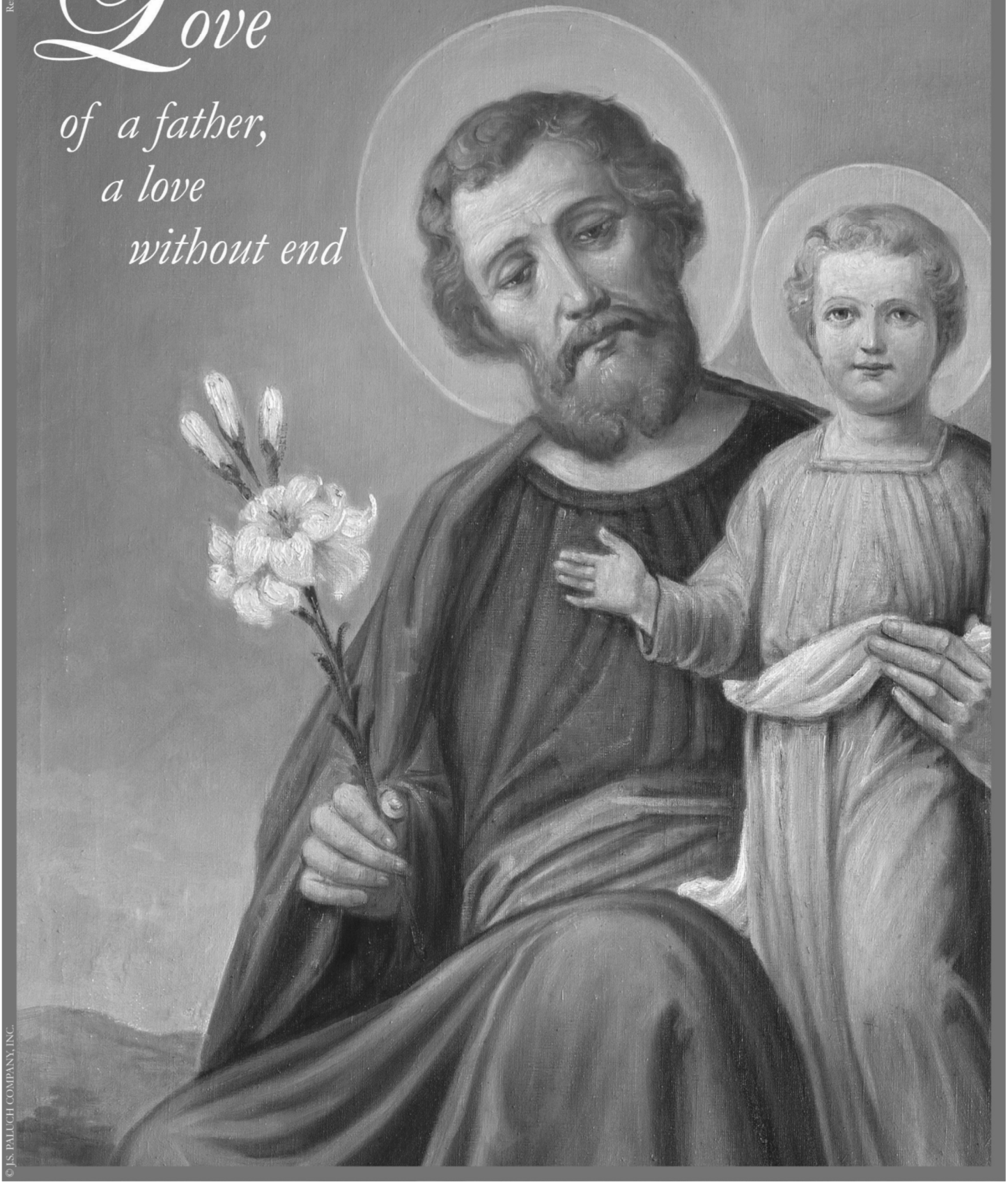
June 21, 2020
Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Love

of a father,
a love
without end



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Saint John Fisher (1469-1535)
Saint Thomas More (1477-1535)

