

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 19, 2020

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: MI 6:1-4,6-8, MT 12:38-42

TUESDAY: MI 7:14-15, 18-20, MT 12:46-50

WEDNESDAY: SGS 3:1-4B, JN 20:1-2,11-18

THURSDAY: JER 2;1-3,7-8,12-1, MT 13:10-17

FRIDAY: JER 3:14-17, MT 13:18-23

SATURDAY: 2 COR 4:7-15, MT 20:20-28

**NEXT SUNDAY: SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME—1 KGS 3:5,7-12, ROM 8:28
-30, MT 13:44-52 OR 13:44-46**

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: TIM GARING

TUESDAY: FRANK RETTIG

WEDNESDAY: CONNIE GILLAM

THURSDAY: TIM GARING

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL: CONNIE GILLAM

7:30: TIM GARING

10:00: LILLIAN MILLS

NOON: FOR THE PARISH

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

All members of St. Ann's parish, families-living & deceased:
(Joletta Geller & Johnna Parker). (Jean Murphy, Kris Stevens
& Keith Gillam). (Martha Chapman, Frank Tymoski, Luella
Thise, Marina Davies). (Bill/Kathy Wilson & George/Ruby
Stingley). Dorothy Nelson. Alvessa Treviño. (Karen Fox,
Mike & Rosemary Cavanaugh). Ann Hubertz. Marcelina
Rangel Llamas. Marcelina Rangel Llamas. Paul & Kate Rieh-
le. Marian Schwartz.

*While everyone was asleep his enemy came
and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went
off.*

*When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared
as well.*

*The slaves of the householder came to him and said,
'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field?
Where have the weeds come from?'*

He answered, 'An enemy has done this.'

There is certainly the temptation to limit our interpretation of the above to a strictly literal sense so that we might conveniently put the blame on "someone" else for the weeds we find so abundant in the garden of our spiritual lives. St. Augustine reminds us not to be so quick to look to others and place the fault at their doorstep but to, in all honesty, admit to our own responsibility in the matter. Even the Bard suggests as much: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings." With this in mind, let us then ask with all sincerity, "where did the weeds come from". If we have to admit to a less than healthy spiritual life, we already have an important answer. Just as in any garden it is necessary to keep watch so that the weeds can be kept under control so in the spiritual life we must keep watch. The best way to do this is through prayer, fasting and works of mercy. By prayer we mean the constant contact with our Loving Father who, through the power of the Spirit and the example of the Son give us continued guidance so than we might spot the weeds and deal with them immediately. I can think of no better source that a "gardener's guide" provided by Sr. Mary Margaret Funk in her book "Thoughts Matter" Discovering the Spiritual Journey. In that book and their others in this series on renewing the lessons of Desert Spirituality, we find an excellent process by which to keep ourselves on track and our garden free of choking weeds. Fasting, continue Sr. in her book "Tools Matter" places fasting in the area of renunciation as in "deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me." And finally concerning Works of Mercy we may consult her book "Humility Matters" to discover that "spiritual pride...is doing the wrong thing for self-centered reasons that negate God's presence and choose the ego rather than God as the referent." Thus, we are reminded that true works of mercy spring from a humble and contrite heart, such a heart God will not spurn. In these few pages covering the necessary measures which involve a healthy and vibrant spiritual life we are reminded that we cannot remove all our obstacles, certainly not this side of the Kingdom and certainly not by our own power, but we can address those which arise out of our own deficiency and that which is allowed to thrive due to sloth and indifference. Let us put it this way, if we are not vigilant about the things which adversely affect our physical health, and stay on top of a regimen which we know is good for us, we are inviting all sorts of problems. That is not to say that we can guarantee a longer life by these measures but it does underscore a certain responsibility we have to keep ourselves healthy and happy. If, in turn, we are not equally as vigilant about our spiritual lives we are inviting all sorts of problems and potential dangers and once encountered in their potentially adverse presence we day not as "where did these weeds come from". We already know!

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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Cassian taught that real intimacy with God in prayer demands renouncing one's former way of life, the thoughts belonging to that former way of life, and one's very idea of God. In *Thoughts Matter*, Mary Margaret Funk focuses on the second of these: renouncing the thoughts belonging to one's former way of life. Her eight chapters focus on different "thoughts"—food, sex, anger, dejection, *acedia* (profound weariness of the soul), vainglory (taking credit for good actions), and pride.

