

As a body is one though it has many parts,
and all the parts of the body,
though many, are one body, so also
Christ.

- 1 Corinthians

Twenty-Fourth Week of Ordinary Time: Sept. 14-20, 2008

The Twenty-Fourth Week of Ordinary Time

This Sunday is the **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**. In **Numbers**, we read of the serpents who are sent to bite the grumbling Israelites. Those who look upon a cross with a serpent mounted on it are saved. **John's Gospel** offers us the power of the cross: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

Monday is the **Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows**. Tuesday is the **Memorial of Saint Cornelius, pope and martyr**, and **Saint Cyprian, bishop and martyr**. Saturday is the **Memorial of Saint Andrew Kim Taegon, priest and martyr**, and **Saint Paul Chong Hasang, martyr, and their companions, martyrs**.

In our first reading, Paul's wonderful **First Letter to the Corinthians** continues to feed us with good community behavior and powerful messages about the Eucharist and the mystery of the Resurrection.

We experience more of the beauty of **Luke's Gospel** this week. Jesus encounters a widow whose only son had died. "He was moved with pity" and raises from the son from the dead. Jesus tells the people how inconsistent their responses are. At a dinner, Jesus encounters a weeping, sinful woman who washes his feet with her tears. "So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love." We hear that Jesus is accompanied by a group of women who "who provided for them out of their resources." Jesus tells the parable of the sower and breaks it open for a large crowd of listeners.

For the **Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time** we receive the powerful parable about the landlord who represents God's way of caring for us. Though workers go out into his vineyard at various times of the day, he pays them all the same. When they

Daily Prayer This Week

This is a good week to imagine how much we are like Jesus' disciples. We clearly want to be his follower, and we do follow him. The humbling reality is that we are inconsistent. At the very time that Jesus is telling us that he wants us to find ourselves by losing ourselves, we are too often being competitive and trying to be on top somehow. Fortunately, he keeps telling us about the real meaning of discipleship. Paul lays it all out in this week's first readings. The parable of the sower is quite helpful this week. We can imagine ourselves as each one of the soils Jesus describes.

Each morning, as soon as we can after waking up, perhaps associated with some automatic behavior like putting on slippers or a robe or getting a cup of coffee, we begin the day in the presence of our Lord. We can get into the habit of greeting our Lord, "Good morning, Lord. Thank you for this day." Even if we didn't have a good night's sleep and we are waking up fairly tired, this habit can part of our routine. Naming our desire for the day can become the way we begin our day with the Lord. Repeating it, with more details, as we encounter the people and responsibilities of our day, will deepen our relationship with the Lord. Brief conversations (what we normally call "prayers") sustain the connection all day.

In one circumstance this week, I might say, "*Lord, here I am being that very hard ground. Please get through to me in the part of me that is still 'receptive soil.'*" Another day, I might catch myself trying to make myself look good and I can say, "*Dear Jesus, your reminder helps me right here. Let me be a servant in this situation, with these people - forgiving, listening, compassion and freer.*" Sometime this week we might encounter someone who needs us to be like Jesus - healing something that is broken, or even deadly and we can say, "*Lord, let me do your*

grumble, he simply explains that he desires to be generous. How this can change our view of God and our own sense of justice?

will, imitate your faith in God here. Thank you for being with me."