June 22

From Robert Bolt's classic A Man for All Seasons to Showtime's edgy The Tudors, Thomas More endears himself still: lawyer-statesman of impeccable integrity, remarried widower and affectionate father delighting in a lively household—four children, a pet monkey, even a paid jester! And challenges still: humanist-reformer, yet champion of Catholic faith and papal primacy. John Paul II named him Patron of Statesmen and Politicians, citing More's generous work, both as a lawyer and in government service, on behalf of the poorest and most marginalized people of his time, as well as his promotion of education for all sectors of society. More's decision for principle over politics, conscience over convenience prompted his final words: "I die the king's good servant, but God's first." Alone among England's bishops, John Fisher dared challenge Henry VIII's divorce and repudiation of the papacy. When the Pope named the imprisoned Fisher a cardinal, Henry thundered: "Don't bother sending Fisher's red hat here; I'll send Fisher's head to Rome!" Whose "good servants" are we first? Isn't a right conscience worth the pain of standing alone?
—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

What We love

We cannot help conforming ourselves to what we love.
—St. Francis de Sales

Enthusiasm And Grammar

There is a good reason that the writings of St. Paul don't show up as examples in grammar textbooks. Today's reading is a case in point. It begins with one of those long Pauline run on sentences that leave lectors gasping for breath. So what? Take a closer look at how Paul's fervor for his subject matter derails the grammar. There is something admirable about being so caught up in his convictions that the words cannot come fast enough to express them, much less in an orderly fashion. Scripture scholars usually take this grammatical ineptness as a sign of a passage's early importance in the Christian community, something they were so ardent about that their language never got refined.

What leaves us in this condition? Re-telling the plot line of an action movie or the play-by-play of a sporting event? When was the last time any of us was so excited by our faith in Christ that we were left grasping for words, stumbling over our own errors in speech? It may be bad grammar, but it is an excellent way to inspire others with the message of Christ!

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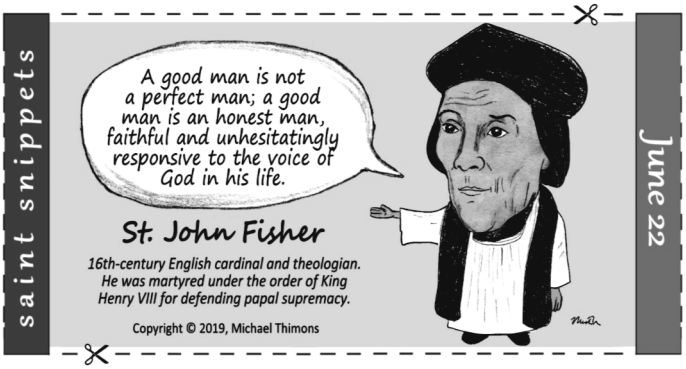
Readings for the Week

Monday:	2 Kgs 17:5-8, 13-15a, 18; Ps 60:3-5, 12-13; Mt 7:1-5
Tuesday:	2 Kgs 19:9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36; Ps 48:2-4, 10-11; Mt 7:6, 12-14
Wednesday:	Vigil: Jer 1:4-10; Ps 71:1-6, 15, 17; 1 Pt 1:8-12; Lk 1:5-17 Day: Is 49:1-6; Ps 139:1-3, 13-15; Acts 13:22-26; Lk 1:57-66, 80
Thursday:	2 Kgs 24:8-17; Ps 79:1b-5, 8-9; Mt 7:21-29
Friday:	2 Kgs 25:1-12; Ps 137:1-6; Mt 8:1-4
Saturday:	Lam 2:2, 10-14, 18-19; Ps 74:1b-7, 20-21; Mt 8:5-17
Sunday:	2 Kgs 4:8-11, 14-16a; Ps 89:2-3, 16-19; Rom 6:3-4, 8-11; Mt 10:37-42

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time; Father's Day
Monday:	St. Paulinus of Nola; Ss. John Fisher and Thomas More
Wednesday:	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
Saturday:	St. Cyril of Alexandria; Blessed Virgin Mary



Today's Readings

First Reading — The LORD has rescued the poor from the clutches of the wicked (Jeremiah 20:10-13).
Psalm — Lord, in your great love, answer me (Psalm 69).
Second Reading — The grace of God overflows for all (Romans 5:12-15).
Gospel — All who acknowledge Jesus before others will likewise be acknowledged by Jesus before the Father (Matthew 10:26-33).

