

NOVEMBER
2021

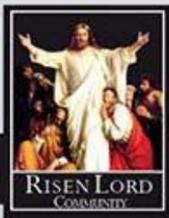


ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS



St. Martin de Porres

Feast Day: 03 November



DAILY READINGS & REFLECTIONS



ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

NOVEMBER
2021

Eternal Father we offer you the body
and blood, soul and divinity of your
dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus
Christ, offered at Masses throughout
the world today, for our sins,
sinners in our own home, sinners in
our family and the holy souls
in purgatory. Amen

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Monday November 1

Solemnity of All Saints

Revelation
7: 2-4, 9-14

Psalm 1 John
24: 1-6 3: 1-3

Matthew
5: 1-12

You too are called to be a Saint!

Today we celebrate and contemplate on the lives of the numerous saints who have been gifted to the Church from all walks of life. Their lives and sanctity reveal to us that holiness is not impossible. In Rev 7 the redeemed declare, "Who saves but our God who sits on the throne and the Lamb." The Lord's love and grace in their lives took them to the heights of spiritual perfection. How do we define these saints? If we read our Lord's Sermon on the mount, we see a certain kind of definition. Our Lord says - Blessed are the ... and he mentions various kinds of people.. those who mourn, those who are gentle, those who hunger for justice, those who are merciful, those who are pure in heart, those for work for peace, those who are persecutet and those for are insulted. .. for the Kingdom of God. Our Lord says, their reward will be great in heaven. As much as we seek the intercession of saints, let us strive to learn from their life examples and live as they lived and our reward will be great in Heaven.

Prayer: Abba Father, we thank you for the fragrant lives of the saint and as you saved them, save us through the blood of your Son Jesus. Amen

Tuesday November 2

All Souls' Day

Solomon
3: 1-9

Psalm Romans
23: 1-6 5: 5-11

Luke
5: 1-11

Commemoration of the souls of the faithful departed

The first reading tells us that although those that are virtuous and faithful to God may not be highly regarded by the world, they will be rewarded in eternity. Trust in God through the vicissitudes of life is the theme of today's best-known psalm. St Paul reminds us that Our Lord Jesus Christ sacrificed his life for our sins so that we are forgiven and, having been reconciled, we can be even more confident of salvation with the Risen Lord within us. The Gospel Acclamation assures the Blessed are welcome into the Kingdom promised at the beginning of the world. In the Gospel Proclamation our Lord Jesus promises us that having been given to Him by the Father, he will not lose us but if we believe in Him, he will raise us up on the last day to have everlasting life in the Kingdom. With such iron-clad promises, we have no reason to fear but should always step forward in faith and hope in God.

Prayer: Abba Father, keep on filling us with the Holy Spirit so that we may be constantly reminded of Your promises and sustained by them. Amen

Wednesday November 3

St. Martin de Porres, religious

Romans
13: 8-10

Psalm
112: 1-5,9

Luke
14: 25-33

Grace to love when there is no reason

In his letter to the Romans, St Paul reiterates how one must love. As all commandments are reflected in the one commandment of loving God and loving your neighbor as yourself, he accentuates the fact that one cannot naturally break any other commandment, as love supersedes all. In the Gospel of St. Luke Christ uses two examples to illustrate the point that to be his disciple we need to have mature dialogue and an unwavering commitment. To stress the point, he speaks boldly and even exaggerates how one must give the first place to God and not to any loved ones. The thought of loving one's family less than God seems against the very principle Jesus speaks of. But as I reflect on this, the love we have is often a self-centred love. Even loving family is often for our satisfaction and benefit. We are called to a greater love; 'agape' love; selfless love, just as Christ loved us. "Let us ask the Lord to help us understand His love.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, give us the grace to love when there is no reason to love! Amen

Thursday November 4

St. Charles Borromeo, bishop

Romans
14: 7-12

Psalm
27: 1,4, 13-14

Luke
15: 1-10

There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents.

