

Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”
When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

- Matthew 19

Creighton University's Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time: August 19 - 25, 2012

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Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time

On the **Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time** the key question the people are asking in **John's Gospel** is: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Jesus tells us the eating his flesh and drinking blood is real food and drink. It gives us life, eternal life. We are one with him and he is one with us.

Monday is the **Memorial of Saint Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church**; Tuesday the **Memorial of Saint Pius X, Pope** and Wednesday the **Memorial of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary**. Friday is the **Feast of Saint Bartholomew, Apostle**, with its own special readings.

We continue reading from the **Book of the Prophet Ezekiel**. We are treated to some of the best of Ezekiel's prophesy this week. He is sharp and biting in his calls for conversion and comforting in his prophesy about God's fidelity and mercy, especially in the field of dry bones that come to life. We miss [that reading](#) this year because of Feast of St. Bartholomew.

Matthew's Gospel this week includes some favorite parables, like the rich young man and introduces the counter-cultural idea that riches may make it more difficult to be saved. Those are followed by stories

Daily Prayer This Week

We pray through our everyday life this week, with the image in the background of our consciousness: Jesus offers us intimacy with him and gives us life, as shown in our relationship with him in the gospels.

Each day, we begin our day with the practice of briefly pausing, at our bedside to focus the day with a 15-30 second prayer. It is so helpful to develop this habit by simply doing it three or four days in a row. Even if we say that we are half-awake at this time, we can discover what a difference this way of beginning the day can be. With practice, it gets easier to say, “Thank you for this day, Lord. Please, be with me today, especially when I do _____ this morning and this afternoon as I _____ . Give me more patience, love and trust in you.” While washing up and dressing, we can expand this prayer, in a simple friend-to-friend conversation with our Lord. This kind of connecting or checking-in with our Lord at the beginning of the day lets a background connection with our Lord develop and grow, while I'm doing many things. It changes our consciousness and connects and integrates this fundamental relationship I desire with the things I'm doing, whether they are pleasant, routine or quite difficult.

Throughout the week I might be thinking of what it would mean for me to sell what I have, give it to the poor, and really follow Jesus. What is preventing me from following the Lord more completely? Are there “riches” that I know are

of the Master of the vineyard who leaves us with the phrase “The last will be first and the first, last.” Jesus tells the parable of the landowner who hires workers throughout the day, including the last hours. When he pays them all the same, those who worked all day grumbled. “Are you envious because I am generous?” He offers the parable of the guests who are too busy to attend the wedding feast of the king's son. On Friday in non-feast readings Jesus tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Saturday, Jesus says, “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

On the **Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time**, we continue with **John's Gospel** and the Bread of Life discussion, with many of the disciples finding Jesus' call to be nourished on his body and blood as tough to swallow. And they leave him. Peter speaks for the others: “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

barriers to my surrendering to God's will more freely? What seems to possess me? Recognizing our lack of freedom in this area or that is the first step in being able to ask our Lord for the grace of freedom in that area.

We might also ask the Lord to show us what he desires that we be “free for.” “Freedom from” is the first part of our relationship. Then, we are free to be sent. What am I being freed for? What loving am I being freed for? What new generosity, what type of self-giving? What neighbor, in my family, or the poor of the world, am I being called to notice and serve? We might ask the Lord to reveal to us this week how we are called to be servant.

We will still do what is on our schedule, respond to all our commitments. The difference will be that we will do it more in touch with the Lord. Staying focused and connecting with our Lord throughout the day is at the heart of prayer, “Raising our minds and hearts to God.” And, at the end of each day, we give thanks for this gifted presence that day.

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