In the Gospel, in response to Jesus' command, Matthew leaves his customs post and follows him. The Pharisees question the company Jesus keeps, but Jesus responds that he has come to call sinners.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting that the Lord always hears us, let us bring before him our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For Pope Francis, bishops, and all priests, may the Holy Spirit continue to guide them in their proclamation of the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For judges and all those who exercise authority in our legal system, may the wisdom of the Lord guide their understanding and application of the law, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all victims of human trafficking, may the Lord sustain them and lead them to a new life of freedom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all gathered here, may the grace of the sacraments enrich us in lives of discipleship and evangelization, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all the souls in purgatory who have no one else to pray for them, may the Lord have mercy on them and receive them in his glory, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving and merciful God, hear these prayers we offer with sincere hearts and answer them in accordance with your will. We make this prayer in Christ's name.

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Wednesday, September 22, 2021  
(Lec. 451)

- 1) Ezra 9:5-9
- 2)) Luke 9:1-6

WEDNESDAY OF  
25<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: *He sent them to proclaim the Kingdom of God.*

The disciples are sent by Jesus to proclaim the Kingdom of God to all whom they meet. Likewise, we are called by virtue of our baptism to fulfill the unique mission God has for each one of us – by becoming more aware of God's presence in our lives and sharing this good news with those around us.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Ezra prays to God, acknowledging the mercy that he has shown them. Ezra also affirms that *God has not abandoned us*. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus sends the Twelve out, giving them the power and authority to expel demons and heal the sick. He gives them instructions for their work of proclaiming the Good News *from village to village*.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Reliant on God's mercy in our lives, let us bring our prayers before him.

- 1) For the Church in its work to continue the mission of the Twelve, may God strengthen her as she proclaims the Gospel throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who work to uphold justice, may the Holy Spirit imbue them with the gifts of understanding and knowledge, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who struggle to forgive themselves, may God's abundant presence be with them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may God strengthen our commitment to spreading the Gospel message, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may God's infinite love welcome them into eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and ever-living God, listen to the prayers we place before you this day, we ask through Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, September 23, 2021  
(Lec. 452)

- 1) Haggai 1:1-8
- 2) Luke 9:7-9

THURSDAY OF  
25<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Saint Pius of Pietrelcina,  
Priest)

FOCUS: We are called to glorify God by our work.

The Lord uses Haggai to invite the Judeans to reflect on the efforts they have devoted to sustaining their lives and how meager the results of their labor have been. He calls them to focus less on their personal needs and devote more energy toward rebuilding the temple. Let us also *consider [our] ways* and make sure our priorities align with those of God.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Lord calls the people through the prophet Haggai to *consider [their] ways* and to begin building the house of the Lord. In today's Gospel, Herod is *perplexed* by differing reports about who Jesus is, and he *kept trying to see him*.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in our merciful God, we now offer him our prayers.

- 1) That Church leaders may be blessed with every grace and wisdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That God may guide the leaders of nations in enacting policies to promote the common good and protect the vulnerable, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That all who labor may be justly compensated with dignified working conditions and a living wage, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That this community of faith may be transformed by the grace of the Eucharist to bear good fruit for the glory of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all who have died may soon rest in eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear the prayers we have offered today in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Friday, September 24, 2021  
(Lec. 453)

- 1) Haggai 2:1-9
- 2) Luke 9:18-22

FRIDAY OF  
25<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: Our God is sovereign over all of his creation.

Today we are shown God's power over all that he has created. God can bring his people out of exile, return them to the Holy Land, and inspire nations to give them treasures for the new temple. Knowing that God can do great things, let us trust God in the smaller matters in our daily lives, knowing that we are also his chosen people.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the prophet Haggai presents an oracle of the Lord, promising the people of Israel that his *spirit continues in [their] midst* and that the rebuilt temple will be even more glorious than the one that had been destroyed. In the Gospel, after Peter identifies him as the Messiah, Jesus foretells his own suffering, death, and resurrection as the suffering Son of Man.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's sovereignty and love, we approach him with the needs of our world and our community.

