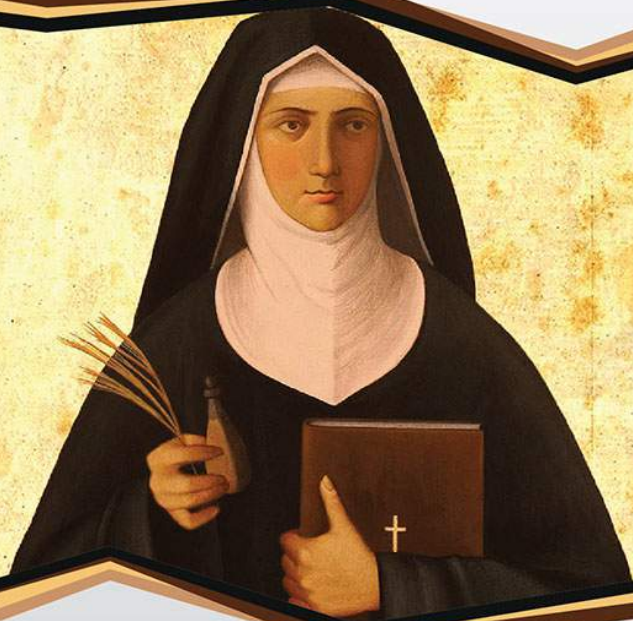


SEPTEMBER
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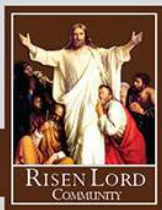


ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS



St. Hildegard of Bingen

Feast Day: 17 September



DAILY READINGS & REFLECTIONS



ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

SEPTEMBER
2021

Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer. Have courage and do not fear the assaults of the Devil. Remember this forever; it is a healthy sign if the devil shouts and roars around your conscience, since this shows that he is not inside your will.

St. Padre Pio

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Louis Benedict

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Wednesday September 1

22nd Week in Ordinary Time

Colossians
1: 1-8

Psalm
52: 10-11

Luke
4: 38-44

"Give thanks to the Lord..., for his steadfast love endures forever.(Ps136:1)

Today's readings contain a vital message: Continue to be faithful for our Lord Jesus Christ wishes to pour out His grace so we can have peace in plenty. The Good news of the Gospel must make abearing on us so we can make a response. It changes lives, a whole change from the inside out, because of His Truth. Moreover, this message of the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ lasts to go out to the entire world! In today's Gospel when Peter's mother-in-law was in the grip of a fever and the disciples begged Jesus to do something for her. There is a lesson here. Health and healing are not just for the individual. Her healing immediately restored her to the community and the duty of serving that community. Who do you take your worries to? Jesus' disciples freely brought their worries to him because they found him ready and capable to deal with any difficulty or sickness. Take your worries and confusion to Jesus today!

Prayer: Abba Father, you have the power to heal and to deliver. Amen

Thursday September 2

22nd Week in Ordinary Time

Colossians
1: 9-14

Psalm
98: 2-6

Luke
5: 1-11

'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch'

In today's reading we see Peter and the fisherman has gone out and were washing their nets after a hard days work, they had returned without any catch. Jesus appears out of no where, gets into the boat and starts to teach the crowd, once he finishes teaching, he asks Peter to put out the nets to the deep and all of sudden they catch large amounts of fish. Some times our lives are also like this. We work so hard to achieve some thing in life, to provide for our children, we are exhausted, our lives are consumed by the this fast pace world, the competition , when we try to run this race of life by our own efforts, we bear less fruit with more effort. However, if we let God lead us, devote more time to the word of God, spent more time in prayer and surrender our lives in to the mighty hands of God. Our lives become so much more fruitful, with less effort, God takes over and starts to steer the boat of our life, and every thing starts to fall into its rightful place. God provides so much more than we could ever imagine.

Prayer: Abba Father, we ask you to give us the grace to lean on to your plan in our life, to take over our lives and steer us which ever way you will. Amen

Friday September 3

St. Gregory the great, Pope & Doctor

Colossians
1: 15-20

Psalm
100: 1-5

Luke
5: 33-39

Through Him, With Him, In Him

A few years ago, while traveling on the main road from the town of Negombo towards Chilaw I noticed two Catholic churches on either side of the road opposite each other. This looked quite unusual to me. I asked someone what this was. He explained that these churches were built for two castes' of people in the area. The smaller for the lower & poorer people & the one more grandeur for the wealthier & affluent other cast of people living in the same village. Both these churches can be seen even today one dedicated to St. Benedict whilst the poorer dedicated to Mother of Refugees. In today's 1st reading St. Paul tells us that all things on the universe is created in Him & He alone hold things together. The world would have fallen to pieces if it wasn't been held by our Lord Jesus Christ. New ideologies keep coming in different names, antiracism, pluralism, coexistence etc. are possible only if the Lord holds the creation together. The wineskin was old, but the new wine needed to mature.