The English translation of the Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Treasures From Our Tradition

In the tradition of the Church, not necessarily in your own life's timeline, confirmation is the midpoint of Christian initiation, standing between font and table. Full initiation is completed when a confirmed person shares in the Eucharist. Centuries ago, this first sharing in the Eucharistic assembly was marked by a first sharing in the Prayer of the Faithful. This prayer raises up the needs of the church and human community, the concerns of the faithful assembled, as they prepare to lift up the world to the Father's love. So a person could not participate in the prayer until they were anointed with the "Oil of Thanksgiving." Next, the newly baptized presented their gifts at the altar, a sure sign of their investment a new way of life. Until the sixth century, these people normally drank a mixture of milk and honey as a kind of pre-Communion. They were hungry, of course, since they were baptized hungry after long fasting, but this beautiful symbol of the promised land revealed them as God's chosen, heirs to the promise. Although the "milk shake" disappeared centuries ago, we still see the vigor of this new life whenever adults are initiated at Easter, and increasingly in confirmation ceremonies that are attentive to this meaning.
—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Fatherhood

When a father gives to his son, both laugh; when a son gives to his father, both cry.

—William Shakespeare

The psalmist cries out to God, "Lord, in your great love, answer me." In each of our readings today, there is movement from darkness and despair to trusting in God as our source of salvation. Jeremiah sounds almost a madman as he describes the evil and vileness that surrounds him. In the midst of that terror, he professes his faith in God. Similarly, in Saint Paul's letter to the Romans, we are reminded that one man, Jesus Christ, came into the world for the sake of many, to overcome the evil and sin that have been prevalent since Adam. In Mark, Jesus calls us from fear, sin, and darkness to live in the light. He reminds us that we are not alone and how very precious each of us is in the eyes of God. Indeed, God hears our cries!

Do Not Be Afraid

In our world today, it seems there are many things to make us fearful. We can become distraught over personal finances, relationships, poor choices our children are making, issues with jobs, the changing climate, the way our parish is being run, or a zillion other things. The problems may not be even be evil but may be simply life and all its challenges. But these struggles are real, and sometimes we seek unhealthy solutions. Many people suffer with issues of anxiety and depression, and fear leads others to addiction as a means of coping. In our Gospel today, God lovingly calls us beyond that darkness to light.

You Are Worth More Than Many Sparrows

Sometimes we look for very complex answers when a simple promise or solution is right in front of us. As I am writing and looking out the window, I see half a dozen little birds sitting in a bush. Their presence is a reminder to me of God's love and care for each and every one of us. If something that seems so insignificant or incidental is known by God, how much more are we loved and cared for! Take a moment, look at the world around you, breathe, take it in, and ask God for the help you in your need. Turn matters over and place your trust in a loving God.

Remember, though, Jesus seldom heals without some sort of action on our part. When you have given your concern over to God, other concrete steps may be necessary. Is it time to schedule an appointment with a professional? Time to name an issue? Or time for the sacrament of reconciliation? Evil's power comes from remaining in the darkness. When we no longer close ourselves off or suffer alone but share our concerns with someone, we can begin to grow and heal and move past them. It is seldom magical or instantaneous. It is a long arduous process. But we hold on to the simple reminder, "You are worth more than many sparrows!"

Today's Readings: Jer 20:10–13; Ps 69:8–10, 14, 17, 33–35; Rom 5:12–15; Mt 10:26–33

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with ADVERTISED toothpaste
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puts on ADVERTISED clothes
drinks a cup
of ADVERTISED coffee
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in an ADVERTISED car
and then . . . .
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