

“Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean.”

Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said,

“I will do it.”

Matthew 8

Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time: June 23 - 29, 2013

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Twelfth Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time**, we have **Luke's Gospel** with powerful words of sacrifice and focus for our lives: “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”

Monday is the **Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist** with its own special readings. Friday is the **Memorial of Saint Irenaeus, Bishop and Martyr**. Saturday is the **Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles**, with its own readings.

The first reading all week is a three week journey through the **Book of Genesis** and begins with the call of Abram and his wife Sarai. Abraham and Lot leave each other, splitting land and herds. God makes a covenant with Abraham, who has no heir, and promises him not only a son, but that he would be the father of as many people as the stars of the sky.

This week we continue reading from **Matthew's Gospel**. Jesus continues his challenge to follow him more completely. “Stop judging, that you may not be judged.” “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you.” “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing.” “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will

Daily Prayer This Week

This is a great week to reflect on several wonderful elements of the Word this week and to let them interact with genuine desires in our hearts - desires that carry over from previous weeks or desires that are just coming to our awareness. We can reflect upon our call - the vocation we find ourselves in, the ways we live it and are faithful to it. We can be comforted by Jesus telling us that fear is what gets in the way of our freedom to be a witness of the Good News for others.

Fear comes in so many forms. Sometimes, when we are angry a lot, or finding ourselves to be more and more defensive, we can trace the anxiety or insecurity back to a particular fear or a general fear. How liberating it can be for us to pray for the grace to be fear-less, especially in the concrete ways that will come to us in our everyday life this week.

And it is good to recognize the traps that sabotage us in our everyday relationships and daily choices. Judging others is an easy trap for people trying to be good. It is so easy for me to notice when you aren't as good as I'm trying to be. The end result is I'm trapped, and fail to recognize my own ways of failing to love. If only we could love others, at least in the same way we crave to be loved! The culture we live in, the way Jesus describes it to us is clearly entering through the “narrow” gate. And, when I don't sort through my various and sometimes conflicting desires, it feels like my life is built upon sand. When the going gets tough, I have nothing to fall back upon. The week ends with a picture of Jesus, the healer.

of my Father in heaven.” “Who do you say that I am?” When a leper asks if Jesus will cure him, Jesus replies, “I will do it. Be made clean.” On Saturday, Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah, “He took away our infirmities and bore our diseases.”

Sunday is the **Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**. In **Luke's Gospel** we hear of Jesus “resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem” but not being welcomed by all. When Jesus invites: “Follow me” he is put off with excuses. “No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Perhaps by the end of the week, the brief conversations we have with Jesus, in the midst of our daily life, will reveal desires for healing. Jesus always wants to show us how he can make us whole. He always wants us to be able to receive gifts, which we in turn can share with others. All of us can find grace in some part of the Abraham and Sarah story. Who among us doesn't feel that we are unable, too old, not religious enough, not strong enough, not ready, held back in some way from bringing forth life or fulfilling our vocation? This week is a good reminder that “nothing is impossible with God.” Each night this week, we can recall what we've talked about, asked for and received, and we can give thanks.

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