Prayer: Abba Father, give us the grace to mature and see things in the perception of being created by Him, for Him and In Him.. Amen

Saturday September 4

22nd Week on Ordinary Time

Colossians
1:21-23

Psalm
54:3-8

Luke
6:1-5

The Son of man is Lord and rules over Sabbath.

Recently I read an article that scientists often highlight two areas of our cognitive architecture. Working memory and long term memory. We do all our conscious thinking in our working memory while storing additional details in our long term memory, but in contrast the human mind has significant limitations. Each person's abilities, talents, expertise and experiences are unique and diverse. Collectively so vast but heading in different directions. To function with the understanding of these limitations to our fullest potential we have been called to stand firm on the foundation of our faith which we have received not because of our merits or that we deserve but because He has chosen to pour our portion of faith into our hearts as gift of His passion and sacrifice the Lord underwent for us. We are invited to feed our hearts and minds with the knowledge and understanding of God, that He is the source of our existence. He designed our thinking capacities and abilities. Let us surrender to the Lordship of His authority.

Prayer: Abba Father, shepherd our hearts the Holy Spirit to surrender to Your Lordship and sovereign plan in our lives. Amen

Sunday September 5

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah
35: 4-7a

Psalm
146:7-10

James
2: 1-5

Mark
7:31-37

You lift me up!

We have a God who is compassionate to all. Our God cannot be limited or restricted in any way and He doesn't discriminate us on our caste, creed, nor on our holiness or vulnerability.

Our Heavenly Father hates it to see His children submit to any kind of fear, other than the holy fear of losing Him. He seems to be telling us through prophet Isaiah thus: "Is it a sickness you're struggling with? I can heal you." "Are you in a desert thirsting for water? I will give you streams of fresh water." "Are you burning from within? I bring you to a soothing pool." This is not just positive or wishful thinking. God proved through His Son, what was foretold through prophets of Old covenant. As I read today's Gospel proclamation about the healing of deaf and mute man, I am amazed at the creativity and the strange ways The Lord chose to bring in the miraculous to our world when He could have done it with just one word or a mere thought.

What was the Lord teaching us? He desired to touch a man who would have been far from presentable. He destroyed the arrogant mentality of those who thought they were untouchables. We are challenged. Are we being untouchables too? Is our contribution to our parish and our community only in fund raisers and fun events alone? Do we dare command in Jesus' Name that the physical and mental illness leave, freeing those who suffer? Is our posture of prayer dependent on the condition we are praying about, like advanced cancer? I myself used to struggle with this issue, my intellect overruling my spirit, when asked to pray for someone with terminal illness. I found myself praying for inner peace and spiritual growth in them, when all they asked was healing. The current pandemic led me to wilderness, giving me plenty of time training in wielding the Sword of The Spirit powerfully. "The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed". (Isaiah 50:4).

This came alive for me each day as I learned to listen to the Lord. I learned to trust in the Word of God alone, claiming "It is written...", rather than focusing on the severity of the problem. I am learning to love as the Lord loves me. The Lord has been faithful as always, making supernatural breakthroughs in people's lives. And I know this calling is to all of us.

Prayer: Abba Father, You call us to lift up those who are bowed down by life's struggles. Give us the grace to be generous as You are to each of us. Amen.

Monday September 6

23rd Week in Ordinary Time

Colossians
1: 24-2:3

Psalm
62:6-9

Luke
6: 6-11

“In Him are hidden... the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3)

In the Gospel the Pharisees use a frame of reference where religiosity ranks above love and compassion. We too may use unhelpful ways of dealing with life. Sick and struggling with intense pain, I tried comparing myself with others suffering with far worse diagnoses. That took me nowhere, until a Disciple of Christ told me to shift my gaze upon Jesus and meditate on His characteristics, which embody all the gifts and truths of the Holy Spirit. Amazingly, despite (or along with) the pain, I was able to experience the joy He had promised, and as His love penetrated my whole being, my frame of reference shifted, and the “peace that passeth all understanding” filled me. In its essence, the Good News is life-giving and liberating. Jesus minister to the man with the paralyzed hand even if it broke a religious law. To Him, dignity and sanctity of life mattered more than the Law. Religion that doesn’t challenge the rigidity of the Law, ignoring human need, does injustice to the Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to break my frame of human thinking and surrender to yours. Amen

Tuesday September 7

23rd Week in Ordinary Time

Colossians
2: 6-15

Psalm
145: 1-11

Luke
6: 12-19

The power that comes forth from Christ

Prayer is the most powerful connection that Jesus always made with the Father, not only was it a special moment of intimacy but also established his mission in fulfillment of the Father’s will. My food is to do the will of the Father he said. And so, it is for us all. In accepting his will, we are empowered to do the mission he has called us for. Saint Paul while he is advising the Colossians to be aware of false prophets, beautifully expresses how rooted we are in Christ through the power of his resurrection, we are purified sanctified and justified through his precious blood. Christ is alive! We need to keep reminding ourselves of this, because we can risk seeing Jesus Christ as a fine model from the distant past. As a memory of someone who saved us. But that would be of no use to us: it would leave us unchanged; it would not set us free. The one who fills us with his grace, the one who liberates us, transforms us, heals, and consoles us is someone fully alive. He is the Christ, risen from the dead, filled with supernatural life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, may the power of the resurrection take root in our lives, empowering us to do your Holy will always. Amen

