

## TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST 16, 2020

### MASS READINGS

MONDAY: IS 1:10-17, MT 10:34-11-1

TUESDAY: IS 7:1-9, MT 11:20-24

WEDNESDAY: IS 10:5-7, 12B-16, MT 11:25-27

THURSDAY: IS 26:7-9,12,16-19, MT 11:28-30

FRIDAY: IS 38:1-6,21-22,7-8, MT12:1-8

SATURDAY: MI 2:1-5, MT 12;14-21

**NEXT SUNDAY: SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN  
ORDINARY TIME—RDGS: WIS 12:13,16-19,  
ROM 8:26-27, MT 13:24-43 or 13:24-30**

### MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: LAURA HARDEN

TUESDAY: DANNY MUNDELL

WEDNESDAY: FR. CHARLES MULLER

THURSDAY: POOR SOULS

FRIDAY: POOR SOULS

VIGIL: POOR SOULS

7:30: POOR SOULS

10:00: POOR SOULS

NOON: FOR THE PARISH

### MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Those serving in our Armed Forces, especially those soldiers who have connections to our parish: (Bill Buckles, Ed & Olive May). Donn Miles. Deborah Harris. Patty Burdine. Marian Schwartz. (John J. FitzSimmons family, Larry White). (Lewis & Hildegard Owen, Donald & Norma Yantis, Patricia Wann). (Mary Salrin, Larry Johnston, Judy & Ed Buckles). (Victor & Dorothy Ringle, Robert Stump, Burnell, Anna & Henry Totten). John Libbers. Ann Hubertz. (deceased family members of Hendricks, Roth, Clark & Thayer

*“Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.”*

Comments have been offered about the callous nature in which Our Lord responded to this non-daughter of Israel. It certainly betrays the sentiment of the time regarding the attitude of many and allows Our Lord to engage in some “political incorrectness” (to say the least) in order that we might hear just how insensitive it sounds. If we can remove ourselves from our righteous indignation long enough to listen to what the woman says and to regard ourselves as in the same boat when it comes to whether or not God owes us anything, we might begin to feel just a bit humbled by all this and that is as it should be. Truth be told this woman offers, in her own words, a profound profession of faith in that she considers herself at least as worthy as anyone else to receive from the table the scraps being cast aside by willful and rebellious children. In the end just where does the insult truly belong? Regarding our own spiritual state, we might do well to consider just how we approach the Lord’s abundant blessings and, once received, how we then go about thanking him, that is, if we get around to thanking him. Recently we found ourselves in a discussion about the way in which people observe others going to communion. It seems that things have changed since the times when folks remember how solemn and reverent the moment to receive communion was. People approached and knelt down at a communion rail and returned to their pews and momentarily gave thanks. Our liturgical sensibilities have changed but these changes are not directly responsible for what people perceive as a lack of reverence in receiving communion. Pope Benedict opined in an article as to whether or not liturgy can actually create the expression of reverence and added that it could but only up to a point. Since Pius X urged frequent communion maybe some have taken this to mean that frequency can then be translated into a kind of rote, non-reflective approach. What is really needed is a dedication to the three pillars of the spiritual life in which daily prayer keeps us in touch with this great gift of God, fasting makes sure that we put nothing before this gift and works of mercy reveal that this is the greatest act of God himself in that he gives himself to us as the imperishable bread of everlasting life. There is nothing in our current liturgical practice which mitigates against what these three aspects of spirituality can instill in us so that when we do approach the altar we are truly prepared, as much as we can be in light of the vast difference between the Lord’s goodness and our deservedness of that goodness. To adopt the attitude of our women in the gospel regarding her readiness to take what others cast aside, we might stop watching how others go and focus on how we go. The liturgy may not be entirely able to instill reverence but we just might be of assistance by our example.

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O Lord, I am not worthy  
That Thou should'st come to me,  
But speak the words of comfort,  
My spirit healed shall be.

