Any who give you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose their reward.

Mark 9:41

Twenty-sixth

Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 26, 2021

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Feast of Faith

The Lord's Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer ends with the great "Amen," the acclamation of assent by the assembly. Then the Communion rite begins with the Lord's Prayer. We pray this prayer in many contexts, both inside and outside the Church's liturgy. Here, in the context of the Mass, the Lord's Prayer is profoundly eucharistic. When we ask for our "daily bread," we are asking for the gift of the Eucharist. When we ask God to forgive us as we forgive others, we are seeking forgiveness and purity of heart before we approach the altar to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood—"so that what is holy may, in fact, be given to those who are holy" (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 81).

At Mass, a prayer for peace is inserted between the prayer and the doxology. In this prayer, called the embolism, the Church asks God for freedom—freedom from sin and all anxiety and distress. We are living in an in-between time; even as we rejoice in Christ's presence, we await his coming in joyful hope.

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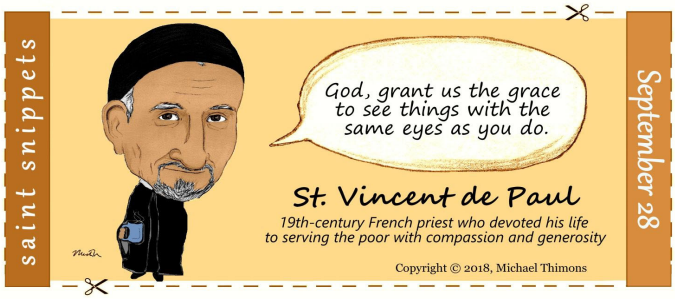

The Presence Of God

In all our thoughts and actions we ought to remember the presence of God, and account all lost in which we think not of God.

—St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Proclaim The Wonder Of God

The gift of the Spirit is given freely, not according to human expectations, but according to the generosity of God. Joshua wants Moses to stop Eldad and Medad from prophesying in the camp, when they were not with the others as the spirit was bestowed on them. Moses, so close to God's mind in the matter, wishes everyone could possess the spirit of God and proclaim it to the nations. Psalm 19 celebrates the perfection of God's law, and how it brings joy and delight. It is better than the finest gold or the sweetest honey. Moreover, God gives the wisdom of the prophets to everyone, especially the simple and lowly ones, even to children. It is the "little ones" who proclaim the wonder of God to all.

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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Zec 8:1-8; Ps 102:16-21, 29, 22-23; Lk 9:46-50
Tuesday:	Zec 8:20-23; Ps 87:1b-7; Lk 9:51-56
Wednesday:	Dn 7:9-10, 13-14 or Rv 12:7-12a; Ps 138:1-5; Jn 1:47-51
Thursday:	Neh 8:1-4a, 5-6, 7b-12; Ps 19:8-11; Lk 10:1-12
Friday:	Bar 1:15-22; Ps 79:1b-5, 8-9; Lk 10:13-16
Saturday:	Bar 4:5-12, 27-29; Ps 69:33-37; Mt 18:1-5, 10
Sunday:	Gn 2:18-24; Ps 128:1-6; Heb 2:9-11; Mk 10:2-16 [2-12]

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time; Priesthood Sunday
Monday:	St. Vincent de Paul
Tuesday:	St. Lawrence Ruiz and Companions; St. Wenceslaus
Wednesday:	Ss. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael
Thursday:	St. Jerome
Friday:	St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus; First Friday
Saturday:	The Holy Guardian Angels; First Saturday

Today's Readings

First Reading — Moses said, "Would that all the people of the LORD were prophets!" (Numbers 11:25-29).

Psalm — The precepts of the Lord give joy to the heart (Psalm 19).

Second Reading — Come now, you rich. The wages you withheld from the workers who harvested your fields are crying aloud (James 5:1-6).

Gospel — Whoever is not against us is for us (Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48).

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Twenty-sixth Sunday
In Ordinary Time
September 26, 2021

The law of the Lord is perfect,
Refreshing the soul;
The decree of the Lord is trustworthy,
Giving wisdom to the simple.
—Psalm 19:8

Treasures From Our Tradition

Did you ever notice how often the angels are referred to during Mass? We commonly meet them in the Confiteor ("I ask blessed Mary, every virgin, all the angels and saints"), prefaces ("with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven"), the Roman Canon ("we pray that your angel may take this sacrifice"), and Eucharistic Prayer IV ("countless hosts of angels stand before you to do your will"). Last week and this week angels abound as we celebrated Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael yesterday and will honor the Guardian Angels on October 2.

September 29 was originally the feast day for Michael alone. Gabriel and Raphael joined him in the 1969 reform of the Church calendar. The celebration of the Guardian Angels has been observed since the sixteenth century in Spain. Pope Clement X assigned the feast to the first free day after St. Michael's in 1670, and there it has remained. Take some time this week to reflect on these, God's messengers and our protectors, and maybe even celebrate with a little angel food cake!

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Exclusive Membership

The first reading might be what Jesus was talking about when he scolded the disciples. They wanted to stop an exorcist whom they didn't know. In both cases, whether prophesying or driving out demons, someone wanted them to stop. Why? Because the persons doing those things were not members of the group. In the gospel, the disciples objected simply because they didn't know the ones who were casting out demons. Back in Moses' days, the two "renegades" were actually on the list, they just weren't present with the rest gathered around Moses. Both Joshua and the disciples of Jesus thought they should control who could do God's work and who couldn't.

It reminds me of the pastor sprinkling people with holy water during Easter season. If I didn't feel the water, I was disappointed because I was "left out." But Father was intending to bless everyone; he just couldn't control where the holy water went. I wanted to control the pastor, to make him throw the water more carefully.

The temptation to control things is pretty common, but we can't be truly at peace till we allow God to be the one in control. God loves all people, even those who don't know him. So if we see someone who has a spiritual gift, it could be God's way of helping that person to know about His love. It might not be prophesying or driving out demons. There are many non-Christians who are very generous or patient or wise, who could come to faith if they realized that God was acting through them. You don't have to bowl them over with evangelistic fervor. Just the observation that you see God's love in them might get them thinking about their faith.

The Apostles Creed reminds us that the Church is catholic, or universal. All are welcome, because Jesus died for everyone. As Moses said in the first reading, wouldn't it be great if God sent his gifts of the Spirit to them all?

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