Wednesday September 8

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Micah
5:1-4/ Rom 8:28-30

Psalm
13: 6

Matthew
1:1-16, 18-23

"Beware, the more we overcome evil, the harder the evil one comes at us."

It's our common experience that we struggle with our sins especially the sins committed repeatedly. We reach the sacrament of reconciliation seeking forgiveness while focusing on overcoming the temptations of the evil one. As we know well, we end up often frustrated and dejected as we fall again and again. We wonder why we fall victim to habitual sins. Our Lord addresses that question in the Gospel today. When the demon is gone (our sins are forgiven and we are made clean) there is the tendency of its return with many other demons more numerous and vicious than the earlier one. Evil returns with greater force because it wants to attack an inner soul clean and orderly. So, the situation becomes more pathetic than earlier. With our repeated sins, we are to guard ourselves continuously, to fill the purified inner self with the Holy Spirit, with virtues, holiness and love. God helps us do it because He has not created us to fail. How deeply are you resolved to overcome evil?

Prayer: Abba Father, "lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil". Amen.

Thursday September 9

St Peter Claver, Priest

Colossians
3: 12-17

Psalm
150: 1-6

Luke
6: 27-38

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" Luke 6:36"

In the first proclamation St. Paul explained the inner being of Christ Jesus and urged us to cultivate the same as followers of Christ Jesus. This passage also recalls the words of Lord Jesus "By their fruit you will recognize them" (Mt. 7:16). We are often reactive, unforgiving and hostile to one another. This is our human nature because we are broken vessels. But our Maker has done the great exchange on the Cross. We forget our value; we are purchased by the Precious Blood. Our distorted images of ourselves devalue us to end up in discord and selfish acts. The Lord Jesus confirmed His inner being in the Gospel proclamation. Isn't this what He meant when He gave us the greatest commandment? "Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another" (Jh 13:34). The Lord Jesus loves us unconditionally and He invites us to love unconditionally. We are chosen to be loved and to love; to be healed and to heal. Let us become instruments of love in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Abba Father, your love heals my hurting heart to be steadfast to channel your love to this hurting world. Amen.

Friday September 10

23rd Week in Ordinary Time

1 Timothy
1: 1-2, 12-14

Psalm
16: 1-11

Luke
6: 39-42

"Why do you look at the speck... in your brother's eye? Luke 6: 41

St Paul speaks of a promise in today's first reading. He confesses although previously he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent enemy of Christ that through the mercy and grace of God, he was forgiven, redeemed, and was made a great servant of the Lord Jesus. We cannot by our own effort remove the planks that are grounded in the depths of our minds that rule us and distort the divine nature within us. But by the power of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ we can be saved from all these planks. We too, need the mercy and grace which St Paul encountered. Firstly, to remove the plank in us. Then to help others. When we accept our shortcomings, weaknesses and sinfulness and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance, He washes us in His precious blood, cleanses us, gives us a new light and anoints us.

Prayer: Abba Father, let the precious blood of Lord Jesus cleanse us and make us new creations in you. Amen

Saturday September 11

Blessed Virgin Mary

1 Timothy
1: 15-17

Psalm
113: 1-7

Luke
6: 43-49

Serenity amidst the storms

The Lord makes severe demands from us. He cautions those who live superficial lives, alienated from living in a new way. Such would not be able to reap the benefits of being a disciple. He invites us to live according to the radical ways He taught. Ironically, the parable reveals all would face trials. Does He not say it would be similar to 'the flood that comes and rivers that burst'. The one who would be able to withstand and be victorious in the end would be they who live according to His word. Though being a practicing Catholic, I had been a victim of living according to worldly values. When the rivers burst against my life, it collapsed and was completely destroyed. The Lord Jesus however, in His loving mercy gathered me from my sinful state. I gave Him Lordship of my life and started living differently. Now when the storms come into my life, I stand on the foundation of His Words and apply it. I ask Him "Lord how am I doing." He says "does not your heart give the answer? Keep it up my son.