- 1) For the Church on earth, may we increase in faith and number, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For world leaders, may God instill in them the virtues necessary to lead with truth and justice, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all essential workers, may the Lord bless them with fortitude, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this community of faith, may the graces offered in the Blessed Sacrament unite us even more closely to Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, may they find eternal rest in heaven in the arms of Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we trust in your knowledge, love, and mercy. Hear these prayers, which we offer in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Saturday, September 25, 2021  
(Lec. 454)  
1) Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15a  
2) Luke 9:43b-45

SATURDAY OF  
25<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(Saturday in honor  
of BVM)

FOCUS: *I am coming to dwell among you, says the Lord.*

Although the meaning of Jesus' words in today's Gospel – that he is *to be handed over to men* – is obscured for his disciples, we recognize the significance of his suffering, dying, and rising. Jesus came to dwell among us. He destroyed death and gave us his Body and Blood that we might have eternal life with him in heaven.

### LITIRGY OF THE WORD

In the passage from Zechariah, the prophet has a vision of a man with a measuring cord who is assessing Jerusalem, and the Lord says that he is coming to dwell among them. In today's Gospel, Jesus predicts his passion a second time. His disciples do not understand what he is saying and are afraid to ask him any more about it.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Placing our trust in God, let us offer him our prayers this day.

- 1) For Pope Francis and the mission of the Church, may God guide his office to build the Kingdom on earth, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all of those appointed to lead our civic communities, may God's presence be with them as they make decisions for the betterment of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all of those who suffer due to violence or poverty, may God bring them peace and consolation, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may God's presence be with us in Word and sacrament, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may God's eternal peace be with them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Glorious Father, your splendor never ceases to amaze us. Hear our prayers today as we seek to follow you in all that we do. We ask this through your Son, Christ our Lord.

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2021**

(Lec. 137)

- 1) Numbers 11:25-29
- 2) James 5:1-6
- 3) Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

**26<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FOCUS: Be open to God, who sends us his Spirit wherever we are.

Eldad and Medad missed Moses' retreat with the elders, yet God's Spirit came upon them. God meets us right where we are. Let us be open to the promptings of the Spirit in our own lives and allow God to come upon us.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Lord takes some of the Spirit that was on Moses and bestows it on the elders, and they begin to prophesy. James writes to warn the rich of the judgment coming to those who seek luxury and pleasure, while shortchanging their workers. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks against intolerance, referring to someone who is not a follower who is driving out demons. He says: *Whoever is not against us is for us.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in God, who delights to give us all good things, let us offer our prayers to him.

- 1) For Pope Francis, may God preserve his health as he leads the Church in wisdom and love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For elected officials, may God bless them with integrity in protecting the dignity of life, especially the aged and the unborn, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those weighed down by sin, may God give them courage in repenting and the grace to trust in his mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our faith community, may the love of Christ shine through us in our work of spreading the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died marked by the sign of faith, may Christ welcome them to his heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, in your mercy, please hear and answer our prayers this day according to your holy will. We ask through your Son, Jesus Christ.

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Monday, September 27, 2021  
(Lec. 455)

- 1) Zechariah 8:1-8
- 2) Luke 9:46-50

MONDAY OF  
26<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Saint Vincent de Paul,  
Priest)

FOCUS: The greatest one in the kingdom of heaven is the least one.

The heart of Christian discipleship, as we hear today, is making oneself the servant of all. That is greatness, according to Jesus. He says the least in the kingdom of heaven is the greatest. Our calling and our challenge, therefore, is to serve others with all our heart.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the Lord reveals his affection for the Israelites, saying, *They shall be my people, and I will be their God*. In the Gospel, the disciples squabble over who is the greatest, and Jesus tells them that the least among them is the greatest.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident in the Lord's promise to hear and answer our prayers, let us offer him our needs.