Funk explains well how failure to control these thoughts can undermine our spiritual life, and she instructs readers on how effectively to overcome these thoughts and to focus instead on thoughts in harmony with God's will. The result is an experience of joy, hope, and freedom from enslavement to our appetites. Readers will come away enlightened, strengthened, and inspired to delve more deeply into a life of intimacy with God.

Mary Margaret Funk is a Benedictine nun of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Beech Grove, Indiana. From 1994 through 2004, she served as executive director of Monastic Interreligious Dialogue, which fosters dialogue among monastics of the world's religions.



And so it is incumbent upon us to strive,
rather, to correct our faults and to
improve our behavior.

St. John Cassian

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I first encountered this series when teaching the Desert Father & Mothers course for the Diocese's Ecclesial Lay Ministry Program. My first response was a very positive one and that has not changed since have read all her works and returning to them over and over again. Let me first say that I found the approach to be initially one of complete "common sense". By that I mean there are no "short cuts" to the spiritual life, or any aspect of our lives for that matter. Work is required of us and that work is laid out simply and forthrightly in these works. At the heart of all of this is the Catholic attitude that we are being transformed by God's grace from sinner to saint. That this attitude must inform everything that we think, say and do is undeniably true and rests squarely in the heart of Scripture and in every aspect of the life of Our Lord. If this is the case, then why aren't we on board with this? Two reasons come to mind, the first is simple, laziness. Just as we are not attentive to matters of physical health and well being in a preventative manner and seek to meet symptoms as they arise with no concern as to how they got there and what they portend, so too in the spiritual life we have the attitude, "I'll cross that bridge when I come to it." That proves to be inadequate when we find ourselves, as we so often do not on the bridge anymore but in a ravine. The second reason stems for a poor understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Beginning from a purely legalistic perspective we see the Sacrament as a form of dry-cleaning service. We breeze in, drop off our sins and leave with a shiny and new start.

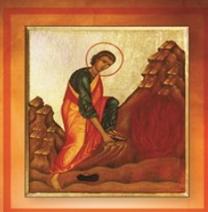
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That explanation may have sufficed when it came to preparing children for First Reconciliation, but it hardly holds up when provided for an adult and the responsibilities which come with an adult spiritual life. This deficit understanding did not arise overnight says Sr. Mary Margaret. As the Church grew and Christians found themselves all too familiar with their responsibilities they become, as we so often do, interested in a more convenient way of dealing with sins and weaknesses. While the Church is not solely responsible for this problem it did add to it by over legalizing the Sacraments and their powers and, coupled with a lack of confidence in the level of commitment possible among the laity, it was presented that Confession would be the most efficient way of dealing with sins. This is simply attacking the “symptoms” and ignoring the “cause”. Whenever the Sacraments are seen as “quick fixes” to our spiritual problems we do a disservice to the very reason the Lord gave us these gifts in the first place. While Confession is an integral part of our spiritual responsibilities it needs to be seen in its proper light and utilized in its proper manner if we are to truly benefit from what it has to offer. In these next few pages, I highlight some of the information I presented to my class on Desert Spirituality by using the material presented in this series by Sr. Mary Margaret Funk. Along with the Bible, and some appropriate commentaries etc., the Catechism of the Catholic Church, I suggest these short but insightful books be added to aid in and to compliment this wonderful journey we are all called to make.

*The Desert Fathers point us in their sayings to a very **wholistic** view of prayer. They pull us away from our mind-minded practices in which God becomes one of the many problems we have to address and show us that real prayer penetrates to the marrow of our soul-bones, does not leave anything untouched. The prayer of the heart is a prayer that does not allow us to limit our relationship with God to interesting words or pious emotions. It is a prayer that by its very nature transforms our whole being into Christ precisely because it opens the eyes of our soul to the truths of ourselves as well as to the truths of God. In our heart we come to see ourselves as sinners embraced by the mercy of God. The prayer of the heart thus challenges us to hide absolutely nothing from God and to surrender ourselves unconditionally to his mercy. In the heart we see ourselves as well as God in truth, and it is this vision that makes us cry out "Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Thus the prayer of the heart is the prayer of truth. It unmasks many illusions about ourselves and about God and leads us into the true relationship of the sinner to the merciful God. This truth is what gives us the rest of the hesychast. To the degree that this truth anchors itself in our heart, to that degree we will be less distracted by worldly thoughts and more single-eyed directed towards the Lord of the heart and of the universe. Thus the words of Jesus, "Blessed the pure of heart they shall see God" will become real in our prayer. Temptations and struggle will remain to the end of our lives, but with a pure heart we will be restful even in the midst of a restless existence. (from Desert Spirituality by Henri J.M Nouwen)*

