

The measure with which you measure
will be measured out to you,
and still more will be given to you.
To the one who has, more will be given;
- Mark 4

Third Week of Ordinary Time: Jan. 23-29, 2011

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Third Week of Ordinary Time

The **Third Sunday of Ordinary Time** brings us to a cycle of **Matthew's gospels** during every Sunday of Ordinary Time this year. This week we see the call of the first disciples as Jesus stops Andrew and his brother, Peter on the beach. "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men'. At once they left their nets and followed him."

Monday is the **Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales, bishop and doctor of the Church**. Tuesday is the **Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, the apostle** with its own special readings. Wednesday is the **Memorial of Saint Timothy and Saint Titus, bishops**. Friday is the **Memorial of Saint Thomas Aquinas, priest and doctor of the Church**.

The first reading this week continues with the **Letter to the Hebrews** which teaches that Jesus is mediator of a new covenant and a priest who "offered one sacrifice for sins. He took his seat forever at the right hand of God."

In **Mark's Gospel** this week, the ever-critical scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed by demons. Jesus responds clearly, "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." When told his family has arrived to see him, he replies that "whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother." He tells the imaginative story of the sower and the seed and after the crowd dispersed, Jesus explains to the disciples that the seed is the word of God, accepted at various levels. He encourages his disciples to show their light: "Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand?" Jesus compares the Kingdom with the tiniest of

Daily Prayer This Week

This week is set at the beginning of Jesus' ministry and the pictures we get of how challenged and pushed he is prepare us to hear the simple parables he tells us. All of us get challenged and pushed in our daily lives. Even when we are on the right road and following a faithful path, there are forces, conflicting demands, tempting alternatives, differing values that batter us. It takes grace and courage to trust our real mission and that our Lord will be with us through it all.

Each morning this week, we can take a moment, to ask for what we desire. The entire day will be different just by spending 20 seconds sitting at the edge of the bed saying, "Lord, I want to keep my eyes open today. Whatever comes at me today, I want to stay in touch with you. Thank you." Another morning I may be aware of a big decision I have to execute that day or a conflict I am planning to face, and I might pray, "Okay, Lord, this is the day. This is how I live out my relationship with you. Be with me and give me what I need. Keep reminding me I can't do it without you."

Each day will offer a different brief moment of connection with our Lord, but each will ground the day. Then it is so very easy, while in the shower or walking down a hall, for just brief moments here and there in the background of our day, to stay in touch with our Lord. These guides can help keep us focused on the nourishing Word which interacts with our daily life. Every day can seem like a living Parable of the Sower. There is seed being scattered all around us and we can see and experience our degrees of receptivity. And while we are doing the best we can, all day, every day, in a variety

mustard seeds which grow to "the largest of plants." He calms the seas during a storm. His disciples wonder, "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

On the **Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time**, Matthew's Gospel gives us the essence of Jesus teaching in the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted."

of things, we can be consoled by the Lord's smile reminding us that the Kingdom is like a mustard seed. The real graces come from very small seeds, the smallest of efforts that make a big difference. Most of all, when things get rough, during any day, we can pause and take a breath and ask him to calm the wind and sea in our hearts.

Every night we can thank him for his presence and ground our growing relationship with him.

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