Prayer: Thank you Father for giving me your word to live by, I can now share in your glory. Amen

Sunday September 12

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah
50: 5-9

Psalm
116: 1-9

James
2: 14-18

Mark
8: 27-35

"But who do you say that I am?" Mark 8:29

In the First reading the prophet Isaiah gives us a glimpse of the Lord Jesus' thoughts as He walks towards His death. Isaiah 50:5 says, "The Lord GOD opened my ear; I did not refuse, did not turn away." The Lord Jesus heard the voice of God and because of this, the things happening around Him and to Him were not as important as obeying the voice of God. Hearing the voice of God and doing as God asked was the foundation of the Lord Jesus' life. No amount of torture, humiliation and fear could stop Him from obeying God and dying on the cross. The Lord Jesus had an intimate relationship with the Father. He heard the voice of God and therefore He knew the Father had a plan and everything was happening to glorify God. He went through everything focused on God.

Can we say that God is the foundation of our lives? I personally cannot say that He is the focus of my life. As much as I want to make the Lord Jesus the number one priority in my life, it does not always happen. Today, the Lord is calling us back to Him. We must build the foundation of our lives on the Lord. We can do this by having an intimate relationship with the Lord. It does not happen overnight. St. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:18, "All of us, then, reflect the glory of the Lord with uncovered faces; and that same glory, coming from the Lord, who is the Spirit, transforms us into his likeness in an ever greater degree of glory." Each day as we sit to pray and open our hearts and minds to the Word of God, we take a step closer to Him. As we gaze upon Him, we will slowly become like Him.

Where can we start this journey of faith? The answer is given to us in today's Gospel proclamation. The Lord Jesus asks the disciples who the people say He is and today He is asking us this same question. Who do we say He is in our lives? He wants us to start by knowing who He is. He is the living God (Matthew 16:15, 16). He is the alpha and the omega (Revelation 1:8).

He is merciful and compassionate and in love with us (Psalm 86:15). Today, the Lord is calling us to open our Bibles and discover who He really is.

Prayer: Abba Father, I pray for the grace to know you more. My heart sings, 'I want to know you, I want to hear your voice, I want to know you more'. Amen.

Monday September 13

St John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor

1 Timothy
2: 1-8

Psalm
28: 2-9

Luke
7: 1-10

Pray for those in authority

1 Timothy encourages us to pray for those in authority. In these times we are quick to criticise and berate those in authority. We find fault with their policies and dealing with various matters. We never realise that if we were given such power, access to money and influence, if we would have succumbed to the pressures of the world. And yet, some leaders may be good in their own way like the Centurion. He loved the Jewish people, built them a synagogue and was so concerned about the health of his sick slave. Though he asked for Jesus to visit his home he was aware that culturally it would not be appropriate for a Jew to enter the home of a pagan and hence he quickly sent a message asking Jesus to give an order. And our Lord Jesus obliged seeing his faith. When the Lord hears our pleas and cries does he see the same sensitivity and faith as we pray for our leaders, the less fortunate and those whom we use and abuse. Let us turn from bitter words to sincere prayers.

Prayer: Abba Father, bless our leaders and do good to those who oversee us.
May they be filled with your wisdom and knowledge. Amen

Tuesday September 14

Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Numbers
21: 4-9

Psalm
78: 1-38

Phil 2: 6-11
John 3: 13-17

Journeying in love with the Lord

Today's Gospel proclamation shows us the ultimate love of God. "God so loved the world that he gave his only son" (John 3:16) this is a verse we have heard time and time again and are very familiar with, but do we really understand the depth of this. Is anyone willing to give up their only son? But here God gives us his son so that we may not perish but have eternal life. The salvation of the world came through passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because he said yes to the will of the Father he was betrayed, humiliated, scourged and crucified on that cross. As God's son he had all the miracle-working power in him to free himself from that agony. But instead he chose to say yes to the will of the Father. It wouldn't have been easy to watch your son suffer so much. It's not easy to endure such pain. But the love God has for us is greater than any of these. The Son of man was lifted up on that cross, an image that still brings us closer to God, an image that reminds us of the unconditional love the Father has for all of us.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to love, be closer to you and walk this journey with you and in you. Amen

Wednesday September 15

Our Lady of Sorrows

Hebrews
5: 7-9

Psalm
31: 2-16

John 19: 25-27 or
Luke 2: 33-35

Behold, your mother ...

Mother Mary loved her Son Jesus with the perfect love of a mother that fully united her with His suffering. Her suffering was not despair but of love and endurance. Today we can relate to her pain and suffering— as a result of our sins and those of the world that nailed Jesus to the cross. Mother Mary didn't turn bitter, angry, didn't seek revenge or lose faith in the promises of God. She forgives, loves and support those around her and prayed in faith. Today we helplessly watch our loved ones' die, the pain and sorrow is overwhelming!! Let us cling to our Mother who knows our pain and sorrow. Let us live her example of perfect love amidst the pandemic and chaos. Let's support others with deep concern and compassion. When the world fails us like it did the Blessed Mother, we stand firm in the promises of God knowing that He is loving, merciful and above it all. "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."- John 16:33

Prayer: Abba Father, as we unite with all those suffering, we cast out this virus and all evil in your mighty name Jesus! Oh sweet Mother - pray for us. Amen.