Discovering the Spiritual Journey



Thoughts Matter

MARY MARGARET FUNK

THOUGHTS MATTER

Cassian taught that real intimacy with God in prayer demands renouncing one's former way of life, the thoughts belonging to that former way of life, and one's very idea of God. In *Thoughts Matter*, Mary Margaret Funk focuses on the second of these: renouncing the thoughts belonging to one's former way of life. Her eight chapters focus on different "thoughts"—food, sex, anger, dejection, *acedia* (profound weariness of the soul), vainglory (taking credit for good actions), and pride. Funk explains well how failure to control these thoughts can undermine our spiritual life, and she instructs readers on how effectively to overcome these thoughts and to focus instead on thoughts in harmony with God's will. The result is an experience of joy, hope, and freedom from enslavement to our appetites. Readers will come away enlightened, strengthened, and inspired to delve more deeply into a life of intimacy with God. All the world's religions have certain practices that are used to redirect the mind while on a spiritual path. Mary Margaret Funk has unearthed the writings of John Cassian, a fourth-century Christian monk, to help believers and seekers do such inner work. He suggests that we need to guard the heart so that we can use our thoughts, desires, and passions in service of God and neighbor.

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Through prayer and practice, it is possible to be vigilant in eight thought areas treated by Cassian. The first three are about food, sex, and things. Funk reveals the importance of discernment and discretion as we deal with these thoughts. Chapters on anger and dejection are especially relevant to the present era when rage and depression eat away at so many minds. Funk's overview of acedia, vainglory, and pride shows how these are indicators of a spiritual sickness of the soul.

Funk has done a superb job in resurrecting Cassian's spiritual practices for our time. It is rewarding to see how the wisdom of one of the desert fathers can speak to contemporary interest in training our thoughts.

Our thoughts are actually the soil from which springs our varied words and actions. In simple words, we live out in our daily life what we think about continually. Thoughts are intangible, but they are powerful, and their results are clearly seen, when acted upon. There is a saying that we are all creatures of habits.

This is true. But what gives birth to the habits we develop are the thoughts which we allow to develop, persist and take root in our souls daily.

Our minds, with its various parts such as our intellect, imaginations, wills, memory and emotions, are the breeding ground of our belief systems, opinions and over-all attitude toward life.

We advance in life or we limit ourselves by our thoughts. Indeed, the Great Creator Himself states, "as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7) Again, he admonishes us, not to be conformed to this world, with all of its negativity, evil, violence and wickedness, but rather to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we may prove for ourselves what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. (Roman 12:2)

What does it mean to have a renewed mind? And how can we know when we have developed sound thinking skills which lead to success, victory and maturity? It stands to reason that if we are going to change circumstances in our lives that we desire to see changed, we must first change how we think in reference to those circumstances. In other words, we must take on a new way of thinking, a new mind-set, in order to walk a new walk and talk a new talk.

The process of mind renewal takes place on a daily basis, as we hear and receive new information, accurate information, information which is in line with God's thoughts and in line with truth. We find His thoughts concerning us and concerning life in The Holy Bible. Here are three different steps to getting our minds thinking differently, based upon God's will, plan and purpose:

Realize that the Creator gave us our minds. This makes the development of our minds our personal responsibility. We are the custodians of our thoughts. We must guard our minds and what stays in them, for out of them will come the issues of our lives. In other words, we will produce without based upon what we have allowed to remain within. Thinking right will cause us to believe right, speak right and do right. Thinking wrong will cause us to speak wrong, believe wrong and do wrong. Whatever we allow to dwell in our thoughts long enough will become what we experience in our lives. Proper and sound thinking will set you free from bondage, but wrong and unhealthy thinking will put you and keep you in slavery to addictive habits, patterns and problems. So guard your thought life diligently.

Read The Holy Bible and other good books, to gain knowledge which the mind can feed upon constantly. Our minds operate by knowledge which is fed into it. So, if it is constantly hearing and feeding upon positive things, it will bring forth positive results. Feed the mind. Do it on purpose. Do not allow just anybody to dump things in your mind, without examining them in the light of truth, to ensure that your mind thinks right and properly.

Apply good wholesome and godly information to your life. Nothing happens without action. So, as you gain knowledge, and push your mind to think positive, do what you read. Do not procrastinate. Act and act now. For example, if you see that it is good, godly and proper to work and save, do so. Refuse to be idle. Refuse to hang with friends who see labor as slavery. Work is a good thing, and can prove to be a great source of joy and fulfillment, if you discover your God-given purpose and pursue that as your work.