Today's first reading speaks to us about accountability. It reminds us how to correctly love one another. We need to train our minds to centre on how we conduct ourselves in the light of what God wants of us than equating ourselves to others. In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul further cautions us to focus on what God wants of us rather than what we expect of others. If we follow God's will, God gives us just a clay lamp's worth of light, just sufficient to take a few more steps. You have to trust God with that kind of light. In the Gospel we speak of the parable of the lost sheep. Christ leaves the 99 in search of the lost. Jesus sweeps the house and then throws a party when the lost are found. It is entirely and thoroughly insane. And, that is why the Gospel is such Good News. When a soul is lost, the soul is missed, ached after, and not only worth the search party, but worth the celebration when the soul is brought back into the fold.

Prayer: Abba Father, help us feel Your presence in times when we're lost. Help us to find our way back to You, and to You alone. Amen

Friday November 5

31st Week in Ordinary Time

Romans
15: 14-21

Psalm
98: 1-4

Luke
16: 1-8

Living with the Lord's wisdom

The key to making it in the world is shrewdness. This shrewdness was exhibited by the manager as he was being pulled up for his lax ways of dealing with his master's debtors. He found a way to please His master as well as the debtors. In the same way St Paul knew that he had a problem with the Jews since they knew his background and had a mental block in relating to him, hence he felt his call was to the Gentiles. He strove to witness among them and thus was shrewd in his choice of his audience. He left the work of preaching to Jews to the apostles while he travelled far and wide to the non-Jewish territories breaking the word of God and changing lives. We are also called to be shrewd in our spiritual life. We need to look into our strengths and weaknesses and respond to the call of the Lord. In our weakness and ability to be clever, our Lord wishes to share His saving power with us and save us from the fate that awaits us. We are not abandoned in our journey but have the Lord to love us and lead us to Heaven.

Prayer: Abba Father, we pray for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in all that we do. Amen

Saturday November 6

Blessed Virgin Mary

Romans
16:3-9, 16, 22-27

Psalm
145: 2-5, 10-11

Luke
16:9-15

Responding to the earthly call to inherit the Kingdom

Today's Gospel reading is taken from the parable of the dishonest manager. The manager was charged with squandering his master's property. Before the trial he acted & handled the situation wisely to receive praise from his master. It is a reminder to be responsible for the work, wealth, talents & resources entrusted to us by the master. The present moment is a gift given to do our best spiritually, socially or personally. Failures & trials may overwhelm us but our grounded understanding in the Lord will save us. Let us pierce the confusion believing it is always possible for God to move mountains when we say yes to Him. We cannot keep one foot on His promises and the other on doubts. We know the promises of God are a blessing and soul refreshing. We hold on to them dearly and it helps us rise above the situations we face. We are invited to draw strength and grace from God in the power of the Holy Spirit for His work.

Prayer: Abba Father, you are faithful in all your words and gracious in all your deeds. Amen!

Sunday November 7

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kings
17: 10-16

Psalm
146:7-10

Hebrews
9: 24-28

Mark
12:38-44

Faith is the currency of heaven!

Today's First Reading and Gospel Proclamation, at a glance, seem to be telling us to give beyond our capacity. Yet they actually reveal a deep secret of the Kingdom of heaven to us, who we are citizens of heaven though now in this world.

In the First Reading, Prophet Elijah was sent to a widow, who was on the verge of utter hopelessness due to the severe drought. She had made up her mind to eat her last meal with her son and face death. The Word of God came to Prophet Elijah that God had directed a widow to provide food for him. We can learn two lessons from through this incident.

1. God's leading encouraged Elijah to boldly request from the widow to make his meal from the last bit of flour and olive oil because he had received confirmation from God that the widow would provide him food. He had a Word for her from God. This would ensure that "her jar of flour would not be used up, and the jug of oil would not run dry" until the rain came.

2. The widow had an obedient heart that was open to God's Word that enabled her to draw the miracle from heaven.

Both Elijah and the widow chose not to look at their circumstances and the strange nature of God's direction, but to trust His Word wholeheartedly. Both of them experienced an "open heaven" above their lives.