Thursday September 16

St. Cornelius, Pope & martyr

1 Timothy
4: 12-16

Psalm
111: 7-10

Luke
7: 36-50

Be a model to the believers in the way you speak and act. 1 Timothy 4:12

The first reading of today often fueled me in my early walk with the Lord, as I used to fear the opinions of the world around me. I knew the Lord had called me into a closer journey with Him, yet I always had a foot in the world – until the Lord's love drew me in and held me in His embrace. The woman in the gospel proclamation is a beautiful example. The Lord simply drew her in with His love and made her feel completely at ease. She may have even been a role model to others in the village because of her boldness. That was her proclamation of love for the Lord, and though it was ridiculed by those around her, she was performing for an audience of one. It was the Lord Jesus' attention she was vying for, and in that moment, nobody else existed but her. That is how the Lord sees us, in each of our daily moments. Everything we do and say must be for the glory of God and it must be with Him in our hearts – else we may waste this life living for the approval of those who do not matter.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to live with eyes for only you. Amen.

Friday September 17

St. Robert Bellamine, Bishop & Doctor

1 Timothy
6: 2-12

Psalm
49: 6-20

Luke
8: 1-3

The Money chase

I recently attended a gathering where few people that I knew were present. We were in a round table discussing about what my friend called “the money chase”. Getting rich was a dream and a priority for a majority. One explained how you must give yourself over to something completely so you will become rich. One pointed out, to become rich, how you must build something so valuable that people willingly trade their hard-earned money, and how that requires blood, sweat and tears. One argued how money can't buy you happiness while another friend was convinced how it makes things happen. But today in the Holy Gospel we are reminded of something completely contrasting. It reminds us of how early church was built and how the members of the church shared what they had in possession to build the ministry of our Lord Jesus. They gave up themselves and their belongings to become rich – they shed blood, sweat and tears to build the ministry, not the way world defines it but how it is defined by heavens.

Prayer: Abba Father help me to understand my purpose in life and to detach my heart and soul from the things that traps me to this world. Amen.

Saturday September 18

Blessed Virgin Mary

1 Timothy
6: 13-16

Psalm
100: 1-5

Luke
8: 4-15

What type of soil am I?

We hear an all too familiar parable in the first reading today and the meaning is made plain by the Master Himself. The seed is the word of God, and we are the field. As we listen to His word today, we are invited to look deep into our hearts. What type of soil am I? We would love to say “the good soil” but the truth sometimes is far from it. I see in me a mixture of all four soils. There are areas in my life that are so exposed to the world, hardened and teeming with cares and worries that however much I listen to the word of God, it ceases to bear any kind of fruit. There is also a part in me that is so receptive of the word of God that it acts as the perfect soil. Once we are aware of the nature of soil within us, we only have to dig and rake the hardened soil, clear away the rocks, burn the thorny weeds and prepare the soil to be rich and ready for the seed.

Prayer: Abba Father, let our ears be truly attentive to Your Holy word so that it may take root within us and bear fruit in abundance. Amen!

Sunday September 19

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wisdom
2: 12, 17-20

Psalm
54: 3-8

James
3: 16-4:3

Mark
9: 30-37

True greatness...serve with the heart of a king...rule with the heart of a servant.

In the Gospel proclamation today we encounter the second time that Jesus is trying to explain to His disciples about His upcoming suffering and death. In the NIV version it says that Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were because He was teaching His disciples. What Jesus had to teach them was so vital, so important - He was teaching them about the cross – that He does not want anyone else getting in the way. But it appears that this teaching falls on deaf ears. The Bible says that they did not understand but were afraid to ask. I do not think they were afraid of Jesus – He has proven over and over to be the most kindest and compassionate teacher. But I think perhaps they were afraid of being judged by the others. And their silence robbed them of understanding the greatest mystery. Their fear of the opinion of the other robbed them of a significant moment with the Lord.

In his letter, St James encourages us to open up and admit if we have bitter envy or selfish ambition in our hearts. We are not to keep silent about this feeling ashamed or defensive about it because that gets us nowhere. We are to admit that there is envy and there is selfish ambition hidden away in our hearts. And when we do that, Jesus comes alongside us, never in condemnation but He comes with mercy and forgiveness and the grace that enables us to change. He brings out of us good fruit that bears witness to His activity within us.

This is something that personally I am walking through this season. After years of denial and defence, the Lord has helped me to open up about my need for purpose and significance. My own thirst for greatness – to matter. And He has had to cut away my deep need for the approval and good opinion of others. As painful as it has been and continues to be, it is also extremely liberating. For it gives me permission to focus on God who walks with me instead of the crowd I might be surrounded by. It frees me to focus on His voice instead of the mindless chatter that I was previously tempted to focus on. And as He removes, methodically and surgically, the lies that I have been believing about what greatness looks like, He is teaching me His greatness, His significance, His purpose. There is kingdom greatness in the love poured into a family meal, there is Kingdom greatness in the mundane work done diligently and faithfully, there is kingdom greatness simply in showing up day after day and asking God to help me do my best in the places that He has placed me in this season.