Oh, come, all you who labor  
In sorrow and in pain,  
Come, eat This Bread from heaven;  
Thy peace and strength regain.

O Jesus, we adore Thee,  
Our Victim and our Priest,  
Whose precious Blood and Body  
Become our sacred Feast.

O Sacrament most holy,  
O Sacrament divine!  
All praise and all thanksgiving  
Be ev'ry moment Thine.

LORD, I AM NOT WORTHY  
TO RECEIVE YOU, BUT ONLY  
SAY THE WORD AND I SHALL  
BE HEALED.

### THE AMAZING POWER OF GRATITUDE IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

*“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thes. 5:18)*

Saint Ignatius of Loyola makes the following powerful and evocative statements about the harm lack of gratitude causes in the spiritual life. He says: *“It seems to me, in light of the divine Goodness, ...that ingratitude is one of the things most worthy of detestation before our Creator and Lord, and before all creatures capable of divine and everlasting glory, out of all the evil and sins which can be imagined. For it is the failure to recognize the good things, the graces, and the gifts received. As such, it is the cause, beginning, and origin of all evil and sins”* (cited and referenced in *Consoling the Heart of Jesus*, page 421).

Another Saint and Doctor of the Church, Therese of Lisieux, has this to say about gratitude: *“What most attracts God’s grace is gratitude, because if we thank him for a gift, he is touched and hastens to give us ten more, and if we thank him again with the same enthusiasm, what an incalculable multiplication of graces! I have experienced this; try it yourself and you will see! My gratitude for everything he gives me is limitless, and I prove it to him in a thousand ways”* (*The Way of Trust And Love*, p.111)

As Father Timothy Gallagher explains, Saint Ignatius of Loyola’s basic attitude toward God was one of deep gratitude. “For Ignatius then, the consciously chosen remembrance of God’s gifts is not just a moment in a spiritual day or simply a devout practice.... It is the heart itself of the way he understands God and relates to God. The only God he ever knew from the first moment of his conversion was the God who constantly bestows gifts of grace upon us, revealing through these gifts the infinite love with which we are loved” (*The Examen Prayer*, p.58). Here is a beautiful quote from one of Saint Ignatius’ early disciples (Father Diego Lainez, S.J.) which touches upon Saint Ignatius’ profound gratitude for God and His creation: *“At night Ignatius would go up on the roof of the house, with the sky there up above him. He would sit quietly, absolutely quietly. He would take his hat off and look up for a long time at the sky. Then he would fall to his knees, bowing profoundly to God....And the tears would begin to flow down his cheeks like a stream....”* (*The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*, page 17).

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Saint Ignatius, truly one of the great masters of the spiritual life, recommends that we end each day with a prayer of thanksgiving to God in gratitude for the gifts and graces we have received from God throughout the day. This can be done in a very simple, two-step process (perhaps as you are lying in bed to go to sleep):

**1. Close your eyes and become aware of the love with which God is looking upon you. Do this for a minute or two to place yourself in the presence of God (Gallagher, p.25).**

**2. In your mind review your day and note the gifts and graces God has given you, and give profound thanks to God for them (Gallagher, p. 25).**

Here then, with this “Examen” prayer, you are ending your day on a very profound note of gratitude to God. Father Jacques Philippe says this about gratitude: “Here we touch on... one of the secrets of the spiritual life that also is one of the laws of happiness. The more we cultivate gratitude and thanksgiving, the more open our hearts are to God’s action, so that we can receive life from God and be transformed and enlarged. By contrast, if we bury ourselves in discontent, permanent dissatisfaction, then our hearts close themselves insidiously against life, against God’s gift” (*The Way of Trust and Love*, p. 112).

Tom Mulcahy, M.A.

## Gratitude is a Prayer

[Laura DeMaria](#) •

While recently considering the many types of prayer we can use when talking to God, I recalled a conversation I had last fall with a priest. The topic was envy, and my desire to avoid it. In response, this priest recommended I pray a decade of the rosary and, before each bead, think of something for which I was grateful.

