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The Twenty-Seventh Week of Ordinary Time

A parable about tenant who were entrusted with their master's fields is at the center of the **Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**. We hear Jesus really challenge the religious leaders with this story of the tenant farmers who refused to listen to the master's servants (the prophets) and abused and killed his son (Jesus) in an attempt to usurp his inheritance. Jesus tells them, "Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit."

Tuesday is the **Memorial of Saint Francis of Assisi**. Friday is the **Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary**.

The first readings this week offer again a sampling of several different Old Testament sources including the reluctant prophet, **Jonah**; **Malachi** ("But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays"); and **Joel**, ("Then shall you know that I, the LORD, am your God, dwelling on Zion, my holy mountain; Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers shall pass through her no more.")

Luke's gospel continues during the weekdays with some of our most familiar and beloved stories. The Good Samaritan teaches us about loving. In the Mary and Martha story, Jesus nudges his dear friend Martha to calm her spirit and choose carefully what she spends time on. Luke offers a look at Jesus praying alone before sharing his prayer with us. With the story of the friend banging on the door in the night, Jesus encourages us to "ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." When his opponents try to confuse the people about Jesus' authority, he says, "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters." We end the week with Jesus emphasizing his relationship with the Father as being stronger than earthly relationships.

In the **Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time** we hear the story from **Matthew** about the King who gave a banquet for his son and invited many guests. It is a powerful story about rejecting Jesus' own invitation and about God's universal invitation to a new group of "chosen" people.

Daily Prayer This Week

Jesus is so full of surprises. This week, we can let his surprising ways interact with our daily lives. All of us, in some ways, tend to kill - or at least intensely resist - the prophets who call us to conversion. We are all asking our Lord to tell us what we need to do to have eternal life. We might all know the ways we don't like his answer. The invitation to love our neighbor, the way the lowly Samaritan did, can be a revealing question for us this week. Who is the neighbor or stranger or enemy whom I'm called to help, care for their wounds, and provide for their recovery? Or, we can reflect upon whether we are too busy, and not focused enough on what really matters - spending some time just listening to Jesus. Perhaps, we have some desire, need, struggle that we very much want to turn to the Lord with. This could be the week we ask, seek and knock - persistently and confidently. All week, we can ask for the grace to be "with" Jesus and to "gather" with him, perhaps especially alert to ways we are "against" Jesus or "scatter" in different things we do or attitudes we take.

All it takes for us busy people is a little focus. We will get into the habit of beginning each day by bringing our attention to these strong desires with practice. At first, it may work best to rely on a line in one of these Guides - letting it be our expression of what we need and returning to it consciously throughout the day. With practice, we will grow in comfort with naming our own desires more precisely. For example, I might already be more like Mary than Martha. I might want to be asking our Lord, "Help me keep listening to you, Lord, throughout this day." It may be that I haven't said the Rosary with devotion in years. This may be a week to rediscover that powerful prayer, a decade at a time, throughout the day, reflecting much more deliberately on the traditional mysteries or the reflections of this week.

Every night, we can all express our thanks to the Lord for the faithful way we are being invited to a closer relationship, in the midst of our busy, daily lives.

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