Prayer: Abba Father, I come before you and I lay out my deepest desires and needs before You. Amen

Monday September 20

St. Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Priest & Martyr

Ezra
1: 1-6

Psalm
126: 1-6

Luke
8: 16-18

You are a Beacon of Light

Today's Gospel narration speaks to us about "light" an essential element for human existence. Lord Jesus Christ in his "I am" statements mentioned, "I am the light of the world"- John 8: 12. We followers of the Lord Jesus Christ naturally become bearers of light and we tend to radiate this light in to the world. Thus, as the Gospel explains, this light cannot be hidden or covered, it is meant to shine before everyone. People must see the light we are shedding and be attracted to the Lord, through us. The Lord who is the source of light and holiness dwell in us and makes us a channel of God's love, light and holiness in the world. Therefore we have the capacity to illuminate the darkness around us. Today let us ask ourselves if we have used this God given power and light bestowed upon us to brighten the dull places, surroundings and incidents in our life. Let us be mindful to radiate this light wherever we are placed in Life.

Prayer: Abba Father, let your light shine brightly on me, so that I could be a beacon of light in the world. Amen

Tuesday September 21

St. Matthew the Evangelist

Ephesians
4: 1-7, 11-13

Psalm
19: 2-5

Matthew
9: 9-13

Follow me

Come as you are, I love you!! each of us has received this call from the Lord Jesus in some form or another, this was what brought us into a relationship with him. We have been called to come to him with all our problems, all our addictions, all our hang-ups, all our mistakes, all our sins. We do not need to change before we come to him. No!! He came looking for the sinful, weak and broken, those whom the world shuns, the Lord Jesus embraces. His love is unconditional and all-encompassing and his call is to all of us "Follow me". But though we are called to "Come as we are" we cannot continue to live our lives just as we are. The very love that drew us to the Lord Jesus gently, carefully and lovingly guides us to mature in our walk as Christians. Slowly day by day as we walk with Jesus in our daily lives, we are changed into his image and likeness, and we are sent into the world to bring the good news of God's salvation to all whom we meet.

Prayer - Abba Father, I come to you as I am, change my heart, Lord! Make me your own, mold me into your image and likeness. Amen

Wednesday September 22

25th Week in Ordinary Time

Ezra
9: 5-9

Tobit
13: 2-8

Luke
9: 1-6

The good news is God is with us

Ezra is found repenting before God for the wrong done by the people. He takes it upon himself to kneel down before the Almighty and declare the sinfulness of the people. As He declares the sinfulness, his eyes are opened to the goodness of God. Despite his seemingly abandonment of his people, God has allowed the survivors to settle in the city, he has given them joy and life. He has allowed them to rebuild the walls of the city and given them support from the King of Persia. This was the kingdom news the disciples were sent to declare as given to them by our Lord Jesus. Despite being under the Roman governance, the Lord was blessing them with healings, love, joy and strength in their suffering, The Good news was being given freely to liberate the people. Today in these times we are offered the Good News of God's love and mercy for us. He is willing to build the walls of protection around us, forgive and restore us and offer us salvation.

Prayer: Abba Father, I receive the Good news of the kingdom into my spirit. I accept the love, mercy and peace of my Lord into my heart. Amen

Thursday September 23

St. Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest

Haggai
1: 1-8

Psalm
149: 1-9

Luke
9: 7-9

Come follow me

We are sometimes trapped in the rat race called 'life'. There is such a compulsion in us to presume our world would not be complete unless we built our dream home, had much and were successful. Even if we had all these, our hearts would remain restless, searching for that true meaning, for our lives. In the 1st reading God reveals to prophet Haggai that all we possess, eat or drink would 'never have our fill', because we were created for more, we were created for Him, then He calls us, 'Come build My house'. Jesus Christ knew the eternal reward of heaven, the Pearl of great price. No matter the pain and persecution He went about building the Kingdom, delivering the oppressed and healing the sick. No wonder today's Gospel proclaims Herod was perplexed when he heard all that had taken place and wanted to know who this was. How are we living our lives today? Can we just stop for a moment; breathe in God, breathe out our own lives and hear His voice, 'Come follow Me'.

Prayer: Abba Father, help us to surrender ourselves and take up our cross daily and truly follow You. Amen

Friday September 24

25th Week in Ordinary Time

Haggai
2: 1-9

Psalm
43: 1-4

Luke
9: 18-22

Hope comes from believing the promises of God.