Thinking differently will result in living differently. So if you do not like how you are living, begin the process of changing the way you think and you will change your life.

The following is taken from Thoughts Matter, pg 9-10

In the desert literature the training of a novice first focusses on external concerns such as what to eat, what to wear, what to do all day long, and how to live in the desert environment. The second set of instructions is about how to deal with the eight thoughts: about food, about sex, about things, about anger, about dejection, about acedia, about vainglory, and about pride. The sequential order of these thoughts makes a difference, because they move in a pattern from simple to complex. These teachings reveal that while our life choices govern what we eat, wear, and do with our time all day, all persons, no matter what their way of life, are subject to the eight thoughts.

When we think of the eight thoughts, we are immediately reminded of the seven capital sins. Gregory the Great (d. 604) was known to have reduced the list from "eight thoughts" to "seven capital sins." (Vainglory was usually deleted and, if treated at all, it was under the label of pride.) **THOUGH THIS TERMINOLOGY OF CAPITAL SINS FOUND ITS WAY INTO EVERY CATECHISM, THE IMPACT OF THE THINKING, WHICH GENERATES OUR ACTING, WAS OFTEN IGNORED. THE EMPHASIS ON SIN, WHICH THIS CHANGE IN TERMINOLOGY BOTH AFFECTED AND EFFECTED, TENDED TO DISTOR THE EARLIER EMPHASIS ON TRAINING THE THOUGHTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE INTERIOR LIFE OF A SERIOUS SEEKER WHO, BY STRIVING TOWARD PURITY OF HEART, LONGS INTENSELY FOR A SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.** (Uppercase mine for emphasis) When people "gave up" on the process of dealing with their thoughts they turn to the Sacrament of Penance as a in the hopes that it will make up for their lack of seriousness and effort.

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The brief article below represents a contemporary approach to the age-old problem involving tending the garden of our soul. Thoughts, like weeds, can crop up any time and threaten an otherwise fruitful garden. The thoughts we entertain, i.e. play with in our mind, start to stir the passions or emotions, we can literally “work ourselves up over things” then it becomes easier to translate these emotions into actions which then become SIN. It is so tempting to let these sins pile up and then dump them off at the confessional for a quick fix, alas it does not work that way. St. Thomas reminds us that the real danger is not mortal sin but unrepentant (i.e. not properly attended to) venial sins which have literally taken over our lives and unfortunately cause us to think that’s who we are.

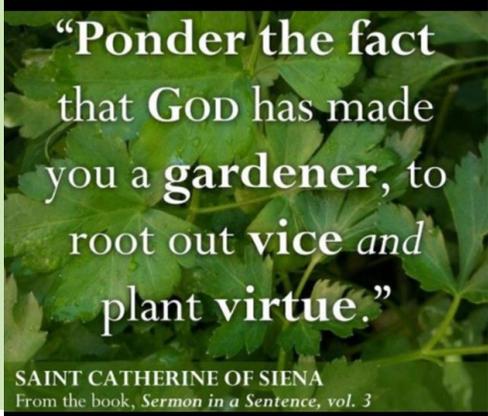
The Theology of Weeds

It felt good to get out into my flower beds this weekend. As I was pulling up weeds, doing a little pruning and planting pots of annuals, I thought about all of the spiritual lessons I have learned over the years in the garden. Weeds have taught me a lot. When my children were little and we lived in an area with better water and soil, we grew a small vegetable garden. When the vegetables would first sprout, they were small and delicate. Often, they would need to be thinned. And even more often, the weeds would be sprouting right alongside the lettuce, spinach, and other plants. As I would carefully pull those plants we did not want, while carefully trying to protect the little seedlings we did, it occurred to me that there was an analogy to parenting in this task. As parents we do many things to give our children the rich soil and water they need to thrive. We provide them with our unconditional love and support, food, shelter, education and a variety of activities to help them learn and grow. But we also have the great task of guiding them to a life of virtue; of weeding out the vices that are part of every person because of our fallen human nature. It occurred to me, while crouched down in the midst of a row of new lettuce, that this weeding must be done gently and carefully. If we are rushed; if we are impatient; if we are inattentive, we may very well damage the small shoot we are working so hard to protect. Also, sometimes it is difficult to sort the weeds from the vegetables when they are both so small. Therefore, all of this pruning has to be done with care. It was an image that would come back to me repeatedly as my children grew and it encouraged me to pray for discernment and wisdom to see the “weeds” for what they were and to know the best way to gently remove them.

