

FREE DIGITAL SAMPLE FOR

the week of
January 22, 2017

DAILY
UNIVERSAL
PRAYER
AND COMMENTARY

CELEBRATING

50

YEARS IN PRINT





SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2017

(Lec. 67)

- 1) Isaiah 8:23–9:3
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17
- 3) Matthew 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

**THIRD SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FOCUS: Each and every day, Jesus calls us to make the choice to live as faithful disciples.

Today's Gospel tells of how Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James and John to come and follow him. All four respond immediately to Jesus' call by leaving everything behind to go and follow him. Similarly, Jesus calls us to follow him and live as his faithful disciples each day. Do we have the faith and courage to answer his call?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah proclaims a message of hope and joy, saying that *the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light*. Saint Paul in the second reading urges the Corinthians to put aside rivalries, and instead be united in their faith in Christ. Today's Gospel relates how Jesus calls Peter and Andrew to put down their nets and come and follow him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God who brought us from darkness to light through the gift of his Son, we present our needs.

- 1) For all who minister in the Church, may they be inspired by Simon Peter and all the Apostles to continue to put Christ first and spread the Good News through word and action, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For national and world leaders, that they may work to protect and defend the dignity and sanctity of all human life, from conception until natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are sick, may they find strength and healing through prayer and the support of caregivers and loved ones, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish families, may we be thankful for the good gifts we have received from the Lord, and share these gifts generously through stewardship and service, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, that they come to enjoy everlasting peace and joy in the company of the angels and saints in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father in heaven, we ask you to hear our prayers and grant what we ask in faith. We ask this through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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Monday, January 23, 2017
(Lec. 317)

DAY OF PRAYER for the
LEGAL PROTECTION
of UNBORN CHILDREN

- 1) Hebrews 9:15, 24-28
- 2) Mark 3:22-30

NOTE: Or for the Day of Prayer, any of the following readings: Gn 1:1—2:2 (41) or 2 Mc 7:1, 20-31 (vol. II, 499) or Is 49:1-6 (587) or Rom 11:33-36 (121) or Eph 1:3-14 (104) or Eph 3:14-21 (vol. III, 476) or Col 1:12-20 (162) or 1 Jn 3:11-21 (208)/Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 (414) or Mk 9:30-37 (134) or Lk 1:39-56 (622) or Lk 17:11-19 (144) or Lk 23:35-43 (162) or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14, 16-18 (755) or Jn 6:24-35 (113), or the *Lectionary for Ritual Masses* (vol. IV), the Mass "For Peace and Justice," nos. 887-891

FOCUS: Christ, as the mediator of the new covenant, calls us to stand strong in the face of sin.

While Christ came into the world to defeat the power of sin and death and open the way to eternal life, we are not immune to the daily temptation to sin. This is why daily prayer is so important, because Jesus intercedes on our behalf so we might have the grace to resist sin and enter into eternal life in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The letter to the Hebrews explains how Christ is the mediator of the new covenant: by his death and resurrection, he has conquered sin and brought salvation to the world. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Mindful of Jesus' command to love one another, we offer these prayers to our loving Father in heaven.

- 1) For all who serve the Church in her ministries, that their public witness to the sanctity of human life will embolden others to share in their mission, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of this nation, and all who hold public office, that they may work to support and defend the most vulnerable among us in a true respect for life at all stages, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For all women and men who have been affected by the tragedy of abortion, may they turn to God for his healing love, mercy and forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that by our prayers and our acts of service we might demonstrate true compassion for those in need of healing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For all who have died, that they might see God face to face in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers, which we offer through your son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Tuesday, January 24, 2017
(Lec. 318)

- 1) Hebrews 10:1-10
- 2) Mark 3:31-35

TUESDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM

Saint Francis De Sales,
Bishop and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: Jesus' life and teachings demonstrate what it means to do God's will.

Jesus lived all of his life in perfect fidelity to the will of his Father. His teachings and example reveal to us what it means to be faithful to God and to do his will, so that we might live as brothers and sisters united in our love for Jesus and one day be judged worthy of eternal life in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Hebrews reminds us that humankind was saved and redeemed by Christ's perfect sacrifice upon the cross. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that all those who choose to follow him and do God's will are *brother and sister* to him.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: With trust in the Father's love and concern for us, we present our prayers and petitions for our needs and the needs of others.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we generously respond to the needs of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters with prayer and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For public officials throughout the world, that they will work to ensure that all people are accorded the right to freely worship and practice the faith of their choosing, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For police and firefighters, may God keep them safe and bless their efforts to protect those in harm's way, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, may we welcome all who enter here, whether they are visiting for the first time or returning to the active practice of the faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they know the joys of heaven and reside with the angels and saints forever, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petitions)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and grant us the patience and perseverance we need to do your will. We ask these things through Christ, our Lord.

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Wednesday, January 25, 2017
(Lec. 519)

- 1) Acts 22:3-16
or Acts 9:1-22
- 2) Mark 16:15-18

**THE CONVERSION
OF SAINT PAUL
the APOSTLE
- FEAST**

FOCUS: From the beginning, the Church's mission has been to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world.