I remembered this last week as I sat in the depths of [Ignatian-focused prayer](#). Those who have experienced Ignatian spirituality know that, occasionally, God or the Holy Spirit will settle a little bit of light and understanding into your prayer time.

Out of this prayer time came the thought that *gratitude is its own prayer*.

### **Why is Gratitude a Form of Prayer?**

When we pray to God out of pure thankfulness, we are acknowledging Him as Creator and, in that sense, we are worshiping Him. It is like St. Francis of Assisi’s [Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon](#), which opens, “Most high, all-powerful, all-good Lord, All praise is yours, all glory, all honor, all blessings.” When you thank God for His movement in your life, you are not far removed from praising him. A “thank you” to our Heavenly Father unites us to Him: creation worshiping its Creator in loving gratitude. It is our most basic offering, the simplest way to unite your will to His including – and perhaps especially – when His will is unclear.

### **How Can I Prayerfully Practice Gratitude in My Daily Life?**

If you desire to practice gratitude in a prayerful way, begin small (and remember that God is in all things). A simple place to start is, “God, I am grateful for my job and family.” Before moving on, sit with that feeling of thankfulness for a few moments. Consider each individual family member; think deeply on how you spend your time at work and notice how each moment of your day is a gift from God.

Eventually you can move on to something more personal, acknowledging the gifts God has given you in a non-material sense. Have you ever thanked God for making you the way you are? “God, thank you for the gift of being outgoing, because it makes it easier to make friends.” Seriously! You could substitute any number of words there: thank you for making me someone who cares about the environment, someone who is a great runner, full of ambition, always on time, has great luck with parking spots. Each and every little thing that makes you *you* is a gift from God, and believe me, he knows those parts of you better than you do. He knows parts of you that you don’t even know!

Eventually, as you move through praying actively in gratitude and acknowledgement for the things, people, and circumstances of your life, you can simply pray, “Thank you.” Thank you, God, for being in all things, for creating this world, and for placing me in it here and now, exactly where I belong. It is amazing how quickly our blessings, large and small, add up – way more than fit in a decade of the rosary.

### **What Happens When Thankfulness Becomes My Prayer?**

I can share from my own experience: lately everything looks different, perhaps brighter. I am noticing things I never have before, or which never caught my eye, whether that is a planter full of tiny flowers or the pattern on the pavement.

This is because when you begin practicing gratitude for more things in your life, inevitably you cannot help but become full of awe for everything God has created. More than that, you gain a sense of awareness of God’s presence in all that is around you, and how everything is, truly, connected.

### **Give It a Try**

If you struggle with prayer, this notion of gratitude as its own form of prayer is especially applicable. Some days, the best we can do is roll out of bed and think, “Thank you, God, for letting me see another day,” and never give Him another glance. It is not beautiful or poetic, and yet how delighted God is to hear from you! It is one small, yet important step toward being with God, acknowledging His presence in your life, and asking for a little more closeness to Him. Our gratitude is enough for God, and it opens to the doors to a richer inner life.



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## I Discernment and the Holy Spirit

The factors that prevent us from having a direct experience of the Holy Spirit are our afflictions. These afflictions can be rooted out from our body, mind, and soul. When the afflictions are extirpated, we abide in peace. We want the whole of our life to be toward God and so we invoke the Holy Spirit often, and this Spirit comes not only in faith but also in actual moment-by-moment decisions of daily life. There can be decision making by an individual or a group, but there's no discernment without the Holy Spirit.

The word "discernment" comes from the Greek word *diakrisis*, which means "to sort." A factor that must be considered is the impulse or grace of the Spirit. Sometimes we decide to go from here to there or to do this or that. We see our choices and take action. Without training in discernment, there is a tendency to ignore the Holy Spirit who wants to be consulted, to make known what is the good to be done, the best option. This Spirit never overrides my free will, my conscience, or my individual spirit that was created in God's image and likeness, but this Spirit is available to my mind. I've learned that I need to invite the Third Person of the Holy Trinity into my deliberations if I want to avoid my default: thinking mind talking to myself. This collaboration with the Holy Spirit, rather than independent self-talk, is discernment I refrain from self-talking to the self and lean into discernment. What is God's way for me? I pray and then sort my thoughts.

