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The Eleventh Week of Ordinary Time

*"As you go, make this proclamation:
'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'
Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse
lepers, drive out demons. Without cost
you have received; without cost you
are to give."*

This is from the gospel for the **Eleventh Week of Ordinary Time**, Jesus tells us "The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few" and calls us to join him in his work.

As we continue reading the **Second Letter to the Corinthians**, Paul is defending himself. He tells the people of Corinth and us not to receive the grace of God in vain. Paul reminds them about generosity and cheerful giving. He boasts about his weakness, which he had at first begged to be freed from by the Lord, who said to him: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."

We continue Jesus' **Sermon on the Mount** in **Matthew's Gospel**. Jesus calls us beyond simply being moral. His message is not an "eye for an eye," but turning the other cheek, loving our enemies and praying for them. Jesus warns us about performing good deeds for others to see. He teaches us to pray simply, because our Father knows what we need. Where our treasure is, there our heart will be. We can't serve several masters in life, so we can stop worrying so much and place our trust in God alone. "But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides."

All of this leads us to the **Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time** in which Jesus tells us to fear no one. God will take care of us, so we can be courageous in proclaiming this Good News to others.

Daily Prayer This Week

There is nothing like the Sermon on the Mount to help us hear the message of Jesus, and to let ourselves be addressed by those words. All of us can ask for these graces with real specificity, that is, with real people and real daily circumstances in mind. We know with whom we need to "turn the other cheek" and to love more. We know the circumstances in which we are tempted to "be religious" in the right circumstances only. Upon reflection, each of us can take the time to "locate" our hearts, by discovering what we tend to "treasure." We can check ourselves out by making a list of the "5 most important things" to me. Then we can make a list of the 5 things I spend most of my time on. Comparing the lists will help us get concrete about asking the Lord for the grace we need to put our lives back in balance, if we aren't. All of us can name what we worry about. And so we can all ask for the graces to "seek first" the Kingdom of God

All of this reflection can happen throughout the week in the background of our daily life, if we get into the habit of focusing for a few moments each morning. If we take just 30 seconds, at the edge of our bed each morning, it will begin to establish a habit of living more reflectively.

Thank you for this day, Lord. Help me to be focused today on not getting so hooked by Ann's ways or Bob's harsh words. I need your grace to place my trust in you. Help me especially before I have to talk with Ann on the phone and let me stay focused before Bill comes home from work.

Our version of a brief moment with the Lord - friend to friend - can be repeated and made more specific, while we are going about our day. Some days, we might have 20 such moments of prayerful conversation with our Lord - guided by the Word, the desires that are surfacing, and the events of our daily lives. And, each night, we can give thanks for this deeper relationship with the Lord that is developing in my heart.

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