- 1) For the Church, the people of God, may the Holy Spirit be with us in our efforts to reflect the light of Christ's love to the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civic leaders, may God bless their efforts in caring for the least, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For the chronically ill, may the healing power of Christ be upon them, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all in this community of faith, may God's word guide our thoughts and actions each day, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they experience the eternal joy of the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, hear our needs with your fatherly affection. We ask these prayers through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

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Tuesday, September 28, 2021  
(Lec. 456)  
1) Zechariah 8:20-23  
2) Luke 9:51-56

TUESDAY OF  
26<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(Opt. Mem.  
Saint Wenceslaus,  
Martyr;  
Saint Lawrence Ruiz and Companions,  
Martyrs)

FOCUS: *God is with us.*

Since there was bitter cultural and religious tension between Jews and Samaritans, there is little surprise that the Samaritans refuse to welcome Jesus. The disciples wanted to punish them for their actions, but Jesus rejects that notion. The new law that Jesus brings is one of love for one's neighbor, not retribution.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Zechariah prophesies that many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem. In today's Gospel, Jesus sets out on his final journey to Jerusalem. He stops along the way in Samaria, where *they would not welcome him*.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With hearts filled with gratitude, we turn our gaze to the Lord, who hears every prayer.

- 1) For all members of the Church, may the Holy Spirit bless us with the gift of piety, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of nations, may God increase their dedication to peace and unity, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those treated inhospitably, may Jesus travel with them as they find their ultimate home in the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For this faith community, may the life of each believer bear fruit through the grace of God, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the deceased, may Jesus bring their souls to eternal rest, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Lord of heaven and earth, we entrust ourselves and these requests into your loving care, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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Wednesday, September 29, 2021  
(Lec. 647)

- 1) Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14  
or Revelation 12:7-12a
- 2) John 1:47-51

**SAINTS MICHAEL,  
GABRIEL AND RAPHAEL,  
ARCHANGELS  
- FEAST**

FOCUS: Behold the glory of God.

On this Feast of the Archangels, we are reminded of the purpose of the angels. They are created beings who glorify God endlessly. Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, and Saint Raphael had specific roles in Scripture, and our tradition celebrates them. As creatures formed in love by the Creator, we, too, are called to glorify God with our lives.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the passage from Daniel, the prophet describes a vision in which a son of man is exalted before the heavenly throne of God. In the Gospel from John, Jesus calls Nathanael to follow him. He assures him that he will see great things, including angels ascending and descending to heaven.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Believing that our merciful Father hears our prayers, let us turn to him with our needs.

- 1) For the Church in its work to glorify God in all things, may God guide her ministry, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For all of those elected to public service, may God's wisdom be with them in their decision-making, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all who are unemployed or underemployed, may God help them in finding fulfilling and life-sustaining work, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For an increase of vocations in this faith community, may God inspire more to follow his call, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all of those who have passed away, may God bring them to his side in his everlasting glory, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful Father, hear our prayers that we bring before you today. We ask through your Son, Christ our Lord.

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Thursday, September 30, 2021

(Lec. 458)

1) Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 5-6, 7b-12

2) Luke 10:1-12

THURSDAY OF  
26<sup>TH</sup> WEEK  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
(OBL MEM  
Saint Jerome,  
Priest and Doctor  
of the Church)

FOCUS: We are called to find joy amid our struggles.

The prophet Ezra encourages the people of Israel to draw strength from rejoicing in the Lord. We can struggle to rejoice at times because of life's hardships, and yet many times the Bible exhorts us to rejoice. God does not ask us to ignore our struggles, but rather to find the joy amid the struggle.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, the prophet Ezra reads the book of Moses and urges his listeners to not be saddened, but to rejoice. In the Gospel, Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples to the towns he intends to visit and gives them instructions on how to announce the Gospel message.

### UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With one voice, we turn to our all-powerful and loving God with the prayers and petitions of this community.

- 1) For the Church and her leaders, may God continue to guide us in our lives of discipleship, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For elected officials, may God grant them wisdom and courage in working for the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all those who are sick in mind or body, may God provide healing and comfort in their time of need, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the faithful gathered together today, may the Lord make of us a community of love and service, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all those who have died, may God provide everlasting peace and rest for their souls in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, we offer these prayers in love and humility. We ask that you hear and answer them according to your will. Through Christ our Lord.

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