In the Gospel proclamation, another poor widow also did the most impractical thing, putting into the temple treasury, all she had to live on. Heaven's financial values are different to this world's, as shown by our Lord Jesus who watched people putting their big offerings to the temple treasury. The One who sees the heart and the hidden thoughts of the mind, saw the deep love which made the poor widow put in the last two coins she had. She trusted that the God she loved, would provide her next meal. Imagine the treasure she would have gotten deposited in her heavenly bank account! The poor widow knew the secret of a wise investment. The Lord is teaching us an important lesson of living in freedom and joy, to those who think we are more smarter and advanced in the 21st century. In today's Second Reading, the letter to the Hebrews, the author confirms that our Lord and Teacher would know exactly how things are in heaven, because he was in heaven, and is now appearing for us in God's Presence. And He is the One who will come in glory to judge according to Heaven's Law, not that of earth. What does that mean? All our wise arguments, disputes and excuses will not matter at the end. So let us resolve today to submit to heaven's Wisdom, the leading of the Holy Spirit in every big and small decision in our life.

Prayer: Abba Father, grant me the grace to enter that reality fully of not worrying each day, to walk by faith and not by sight. Amen.

Monday November 8

32nd Week in Ordinary Time

Solomon
1: 1-7

Psalm
139:1-10

Luke
17: 1-6

A call to simple faith

A man asked a friend to join him at the bar. The friend says, my faith does not allow it. Are you a Christian? The man asks. The friend says Yes, but Faith is my wife's name. The disciples ask the Lord: "Increase our faith". Of course, the faith the disciples ask for is not the "Faith" in the story. "Faith" obstructs husband's desires, but faith for disciples is to help them accomplish the Lord's desires. Our Lord had instructed the disciples to not cause the weak brothers and sisters to stumble and sin. Instructions are given also to forgive without limits the sinners who repeatedly offend and repeatedly beg forgiveness. This is a huge challenge. So, the disciples ask for increased faith. Responding our Lord says that simple faith is sufficient. It is not about great faith in God but faith in a great God. Faith is faithfulness. It is simple obedience and complete loyalty to the Lord. A person of faith is one who is wise, free of scandal and always forgiving.

Prayer: Abba Father, we pray for steadfast faith through every season of our life. Amen

Tuesday November 9

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome

Ezekiel
47: 1-2,8-12

Psalm
46: 2-9

1 Cor
3: 9-17

John
2: 13-22

God is dwelling in our hearts, He and I are one!

We can often think that God dwells only in huge church buildings. In today's reading, it is made clear that each individual is a temple of God, God dwells in our hearts. Together, we become God's building called the church through the spirit of God who lives in us. Jesus Christ laid the foundation for us by giving his life for the Church, therefore we must take utmost care to build on this foundation. We are responsible for our own actions, if we defile the temple of God. By doing the wrong thing, or by not following in Christ's foot steps, we are contributing to the destruction of the church which Christ himself built. As we see in today's Gospel reading, this is one of the few occasions where our Lord loses his temper and chases people out as they have made the house of God a market place. The questions we need to ask is do we realise who we are? Are we led by the Holy Spirit in our day to day activities.

Prayer: Abba Father, increase my faith. Amen

Wednesday November 10

St. Leo the Great

Solomon
6: 1-11

Psalm
82: 3-7

Luke
17: 11-19

In our isolation He is our consolation

Today's Gospel proclamation shows us how our Lord Jesus cleansed the ten lepers. The lepers knew they were unclean as deemed by Jewish law. They were not allowed into the city and no one would even come anywhere close to them. That is why they call out to our Lord Jesus from a distance asking him for his mercy. In today's world this incident seems familiar. Due to the pandemic many are isolated and are living in fear, but yet they keep calling out to the Lord for his mercy. Our Lord Jesus healed the lepers, but the healing was witnessed only when they turned back to go away. We have been calling out to the Lord in our anguish and he has been protecting and healing us in this way. But most often we fail to see his miracle working power. We often think it has been purely our effort that has saved us thus far. Only one leper was able to see the hand of God in his healing and turned back praising God for his miracle. The hand of our Lord has always been upon us. **He keeps protecting and healing us everyday. Let us be like that one leper.**

