

“Brothers and sisters:

Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

Romans 5

Thirty-First Week of Ordinary Time: Oct. 31- Nov. 6, 2010

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Thirty-First Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Thirty-first Sunday of Ordinary Time** we have **Luke's** marvelous account of Jesus' encounter with the wealthy tax collector, Zacchaeus from **Luke's Gospel**. Watching from a tree, he is invited by Jesus: “Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house.”

Monday is the **Solemnity of All Saints**, with Matthew's Gospel offering us the Beatitudes. Tuesday is the **Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls)**, also with its own special readings.

The first readings this week are from Paul's wonderful **Letter to the Philippians**.

Continuing **Luke's Gospel**, Jesus talks about not only inviting all the “right” people into our lives, but to include “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind.” “For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Then Jesus tells the parable of the invited guests who made excuses to decline the invitation. He sends his servants to invite everyone. Jesus tells a crowd that they have to renounce their possessions to be his disciple and that to do something really important, we have to prepare and be ready. In answer to the Pharisees' criticism of Jesus eating and drinking with sinners, Jesus tells parables of the man who finds his lost sheep and the woman with the lost coin, both of whom rejoice in finding what was lost. Jesus tells the parable of the dishonest steward who is caught overcharging his master's customers and saves himself by

Daily Prayer This Week

This week it is clear that Jesus is calling us to a deeper love of our neighbor. He is telling us that we need to expand the list of those we are to love. He is telling us to have more passion in our desire to love others and he is urging us to prepare for how we will do that. Finally, Jesus makes it clear that we can't try to love money or honors and at the same time love God. On Sunday we watch Jesus admire the poor widow put her small change in the poor box.

This is a wonderful background reflection for us this week. All week we can ask the Lord to help us. The quality of our asking will make all of the difference.

Dear Lord, help me today when, in my busyness, I become self absorbed. Help me, in my intensity, when I take things personally. Help me, in the burdens I bear, to give up my escape into self-pity.

Dear Lord, thank you for loving me and for showering so many gifts on me and my family. Help me to be more grateful and more generous. Today, help me to notice the needs of others. Help me to hear the news with more compassion. Help me imagine what I can do for others in need. I know the cost of discipleship with you will be easy when I remember your love.

Dear Lord, I am really getting it that the lure of “riches and honors” can easily seduce my heart. Why is it so tempting to like and be with the beautiful people, the “successful” people? Why do I get tricked into these values and

cutting his master's prices. Jesus praises his enterprise: "the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than the children of light." Finally, Jesus says that we can't have two masters, trying to love God and money. When a Pharisee sneered at him, he said: "what is of human esteem is an abomination in the sight of God."

On the **Thirty-Second Sunday of Ordinary Time**, in **Luke's Gospel**, the Sadducees ask sly questions of Jesus, hoping to confuse him on the idea of a Resurrection. Jesus refutes them by quoting Moses: "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."

these ways of valuing myself and others? Let me choose "simple," Lord. Let me choose "solidarity." And, when I resist, let me know.

These kinds of prayers, or the prayers that come to my heart in this or that daily situation - so simple to express to the Lord in 20 or 30 seconds as I walk down a hall or do any ordinary thing that allows me turn to God - can transform our days. These are words of intimacy, faith, trust, reliance. They acknowledge small graces and ask for bigger ones. They come out of a desire to grow in our relationship with the Lord and out of a confidence that with his grace, we can enjoy the blessing of being his disciples. Each night this week, let us give thanks.

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