We can see a connection between the first reading today from the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel reading from Mark. In Acts, Saul's conversion will bring about his missionary work among the Gentiles, which continues the work of the Apostles, who were commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the Good News to the whole world.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the Acts of the Apostles, we learn about the conversion of Saul that takes place on the road to Damascus. In the Gospel, the resurrected Lord Jesus appears to the Apostles and gives them their mission: *Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.*

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us come together with one voice to bring our needs to our loving God.

- 1) For missionaries throughout the world, that their proclamation of the Gospel will open hearts, and draw those who hear it nearer to Jesus, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the gift of wisdom to aid government leaders as they seek just policies for all, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who are alone or feel isolated, may the word of God bring them comfort and peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For catechumens as they journey to the Easter sacraments, may their conversion be heartfelt and their passion for the Gospel lifelong, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they enter the loving embrace of the Father and experience eternal peace and joy in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God and Father, you are the giver of all good things. We pray that you will hear our prayers and answer them according to your will, through your son, Jesus Christ.

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Thursday, January 26, 2017

(Lec. 520)

- 1) 2 Timothy 1:1-8
or Titus 1:1-5

(Lec. 320)

- 2) Mark 4:21-25

THURSDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM
Saints Timothy and Titus,
Bishops)

FOCUS: Christ encourages us to shine the light of his love and truth in this world of darkness.

Jesus tells us to shine our light of goodness, kindness, faithfulness, love, peace, joy, gentleness, patience and self-control. These fruits of the Holy Spirit shine forth in those who have received the gifts of the Spirit, and who actively cooperate with the grace and action of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, Paul speaks to Titus as a father to his son, encouraging him to continue the work of leading and building up the Church in Crete. In the Gospel, Jesus instructs his followers to let the light of their faith shine forth in the darkness. How they measure others is how they will in turn be measured themselves.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Let us bring our needs before God, our loving and merciful Father.

- 1) That all members of the Church recommit themselves to the work of evangelization, announcing the Good News of Jesus' saving love every day through their words and actions, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That our nation's leaders may seek wisdom and understanding from God as they seek to form policies and enact laws which promote the common good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That refugees facing religious and political persecution may find strength in their faith and safe haven with the help of charitable organizations and people of goodwill, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That our catechists and teachers be blessed in their efforts to share their love for Jesus with the young people they serve, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That our beloved dead, and all who have died, may enjoy perpetual light and peace in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty and eternal God, we ask that you hear and answer our prayers, and draw us closer to you. Through Christ our Lord.

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Friday, January 27, 2017
(Lec. 321)

- 1) Hebrews 10:32-39
- 2) Mark 4:26-34

FRIDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(Opt. Mem.
Saint Angela Merici,
Virgin)

FOCUS: By cooperating with God's grace, our faith can grow strong and bear good fruit for the kingdom of God.

Today's readings remind us that while we do our part, it is the work of God that increases our faith. Our actions are like those of the farmer who plants the seed – what springs forth is not of the farmer's doing. Time and patience reveal what is sown. We put in our effort, and God brings forth the abundant harvest.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from the letter to the Hebrews encourages hope and perseverance. The passage urges us to remain confident in our faith in Christ. Jesus uses the parable of the mustard seed to demonstrate that while we play our part, God produces the abundant harvest of faith.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in the abundant mercy of God, let us offer our prayers of petition for the Church and our world.

- 1) For Pope Francis, may his humble acts of service and powerful words of love continue to inspire faith-filled actions in people of goodwill throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For civic leaders, may they be mindful that the measure with which they invest in their leadership will be returned to them, and may they be inspired through the Holy Spirit to lead with integrity and humility, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For women considering abortion, may they recognize the child they are carrying within them as a gift from God who has a right to life, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all those gathered here today, may we open our hearts to God's grace and pray daily for the strength to live as disciples of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For those who have died, may they be welcomed into the heavenly banquet of abundant love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Almighty God, the full measure of your abundant harvest is beyond even our wildest imagination. We offer these prayers trusting that, in your goodness and mercy, you will answer them according to your will. Through Christ, our Lord.

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Saturday, January 28, 2017
(Lec. 322)
1) Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19
2) Mark 4:35-41

SATURDAY OF
THIRD WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM
Saint Thomas Aquinas,
Priest and Doctor of the Church)

FOCUS: Trust in the Lord's presence, and turn to him in prayer.

As we encounter storms and choppy waters in our lives, we must trust in the Lord's presence and turn to him in prayer. Today, we celebrate the memorial of the early Church doctor, Saint Thomas Aquinas. His writings teach us that although faith may seem to contradict reason at times, it transcends what human intellect will ever "know."