We see God reaffirming His promises to the people of Israel through Prophet Haggai in the first reading. The greatest promise of God - the promised salvation through a Saviour is now recognised by the Jewish people in the Gospel. Through the Gospels we understand that Jesus never expected affirmation or glory from crowds, his own friends or family. Even when they were willing to glorify Him as a King, He withdrew Himself to the feet of His Father and gave glory to God for all the miracles and healings. Why does Jesus suddenly question His disciples about His own identity? It is indeed for the realisation of the disciples themselves. They've been with Him now for a long time, seeing Him performing miracles and healings. But what have they learned? They only knew to compare Him to something they've seen earlier as that's their experience. They were limited. However, Peter filled with the Holy Spirit answers His question saying He's THE SON OF GOD. The promised Messiah has now come. The Holy Spirit inspired Peter.

Prayer: Abba Father, help us to realise Your presence and promises in our life and always remember your gift of salvation to us Amen.

Saturday September 25

Blessed Virgin Mary

Zechariah
2: 5-9, 14-15

Jeremiah
31: 10-13

Luke
9: 43-45

Our perspective vs God's perspective

Today's 1st reading is a prophecy of what is yet to come; the Lord's goodness to His creation, which would bring together every nation under one banner. In the Gospel proclamation we see the Lord Jesus speaking about what is yet to come, His death. However, none of the disciples were able to understand the plans of God. This is how the human mind was able to comprehend it. Nonetheless, God was orchestrating a beautiful picture behind the scenes and that was the Resurrection of His Son, which would be the glory of Jerusalem that spread into the whole world. In the same way in our lives, we try to understand our lives circumstances through our perspectives and our past experiences, which would bring about hopelessness and despair. Today's readings are teaching us of another perspective, that is much better - God's perspective. This perspective shows us that behind every situation, God has a beautiful purpose, far greater than what our minds can comprehend.

Prayer: Abba Father, give us the grace today to see our lives through Your perspective. Amen!

Sunday September 26

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Numbers
11: 25-29

Psalm
19: 8-14

James
5: 1-6

Mark
9: 38-48

Selfish living vs selfless giving

The readings for today are about giving or taking. Getting of oneself or thinking about benefitting others.

In the reading from the Book of Numbers, the Lord came down and took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and shared it with the seventy leaders. Two who were in the camp and who were missing the infilling session were also blessed with the Spirit. Joshua who was then a young fiery man was very upset that the men who had missed the session had been filled with the spirit and he wanted them stopped but Moses was thinking otherwise and said something remarkable - "Would that all Yahweh's people were prophets and that Yahweh would send his spirit upon them." Moses did not wish to remain exclusive and blessed, His wished that all the people had the same deep experience that He had. He did not feel threatened. As leaders or as people on a journey sometimes we want to be a head above the rest and so it can be with religious people as well, wanting to remain superior to the others.

The reading from St. James warns people about gathering riches for themselves and building their fortunes. The sin is not about becoming rich but gaining at the expense of others. The stern warning is given about greed and self-gain.

The Gospel proclamation from St. Mark has a similar story of people other than the Lord's followers casting out demons and the Lord's disciples complain because they do not belong to their group. The Lord gives his classic reply that Whoever is not against us is for us.

Our church which has been deeply divided over matters of theology and the word has this issue. We wonder why and if the Lord is the one behind the miracles being worked in other churches, Sometimes we are quick to dismiss them and they are quick to dismiss our work. But are we not aware that it is one Lord Jesus alive and who has given his life for each of us, Ultimately faith in action and love is more important than who is right or wrong. The Lord welcomes us to share a drink of water with those who are thirsting. We are invited to give life and fulness to children rather than to cause them to sin. If our hand or foot causes us to sin we are encouraged to cut them off rather than allow them to lead us to a future in hell. Finally if our eyes cause us to sin we are told to pluck them out rather than be eaten by worms in hell. I personally feel that if we limit our viewing by 10% everyday we will save ourselves from breaking so many comandments and committing so much sin. Let us instead of wanting to get, learn to give and love.

Prayer: Abba Father, I plead your mercy for my greed, unreserved wants and selfish style. May I choose to give rather than get. Amen.

Monday September 27

St. Vincent de Paul, Priest

Zechariah
8: 1-8

Psalm
102: 16-23

Luke
9: 46-50

Today we discover the root of greatness.

In the first reading today, the Lord prophesies over Jerusalem and promises great blessing and prosperity to His people. He declares Jerusalem "the faithful city", although the people of Jerusalem had been anything but faithful. They had hardened their hearts against God through their disobedience. What then qualified them to receive God's blessing and be called "holy"? It was simply the nature of God. He rescues them from their enemies, from themselves and thrusts His greatness upon them. They are then, no longer marked by their disobedience, but marked by the holiness and greatness of God. In today's Gospel too, the disciples struggle with a broken desire for greatness; they argue about "which of them was the greatest". Jesus presents them with the symbol of a child and reveals what true greatness is. As children of THE perfect parent, our greatness is completely a product of the Father. He never withholds his greatness from us but forgives us and calls us too into His glory. calls us too into His glory.