## II. Thoughts and Prayer

We need a method for discernment. We observe and notice all that rises on the screen of consciousness. The traditional word for this sorting is "discernment." We sort our thoughts of food, sex, things, anger, dejection, *acedia*, vainglory, and pride.

This sorting is not analytic speculation but the hard work of directing our own thoughts that rise in our minds. Again, we are not alone. We have the Holy Spirit, and we also have tradition that gives us sturdy instruction. We are not our thoughts (and feelings), but thoughts can be a skillful means to find our heart.

The teachings on the thoughts are the heart of discernment. We can sort our thoughts according to content, as in the list of the eight deadly thoughts given above. We can also sort our thoughts by seeing the stage of their rising and clustering into an entity with energy and action. We can sort our thoughts by looking at their sources, their directions, and their "spirits." We can also sort our thoughts according to frequency and persistence.

### the Afflictive Thought-Thoughts in General

the theory about the afflictions in the spiritual life owes its root teachings to the Greek idea of body, mind, and soul (spirit). The Holy Spirit is seen as the soul of the soul for the Christian thinkers from the School of Alexandria. The insight that thoughts come and thoughts go gave rise to a priority of the moral life. We can direct our thoughts and if we do not entertain them, then they leave the mind undisturbed. The mind can contemplate, rest on, direct, or get involved with these e passing thoughts. When one removes, stills, or orders the thoughts, there is a pervading stillness, a peace, an equanimity that prevails.

### The Afflictive thought: A Starting Place for Discernment

There is one overall indicator that thoughts need modulating with quick attention before ceate danger for the soul: "Extremes meet," say the ancient monks. It's equally averse to have too little as too much of a thin. The most compelling reason why thoughts matter is that when we let our mind to into free-fall mindlessness, listlessness, or laziness, our casual unbidden thoughts become our consciousness; food consciousness, sex consciousness, thing consciousness, etc. The goal is Christ consciousness-an abiding consciousness of God's presence. The teachings on the eight thoughts are not to cause discouragement but to help us identify our difficulties and learn the tools to root out and even prevent these thoughts from becoming afflictions. The Holy Spirit is our guide. The work is discernment.

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## Anatomy of a Thought

In *The Ladder of Divine Assent*, John Climacus includes teachings on how thoughts come and go. Here, he reports the distinctions hallowed before his time (579-649 CE).

Thoughts go from:

- Provocation (thoughts rise, simply rise)
- Coupling with dialogue (an interactive phase)
- Assent (moving along the possibility)
- Captivity (got attention toward doing it)
- Struggle and consent (pathos)
- Passion (the full disease/pattern: captivity)

Thoughts have an anatomy from beginning to end. When seekers would go to a desert elder, they attended to the movements of the heart (of the mind), suggestions, inner promptings. When such an impulse or inner prompting developed into an outward deed, into consent that eventually became habitual, it would be too late to show all this to the director. Confession, as in the sacrament of reconciliation, is a more appropriate forum to seek absolution from end-stage thoughts that have become sin. But to prevent thoughts from going into full-blown patterns of sin, it is beneficial to go to a wise elder and manifest our thoughts and urges.

## Repetition and Intensity

Discernment not only sorts the content of the thought, the stage of the thought, and the source and goal of the thought but also notices the repetition of that same thought rising from underneath consciousness over and over again. This sequence can be mesmerizing and almost hypnotic and, with repetition over time, can be obsessive. The teaching is to remember that we are not our thoughts, no matter how often they recur. We stay awake and watch. The theory is that our thoughts loop around the hook us. We can watch our thoughts (*nepis*) and see the points of contact, invitation, and consent of the will. Some thoughts are slicker and more insidious and catch us before we catch them. We need help.