Another memory I have comes from long hours weeding the 1000-tree shelter belt we have behind and next to our house. After twenty years of care and growth, it provides us some very good protection against the wind and the snow, but initially it was a large swath of bare ground with A LOT of little twigs we hoped would grow into trees and bushes one day. The first year they were in, we were also busy building the house we now live in and the trees didn’t get all the attention they deserved. I remember heading into them one day after a particularly rainy stretch and the trees in some places had completely disappeared under a canopy of bindweed. We crawled down the rows on hands and knees pulling the weeds away and unraveling them from the little saplings. If weeds in my musings represent vice, the lesson here is **don’t turn your back on them!** If you ignore them they can soon overwhelm much that is good in your life. In fact, they have the power to choke the life out of you.

In general, all of my tree hoeing taught me that weeds come up much easier the quicker you attack them. The lesson I see is: don’t wait and allow them to take root! The same is true of vice in our lives. Tackling them early on is a much easier task than waiting until they are ingrained habits. Similarly, St. Ignatius in his Rules of Discernment advises us to resist the temptations of the Enemy quickly and boldly, for when we do, he flees. However, if we do not resist initially, we allow him a stronghold which is harder to dislodge later. This image reminds me often that in our battle to live virtuously, little things matter. Discipline in small things, brings strength to tackle greater challenges. And rooting out bad habits at their beginning prove easier than battling them after they have a hold on our lives. Which brings me to another memory of something I read that touched me so much I printed it and had it on my refrigerator for years: **DISCIPLINE MEANS REMEMBERING WHAT YOU REALLY WANT**

Today most of my weeding is confined to the area surrounding our front porch where we have a variety of bushes and perennials among the rocks. I spend a bit of most Saturdays out there, doing what I often call “perpetual battle with bindweed.” It seems you can’t ever rid yourself of it entirely. I think the root systems go halfway to China. And it is tenacious in how it works its way around the best landscaping fabric. I find a lesson for the spiritual life here too. Life is a battle. The pursuit of Christian perfection is a lifetime adventure. And it is done best when we are attentive, persistent, hard-working, diligent and allow ourselves space and time to be quiet and listen. Sometimes my time is spent on the equally reoccurring skirmish with misplaced grass. We struggle to keep some semblance of a lawn in our south facing front yard given the clay soil and limited (and very hard) well water. But that never seems to stop it from cropping up where you don’t want it. My lesson here? Sometimes our biggest struggles come out of the right thing in the wrong place. For instance, sometimes we have developed coping mechanisms that served us well in a time of great pain or protected us when life’s hurts assail us. But then we have trouble not taking those behaviors into the new day. The Magnificat reflections during Morning Prayer sometimes remind us not to let “yesterday’s demons spoil today.” Pulling up grass reminds me to seek healing from the Lord for past hurts; to let go of resentments and grudges so that I am free to meet each new day ready to receive all that the Lord desires to give and to generously and lovingly meet those He sends my way.



“Ponder the fact
that God has made
you a gardener, to
root out vice and
plant virtue.”

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA
From the book, *Sermon in a Sentence*, vol. 3

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 19, 2020



DIocese
of
LAFAYETTE-IN-INDIANA

July 10, 2020

Dear People of God of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana. As a Bishop, my mission is the salvation of souls. Our Church teaches us that every human life is valuable and made in the image and likeness of God no matter our color or origin. The Church also teaches, and I firmly believe, that racism is wrong.

I support those who choose to demonstrate peacefully in favor of social equality, equity and justice. However, The Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation and Antifa promote beliefs and stances that directly contradict Catholic Church teachings. I have always opposed these contradictions to Church teaching and have never advocated for any organization that promotes these contradictions. I have never supported those who bring violence to otherwise peaceful demonstrations.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us many things about racism, violence, the human family, marriage and our social and economic systems. I am sworn to uphold all the teachings of the Church that I love, and I do.

I invite Catholic people to continue promoting racial justice in our society, and we should play an active role in opposing racism. Charity obliges us to work toward ongoing conversion and spiritual transformation of everyone in our presence. As we encounter people in our day to day life, we should help them to encounter Jesus Christ who has taught us that to love Him is to love others.

Bishop Timothy L. Doherty

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**You reap what you sow
so make sure you sow good seeds...**



Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for
for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Galatians 6:7



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**“FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS
GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE
WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAIN-
DER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS”**

ST. AUGUSTINE