

“The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”

Luke 10

Twenty-Sixth Week in Ordinary Time: Sept. 25- Oct. 1, 2011

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The Twenty-Sixth Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time** we hear Paul exhorting the **Philippians**, “Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus,” offering us a powerful image of Jesus' humble, selfless service. In **Matthew's Gospel** Jesus offers a story about two sons, one who agrees to work in the vineyard but doesn't; the other who tells his father he will not work but then quietly goes to work. It is a story that challenges the chief priests and elders of the people, “Tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you.”

Tuesday is the **Memorial of Saint Vincent de Paul, priest**. Thursday is the **Feast of Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel and Saint Raphael, archangels**. Friday is the **Memorial of Saint Jerome, priest and doctor of the Church**. Saturday is the **Memorial of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church**.

The first readings continue with the prophet **Zechariah** of the period of recovery after the exile. “They shall be my people, and I will be their God, with faithfulness and justice.” The **Book of Nehemiah**, like Ezra, chronicles this history. The prophet **Baruch** gives us a prayer of the people in captivity and God's reply, “Fear not, my children; call out to God!”

We continue reading **Luke's Gospel**, as the disciples argue about who is the greatest. Jesus points out a young child and asks them to strive to be the “least” not the greatest. Jesus stops his disciples from preventing people, not of their group, from healing, because they are with Jesus, too. He stops the disciples from “calling down fire from heaven” on the Samaritan people who didn't give them a good reception. People come up, offering to follow Jesus, but have excuses for why they can't do it now. Jesus calls them to not “look back” once

Daily Prayer This Week

We can be inspired this week by Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, the beloved Little Flower and her “Little Way” of finding a path to God in the tiniest of ways. An extraordinary young woman who lived close to our own times (not many saints have had their photographs taken); she is an example of a humble life of simplicity and humility.

This week we can ask for the desire to become the least, not the greatest, in ways that applies to us. We can ask to experience humility and grace in the real limits we experience in our lives. All of us have some places where we come to know our humanity and are brought to our knees: perhaps we continue to be judgmental of others even after asking for forgiveness ourselves; we keep falling into the same temptations; we present ourselves one way in public, but act a very different way with those closest to us; we never get around to acts of generosity and charity, perhaps even to our parents.

We can all begin our mornings with our own version of this prayer: “Lord, help me to be more simple, authentic, transparent and trusting today. I don't want to try to be someone else.” We might ask, “Help me not 'look back' today, Lord” or “Lord, I need your help today to be more accepting of others who are different. Help me to see you in those who suffer or struggle in any way.”

they have said, “yes.” He sends his disciples to other towns: “The harvest is rich but the workers are few.” Jesus warns the people blessed by the graces of his visits there, but who have not changed their ways. He prays, “I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike.”

A parable about tenants who were entrusted with their master's fields is at the center of the **Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**. We hear Jesus really challenge the religious leaders with this story of the tenant farmers who refused to listen to the master's servants (the prophets) and abused and killed his son (Jesus) in an attempt to usurp his inheritance. Jesus tells them, “Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit.”

For those who have hurt us in some ways, we can do as Thérèse of Lisieux suggests and pray for those people. It is nearly impossible to hold a grudge or hang onto a hurt inflicted by someone when we are praying for that person each day.

Throughout the day this week, we can take brief moments, in the background of our consciousness, while driving, going to a meeting, shopping, doing laundry, to repeat and deepen these prayers. And, may our God send prophets and angels and his own Son to help us find intimacy with God in the midst of our busy lives. We can beg God to increase our faith and in the simplest ways each day, we can let our tiny seed of faith bloom in extraordinary ways in our lives.

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