

He had cured many and, as a result,
those who had diseases
were pressing upon him to touch him.
And whenever unclean spirits saw him
they would fall down before him
and shout, "You are the Son of God."

Mark 3:10-11

Second Week of Ordinary Time: January 20 - 26, 2013

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Second Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Second Sunday of Ordinary Time**, a beautiful reading from Isaiah promises vindication which will "shine forth like the dawn." In the **First Letter to the Corinthians**, we are reassured that each of us has different gifts of the Spirit. "There are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone." The Wedding Feast of Cana is the centerpiece of **John's Gospel**. His mother told the servants to follow his orders and Jesus performed his first public miracle "and so revealed his glory."

Monday is the **Memorial of Saint Agnes, Virgin and Martyr**. Thursday is the **Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**. Friday is the **Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, Apostle**. Saturday is the **Memorial of Saints Timothy and Titus, bishops**.

The first reading this week continues with the **Letter to the Hebrews**. Written to inspire and encourage the community in its faith, he exhorts them "not become sluggish, but imitators of those who, through faith and patience, are inheriting the promises."

As we continue **Mark's Gospel** on the weekdays, Jesus is asked why his disciples don't fast. He challenges the religious leaders to have a completely open mind and heart to his teaching because "new wine is poured into fresh wineskins." Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, bringing a new

Daily Prayer This Week

Ordinary Time is the longest Season of the Church year. Week after week, we are following the scriptures, and learning from them. It is important to focus our desires early in the day and talk with the Lord throughout the day, in the background of our busy lives. This is how we become "Contemplatives in Action" and find intimacy with God without leaving the context of the real circumstances of our lives.

Sometimes we protest: "I don't have time to pray." But if we change our focus to the moments we have free, we find ourselves surprised at the time we really do have. There are dozens of times in all of our days during which our minds are occupied with something: a song, re-playing the last event, practicing a conversation with someone, having an imaginary argument with someone, thinking through the "to do" list of the day. We can learn to fill these times with whatever we choose. If we choose to let it be about our relationship with our Lord, it transforms our lives.

It all begins with our mornings. This week, when we first get up and perhaps for a few moments while bathing or getting dressed, let's tell the Lord that our desire today is to be more conscious that everything we do this day, is in response to his call to be a disciple. Then, in those moments while driving or shopping or walking down the hall to a meeting, we can talk with God about how we are living our call in this or that activity we are engaged in. That conversation may get more detailed and

freedom. It is only chapter 3 in the gospel, but we already see the tension with religious leaders building. Because Jesus heals a withered hand on the Sabbath, the Pharisees seek to kill him. Jesus withdraws and people from the surrounding regions come to him, and even the demons know who he is. Jesus names twelve Apostles to be with him, to preach and to drive out demons. Jesus' relatives think he's "out of his mind" because so many people are coming to him that he can't even eat.

The **Third Sunday in Ordinary Time** begins to take us through **Luke's Gospel**. We will follow it each week until February when Lent begins and pick it up again after the Easter season when Ordinary Time returns. It introduces Jesus as returning to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" where he goes to the synagogue and teaches from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor." He ends with the stunning words "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

specific depending on the event.

Each evening, for even a few moments, we can review our day's momentary conversations, recognizing the moments of real connection and grace and giving thanks for them, and resolving to take even greater advantage of these opportunities the next day.

Dear Lord, at times, my heart is quite sluggish. Give me hope today. Lift my spirits and give me perspective. When I find myself stiff and inflexible, make me into a new wineskin to receive the alive, new wine with which you wish to fill me. And let me be open to your call to discipleship today. What are the opportunities to preach your Word today? Where can I drive out demons, rather than sit with their discouragement and division? Please fill my home, my workplace, my heart with your Spirit, that I might join you in bringing good news for the poor.

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