Prayer: Abba Father, help my unbelief and help me always to see your hand in my life. Amen

Thursday November 11

St Martin of Tours, Bishop

Solomon
7: 22-8:1

Psalm
119: 89-91, 130-135, 175

Luke
17: 20-25

I am a friend of God

As was with the disciples and the early church, hardships and enduring rejection are a prerequisite for us to enter the Kingdom of God. That Kingdom could be accessed within us. It is to do with a state of being, that is living in Christ Jesus. On their own, our natural faculties, cannot take us there. It is accessible only through a surrendering of our natural state and allowing our spirit to dwell in the Spirit of Christ. There is a gigantic leap into something new and unknown when suffering pervades.

When living with our natural abilities, suffering and rejection become detestable and unwelcome. Living in the Spirit however, and holding on in faith, our spirit alone experiences the heavens opened and the love of God being poured out into our hearts, through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (Rom5/5). Heaven invades our lives and suffering becomes redemptive. Hardships and rejection become spring boards to enter the realm of God through the Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Abba Father, may our souls benefit living within your Spirit, allowing us to be your friends, now and forever. Amen

Friday November 12

St. Josaphat, Bishop & Martyr

Solomon
13:1-9

Psalm
19: 2-5

Luke
17: 26-37

Let us commit ourselves to the true God and worship Him alone

Today's first reading explains that the people saw the beauty of the nature but were distracted by what they saw and felt, and worshipped what was visible, instead of the invisible 'Maker' of them all. In our lives have we given the first place to the Almighty God and worshipping Him alone or are we worshipping other gods that satisfy our cravings for a brief moment? These gods can be an addiction to alcohol/ drugs, wrong relationships, pornography, wealth, power and career. They make us forget the true God. We can even make our family or even a mobile phone, television, vehicle, sport and various other things, gods in our lives. The Gospel proclamation tells us if we living lost in our day-to-day affairs and push God away, as if God does not exist then we need to repent and turn back to God. Though we belong to a Catholic family or to a particular community will not give us a certificate to inherit the Kingdom of God rather we are called to change our ways and repent.

Prayer: Abba Father, the whole of creation declares Your beauty, might and glory. I fall at Your feet and worship You. Amen

Saturday November 13

St. Francis Xavier Cabrini

Solomon
18: 14-16, 19:6-9

Psalm
105: 2-3, 36-37,42-43

Luke
18: 1-8

Persistence in prayer

In today's Gospel proclamation, I read through these few verses, which grabbed my attention about an unjust Judge. There was a widow under his nose, and it irritated him to serve the widow justice. Widows and orphans are among the most vulnerable of God's people. Both old testament prophets and new testament apostles insist that these needy people should be properly cared for. To persist in prayer and not give up does not mean endless repetition or painfully long prayer sessions. Constant prayer means keeping our requests continually before God as we live for him, believing he will answer in His time. When we live by faith, we are not to give up. God may delay answering, but his delays always have good reasons. As we persist in prayer, we grow in character, faith, and hope. As I write this, I've seen and experienced what it is to be a father. I treasure my children, and I will always want the best for them at the right time. Similarly our heavenly Father wants to bless us as we turn to Him in prayer.

Prayer: Abba Father, I pray that all your children become prayer warriors according to your will. Amen

Sunday November 14

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Daniel
12: 1-3

Psalm
16: 5-11

Hebrews
10: 11-14,18

Mark
13: 24-32

Be vigilant at all times and pray...Luke 21:36

Today's readings centre on the signs that will warn us of the end. It is not meant to scare us, but to remind ourselves to prepare for the end. The Father loves us and wants us to live with Him forever, in His heart. Therefore, He wants us to prepare ourselves for what will come.

From the book of Daniel, the first reading paints a picture of what the last days of the world will be like. The second reading and Gospel acclamation give us an idea of how we can prepare ourselves.