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Hebrews highlights the many ways Abraham demonstrates his faith, even when it challenges logic and the realities of the natural world. Today's Gospel describes a terrifying scenario as the Apostles' boat is tossed by the sea. Jesus commands the wind to cease, and then he questions the Apostles' faith.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: As disciples navigating the stormy seas of this world, let us turn to the Lord with our prayers and petitions.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we may be witnesses to Christ's mercy by practicing charity and promoting justice in the world, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For those who serve in public office, that courage and wisdom, and a spirit of cooperation, may guide their decision-making, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For couples who are facing difficulties in their marriage, may they turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and seek help from Church ministries, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For our parish community, that we continue to work to defend the dignity and sanctity of human life from conception until natural death through our service and advocacy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, may they come to receive the promised reward of eternal life in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Heavenly Father, you know the needs of your people. Look favorably upon these petitions, and grant them according to your will. We ask this through your son, Jesus Christ.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2017

(Lec. 70)

- 1) Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- 3) Matthew 5:1-12a

**FOURTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**

FOCUS: God's ways are not our ways.

Today's readings make clear that God's ways are not the status quo. Each reading demonstrates God's glory in the most unlikely of people – the weak, the humble, the lowly. Conventional wisdom is rendered moot by God. These readings challenge us to reflect on our own biases as to who is worthy and who is to be admired. Whose ideals are we striving to live by?

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading explains that those who live by God's ways will be protected. In the second reading, Saint Paul reminds the Corinthians that God used their lowliness to demonstrate Christ's glory. The Gospel shares the beatitudes given by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Confident that God hears and answers all of our prayers, let us join in offering him our petitions for our needs and those of the world.

- 1) For the Church, may she continue to be a beacon of hope to all by boldly proclaiming the Gospel message and assisting those in need with kindness and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For the leaders of nations, may they, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, establish laws that safeguard the sacredness and value of all human life from conception to natural death, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those in our society who are vulnerable or marginalized, may they find a sense of solidarity with caring Christians and may they be strengthened through prayer, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For all members of this faith community, may we seek out those who need to hear the Good News and assure them of God's love and mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For our loved ones who have died, may they be welcomed into the heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Gracious God, your ways overturn conventional wisdom. We offer our prayers today in the hope that, in granting them, your glory will prevail and penetrate even the most desperate of situations. We offer them through Christ, our Lord.

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Monday, January 30, 2017
(Lec. 323)
1) Hebrews 11:32-40
2) Mark 5:1-20

MONDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME

FOCUS: *Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you.*

Sin can turn us in on ourselves and rob us of the fullness of life that God desires us to have. One consequence of sin is separation from family and community. When we turn to Jesus to be freed from bondage to sin, Jesus works to heal and deliver us so we are reconciled to God, set on course to experiencing abundant life in God's love, and in God's time are reconciled with loved ones.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading reminds us that it is faith in Jesus, and Jesus alone, which offers new life and the promise and hope of eternal life in heaven. In the Gospel, Jesus encounters a man who was possessed by a number of demons among the tombs near the Sea of Galilee, and he casts the demons into a herd of swine.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Trusting in God's mercy, we place our prayers before him.

- 1) For all members of the Church, that we will give witness to our faith in Jesus by striving to treat all those we encounter with kindness and compassion, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For our nation, that we work to ensure that those who suffer from mental illness receive the care they need to lead healthy and meaningful lives, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those burdened by guilt and regret, that they will open themselves to God's healing love and mercy so they can learn from their mistakes and move forward, walking in the light of God's love, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the sick of our parish, that our prayers and God's grace will bring them healing and strength, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) For the faithful departed, that they may enter into eternal rest and peace in God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Loving God, hear and answer these, our prayers, which we offer you through Christ our Lord.

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Tuesday, January 31, 2017
(Lec. 324)

- 1) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 2) Mark 5:21-43

TUESDAY OF
FOURTH WEEK
IN ORDINARY TIME
(OBL MEM
Saint John Bosco, Priest)

FOCUS: Turn to Jesus, the leader and model of faith.

Today's Gospel recalls a woman suffering with hemorrhages who turns to Jesus for healing. As a result of turning to him and trusting that he could help, she was healed of her affliction. In the same way, Jesus desires to bring about healing in our lives. We need to turn to Jesus in prayer with the things that weigh us down.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In Hebrews, Christians are reminded to look to Jesus as the leader and model of faith. The suffering he endured for the salvation of sinners inspires his followers to persevere in running the race before them. The Gospel describes two miracles that occurred when a man and a woman turned to Jesus in their time of suffering.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

PRIEST: Living in the light of God's love, let us turn to him with our prayers and petitions.

- 1) That all members of the Church may persevere in the race before us by looking to Jesus to perfect our faith, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That world leaders may be inspired by the Holy Spirit to seek and find nonviolent solutions to the problems and conflicts that plague their nations, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That families of special needs children may find strength in Jesus to face the challenges that each new day brings, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That all who minister in our parish may experience a deepening of faith as they carry out their mission of serving our faith community, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That those who have fallen asleep believing in Christ may be welcomed into God's heavenly kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Father, hear our prayers, both spoken and those held within the silence of our hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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