## III. Tools for the Interior Journey

### IV. Specific practices for Discernment

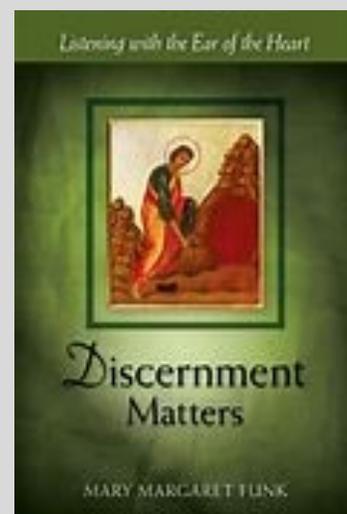
Five Steps to Making a Decision

- We Ask the Holy Spirit for Help
- Make a Virtual Decision
- Ask for a Confirming Sign
- Make the Decision

*After fifty years of monastic life, prayer, and spiritual direction, Sr. M. Margaret knows what it means to listen with the ear of one's heart to the Holy Spirit. In *Discernment Matters*, she shares what she has learned. This book is a resource for those who want to learn and practice discernment as taught by the early monastic tradition. It includes an accessible summary of teachings about discernment from monastic traditions of late antiquity, consideration of important tools for making decisions today, and practical examples from the lives of St. Benedict and St. Patrick, as well as from the experience of monastics today.*

*With this fifth volume of the *Matters Series*, Funk completes one of the most comprehensive presentations of the spiritual life available today, demonstrating why this inner work is both necessary and such a joy.*

*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. In addition to the volumes of the *Matters Series*, she is the author of *Islam Is...: An Experience of Dialogue and Devotion* and *Into the Depths: A Journey of Loss and Vocation*.*



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### IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Bishops across all five Indiana dioceses have extended the dispensation from the obligation of Sunday Mass attendance until **Nov. 1, 2020**. In a joint statement, the bishops of the Province of Indianapolis announced that the dispensation was extended from a previously set day of August 15, because of the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Indiana.

As your parishioners consider their ability to attend Mass, please advise them to keep the following 6 guidelines in mind which should influence their decision-making process:

1. You cannot attend Mass through no fault of your own (e.g., no Mass is offered, you are infirmed, or, while wanting to go, you are prevented for some reason you cannot control {e.g., your ride did not show up, the church was at capacity}).
2. You are seriously ill, or if not seriously ill, your health condition will be compromised if you were to contract a communicable illness (i.e., you have underlying conditions or are in a high risk category) for as long as this endures. Use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.
3. You have good reason to think you might be asymptomatic of a contagious illness (e.g., you were in recent contact with one who contracted a contagion). Use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.
4. You exhibit flu-like symptoms. Use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.
5. You are overcome by anxiety and fear of becoming ill by being at Mass, such that you will not be able to participate in the Mass in a full and active manner; you should rather speak with your pastor about this anxiety.
6. You care for the sick, homebound, or infirmed. The diocese encourages those who have been away to contact their local parish to learn of the various protocols that have been put in place for their safety.



Until we meet again

Peace be to you,

I want to thank all those whose open hearts and minds welcomed me here back in 2007 and all those since who have been an inspiration to me in our common call to holiness. Your witness and collaboration for the sake of the Kingdom has made my ministry richer and provided me with an endless source of courage and hope as I face retirement. I hope to continue, especially at the altar of God, moved by the piety and hope I have seen expressed here among people devoted to following Christ and building up his Church. Special places in my heart have already been taken by folks whose presence was a deep enrichment for me, some of whom have gone to their eternal reward and, I trust, are keeping me in their prayers. God in his Divine Providence made it possible for me to serve him through and with you and to the extent that we have worked together to that extent is he glorified. God bless you...*fr dominic*

### SUNDAY OFFERING

\$6012

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

**ST. AUGUSTINE**