

September
18
2022

God wills everyone
to be saved and to
come to knowledge
of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:4

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



Priorities

Make a choice. God or money, material things, earthly pleasure. This is what Jesus asks us to do in today's Gospel. The Pharisees and scribes, and many people, want it both ways. God and wealth. But Jesus knows that "no servant can serve two masters." It is not that wealth is inherently bad, but the pursuit of it to the exclusion of what is good and righteous is. Our faith is meant to guide and shape the way we live. If we are followers of Jesus Christ, we will treat others, especially the poor and vulnerable, fairly and justly. We will live with devotion to God and let our lives speak the truth of God's love for all. We will put first things first, or more precisely, put God and God's ways first, assured that when we do, everything else will fall into place.

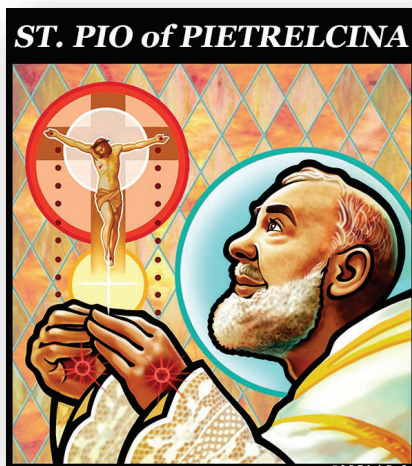
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Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time; Catechetical Sunday
Monday:	St. Januarius
Tuesday:	Ss. Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn and Paul Chŏng Ha-sang and Companions
Wednesday:	St. Matthew
Thursday:	Autumn begins
Friday:	St. Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)
Saturday:	Blessed Virgin Mary

Readings for the Week

Monday:	Prv 3:27-34; Ps 15:2-5; Lk 8:16-18
Tuesday:	Prv 21:1-6, 10-13; Ps 119:1, 27, 30, 34, 35, 44; Lk 8:19-21
Wednesday:	Eph 4:1-7, 11-13; Ps 19:2-5; Mt 9:9-13
Thursday:	Eccl 1:2-11; Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17bc; Lk 9:7-9
Friday:	Eccl 3:1-11; Ps 144:1b, 2abc, 3-4; Lk 9:18-22
Saturday:	Eccl 11:9 — 12:8; Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17; Lk 9:43b-45
Sunday:	Am 6:1a, 4-7; Ps 146:7-10; 1 Tm 6:11-16; Lk 16:19-31



Today's Readings

First Reading — The Lord never forgets the sins of those who take advantage of the poor (Amos 8:4-7).

Psalm — Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor (Psalm 113).

Second Reading — Pray to the Lord, who wants everyone to be saved (1 Timothy 2:1-8).

Gospel — Be trustworthy in all things. Serve God, the only master, not mammon (Luke 16:1-13 [10-13]). The English translation of the Psalm Responses from the Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Prayer Of The Week

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbor, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Reflection question:

How do I show love for my neighbor?

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Treasures From Our Tradition

When the Roman Empire turned a favorable eye toward the once-persecuted Christians, among the effects was a population explosion in the baptismal font, as Christian sympathizers stepped from the shadows. With more and more people becoming Christians, laws were passed to protect Sunday as a work-free day. Soon, it became possible to celebrate Mass later in the morning, rather than the older custom of gathering before dawn to celebrate Eucharist. Amazingly, despite the increasing numbers of Christians, there was great resistance to adding to the number of worship events; the Eucharist that began as a few friends around a table soon was transformed into a more formal event with throngs crowding a large hall. All the Christians in a city or town would gather around the bishop for the one Sunday Eucharist, and only when the crowds became unmanageable was there an impulse to divide the assembly by splitting off a new bishop and flock. Now, sixteen hundred years later, many parishes see a need to trim or combine Mass schedules. This is often seen as tough surgery. Yet our forebears in the faith would see it as a gain: a filling up of the Eucharist with a large and vigorous assembly, a fullness of ministry, an opportunity to make the Church more fully visible and stronger for service.

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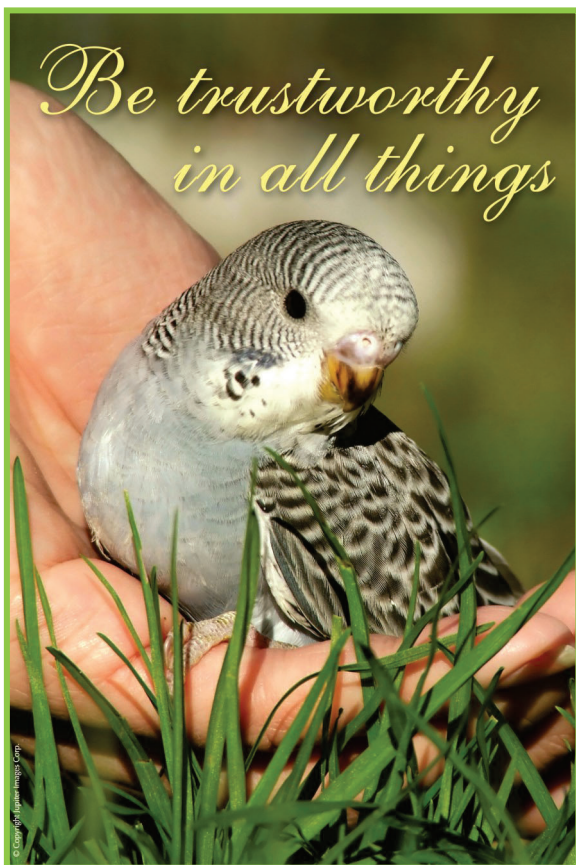
The Clever Crook

The parable in today's Gospel is another one with a surprise ending. The crooked steward is commended by his master for being prudent, or clever, trying to protect himself. Jesus did not condone dishonesty. He just wanted us to be just as clever in serving the Lord. Let's look at the first two readings and how they challenge us to do more.

The reading from Amos talks about those "who trample upon the needy and destroy the poor" (Amos 8:4). The challenge here is to ask yourself, "What do I do for the poor?" If all you can think of is to throw some change in the monthly collection for the poor, you're not being very clever. Most parishes have organizations to help the needy and are happy to get volunteers. Imagine what you would do to help someone you loved who was laid off or on disability leave. Do you love Jesus enough to help the poor in his name? Do you ever think of praying for the poor? Not just a quick response to one of the Prayers of the Faithful for the homeless, but actually taking time to pray for those who are unemployed or with jobs that don't pay enough to support a family.

Speaking of prayer, our second reading also challenges us to do more. Paul recommends prayers for "kings and for all in authority" (1 Timothy 2:2). It's easy to pray for friends and family; how much time do we give to prayers for government leaders and executives? Even the leaders with whom we disagree could use more guidance from the Holy Spirit. Paul reminds us that God wants everyone to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4), sinners as well as saints, terrorists and embezzlers, atheists and agnostics. I'll bet you don't spend much time praying for the "bad guys." Yet Jesus said, "Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you" (Matthew 5:44). I can't say I've ever heard anyone say that was their favorite Bible passage. But if Jesus expects more from those who love him, who are we to let him down?

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