



Guide for Prayer for the week of Oct. 23-29, 2005

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The Thirtieth Week of Ordinary Time

Justice and compassion are keys to loving, in the readings for the **Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time**. **Ezekiel** proclaims God's call that we act justly toward foreigners, and the most vulnerable among us: widows, orphans and the poor. Jesus says it most simply: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. ...You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Friday is the **Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles**, with special readings including Luke's gospel of the calling of the 12 Apostles.

The first reading all week continues with the third week of Paul's longest letter, the **Letter to the Romans**, with his teaching of the Holy Spirit in our lives, including his famous passage teaching that when we do not know how to pray, the Spirit "intercedes with inexpressible groanings."

The **Gospel of Luke** offers a glimpse of Jesus healing and teaching the people, even as he continues to clash with religious leaders. He cures the "bent woman" on a sabbath and tells of the tiny mustard seed which develops to become a full grown bush. He repeats that it will not be easy to enter the Kingdom: "For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." He defies those who bring word of threats on his life and encourages us to be humble: "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

That line from Luke is echoed in the gospel for the **Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time** as Jesus says in the **Gospel of Matthew**, "Whoever exalts

Daily Prayer This Week

Please, Lord, anything but humility! Our instinctive reaction to humility might be the result of a culture that exalts riches, honors and pride. Yet all this week Jesus teaches that the way to salvation is through humility.

The first step might be simply asking for the desire to be humble. As we move through the simplest of moments in our everyday lives, we can stop and ask God to help us *want* to be humble. As we sit on the edge of the bed in the morning, as we head to work, sort laundry or do our errands, we can keep a running prayer in the background of our consciousness: "Lord, help me to desire the humility that will make me more aware of your saving grace."

These same background moments offer ways for us to recognize opportunities to practice humility as we go through our days. Perhaps I can stop myself from correcting my spouse. In a disagreement, I might make an extra effort to listen to the other person's side rather than planning my rebuttal as they speak. I can let a person in line in front of me, hold the door for someone or make an extra effort to recognize and thank those who serve me. Even these tiny gestures, when done in the spirit of Jesus' teachings this week, offer us a special grace.

All week we can continue to speak to the Lord as we would to a loving friend who listens to us. And always, we can

himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted." He encourages us to turn away from honors and titles and to take the lowest place at the banquet.

end our day in gratitude, for the merciful God who loves us so compassionately and longs to be in our hearts.

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