Prayer: Abba Father, clothe us in Your holiness and greatness so that we may die to ourselves and be open to more of you. Amen.

Tuesday September 28

St. Wenceslaus, King & Martyr

Zachariah
8: 20-23

Psalm
87: 1-7

Luke
9: 51-56

'Holding onto to the hem of his garment'

James and John are truly living up to their moniker; 'Sons of Thunder', perhaps not taking too kindly to rejection. After all, amongst them is the 'Son of God', the 'King of Israel' how dare they reject him, escalating the situation is the animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans. But Our Lord accepts the situation from the hands of the Father and moves on, nothing shall deter him a greater mission awaits and there is no time to get embroiled in petty human conflicts. Here, we can be James and John, the Lord is on our side hence everything else needs to be smooth sailing and when things don't go our way we respond with knee-jerk reactions. We have a role to play however small it is important and keeping our eyes fixed firmly on our destination, the heart of our Father. It's easy to lose sight of it especially in these times, therefore each of us to need to keep holding onto the hem of the garment of our Lord, because time is quickly running out!

Prayer: Abba Father, help me keep my eyes firmly fixed on our Lord Jesus and through him my purpose . Amen

Wednesday September 29

Feast of the Holy Archangels, Michael, Gabriel & Raphael

Daniel 7: 9-10
or Rev 12: 7-12

Psalm
138: 1-5

John
1: 47-51

You will see the angels ascending and descending

Both the readings speak of Heavenly visions. As we celebrate the feast of the Holy Archangels, we remember that they carried the heavenly messages from the throne of God to the recipients on earth, The Blessed Mother was visited by Gabriel, Tobit was guided by Raphael and Michael was witnessed fighting off Satan.

As Jesus spoke to Nataniel and welcomed him, Nathaniel was able to piece together all that he had been researching about the Son of Man and was able to tell that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Our Lord reminded him where he had come from and gave him a glimpse of the future where he was promised a vision of Heaven and the Son of Man ascending with the angels. Faced with the brokenness of the world around us, may we hold on to the Heavenly Vision of God seated on His throne and the angels ascending and descending bringing us messages of protection, hope and love.

Abba Father, thank you for the presence and gift of the Archangels. Amen

Thursday September 30

St. Jerome, Priest & Doctor

Nehemiah
8: 1-12

Psalm
19: 8-11

Luke
10: 1-12

Joy in faith

In the first reading, the people are at first sorrowful at hearing the commandments, but, with understanding, comes celebration. The psalm teaches us that following the commandments brings a deep joy. In the gospel proclamation, we are told that there is a great task of evangelization to be carried out and, like the seventy-two sent out by Our Lord Jesus Christ, we are required to trust in Divine providence for our basic needs. With modern technology, the message is being spread far and wide, however, example is a much more powerful teacher than words. Our leaders exemplify this trust in Divine providence in their commitment to Ministry, at the expense of careers and family, with dependence on Divine providence, through the community, for their basic needs. We lay people, as well, are called to the task of evangelisation, largely by example, within our families, at work, among friends and even in casual interactions with strangers, by demonstrating our love of neighbor, in the way we behave towards them.

Prayer: Abba Father, send your Holy Spirit into our hearts to strengthen our trust in you. Amen

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ST. HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

St. Hildegard of Bingen is a Doctor of the Church. She was also a writer, composer, philosopher, Christian mystic, and German Benedictine abbess. She was born around the year 1098 to a noble family as the youngest of ten children.

Her parents had promised their sick daughter to God, so they placed her in care of a Benedictine nun, Blessed Jutta, in the Diocese of Speyer at 8-years-old. She was taught how to read and sing the Latin psalms. Her holiness and strong piety made her adored by all who met her. It is said, from this young age, Hildegard began experiencing her visions.

When Hildegard turned 18, she became a Benedictine nun. In 1136, Hildegard was elected superior. Her unique nature and strong devotion to the Holy Spirit attracted many novices to the convent. The rapid growth alarmed Hildegard. She soon moved on with eighteen other sisters to find a new Benedictine house near Bingen in 1148 and later establish a convent in Eibingen in 1165. She believed this was a divine command.

Hildegard quickly became recognized for her immense knowledge of all things, music and natural science, with knowledge of herbs and medicinal arts, despite never having any formal education. Hildegard's fame began to spread all throughout Europe.

For remainder of her life, Hildegard continued her writings. She wrote on many other subjects. She also became an important person in the history of music. There are more chant compositions surviving by St. Hildegard than any other medieval composer. Hildegard died on September 17, 1179.

She is considered a patron saint of musicians and writers.

On Our Knees - In His Hands is a book of reflections and aid to prayer, based on the daily readings of the mass. Its purpose is to help Catholics and other Christians engaged in the normal hustle and bustle of life to discover God's presence and direction in the practical situations they are placed in. This is made possible by a group of writers who themselves are lay people living at the heart of busy day-to-day life.