Today's second reading from St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews says, "For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Hebrews 10:14). When we accept that the Lord Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins, we are being made perfect throughout our lives, until the day when we come face to face with the Father.

The Gospel acclamation says, "Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to stand before the Son of Man." This is the key to preparing ourselves for the end. It is by building a relationship with the Father through personal prayer and doing what He tells us to do. When we accept that the Lord Jesus' sacrifice on the cross brought us salvation and we learn to journey with Him throughout our lives, we will be preparing ourselves for an eternity in the Father's heart.

Today's Psalm explains what prayer and a relationship with God can do for us. Psalm 16:11 says, "You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever." Through prayer the Lord can guide us and show us the right way to live.

Last year, when Dr. Scott Hahn gave a talk to the Risen Lord Community, he said when we reach the point of death, we do not have to be scared because the Lord Jesus gave up His life as a gift of love and turned death into a sacrifice. When we reach heaven, it will be nothing in comparison to this life on earth. Therefore, we must prepare ourselves by making God a priority in our lives. Waking up each morning to sit before the Lord and asking Him to transform us into His holiness; to take away fear or anxiety we have and replace it with His love. This will be our preparation for eternity.

Prayer: Abba Father, I accept you as my Lord and Saviour, prepare me now for an eternity with you. Amen.

Monday November 15

St. Albert the Great, Bishop & Doctor

1 Maccabees

1: 10-15,41-43,54-63

Psalm

119: 53,61,134,150,155,158

Luke

18: 35-43

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord...

Today we live in a world, where 'our faith' is put to the ultimate test. Science and technology are trying to play God. Human eyes are open to seeing the glory in success at any cost. People wish to create a comfortable future on earth. Are we blinded by this world and its powers of darkness? "I am the light of the world," says the Lord; "whoever follows me will have the light of life." John 8:12 God has many things in store for us but we must fix our gaze on the things above so we may see. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Colossians 3:2 We may have troubles in this world but Christ has overcome the world by fixing their eyes on the Lord, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2 Today our Lord is asking me "What do you want me to do for you?" Am I willing to stand up for my faith even to be persecuted, ridiculed and put to death?

Prayer: Abba Father, have mercy on me, let me not grow weary and loose heart but stand firm in my faith for your glory! Amen

Tuesday November 16

St Margaret & St. Gertrude

2 Maccabees

6: 18-31

Psalm

3: 2-7

Luke

19:1-10

People looks at the outward appearance... the Lord looks at the heart

In today's first reading we are introduced to Eleazar, the Second High Priest, a man from whom we can learn valuable traits. He knew well the stakes at hand – He either pleased God or defiled the laws of God to save his mortal life. How many of us would twist 'for the time being' into the opposite to suit our own comfort and convenience? Eleazar knew his God and he had an "Eternal Perspective" in mind, which made his decision clear, albeit not necessarily easy. Do WE have this eternal perspective in mind. Eleazar was also concerned of the example he was setting. Are WE mindful that others are watching our reactions? Our children, our colleagues, our employers, our friends and most importantly, God himself? In today's Gospel we meet Zacchaeus we are a familiar with. He was eager and curious to SEE who this Jesus was. As 1 Samuel 16.7 says "... man looks at the outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart". Jesus saw Zacchaeus' heart and offered him Salvation.

Prayer: Abba Father, give us your eternal perspective as we face the joys and challenges of life. Amen

Wednesday November 17

Our Lady of Sorrows

1 Maccabees
7: 1, 20-31

Psalm
17: 1-8, 15

Luke
19: 11-28

Investing in God's Kingdom

In the first reading, Heaven-bound thinking underscores the mother and son's behaviour. They understood that though the tyrannical king had power over their mortal bodies, he had no power over their minds and hearts which belonged to God alone. Even as they approached a torturous death their focus was on the day they would be reunited in heaven, trusting that God would vindicate and uphold them. We have been entrusted with gifts, talents, and abilities. Whatever our role in life we are called to put God first. We are called to invest all that he has given us in our own spheres of influence for the building of God's kingdom. The more we invest in building the kingdom of God the more riches we amass in heaven. God's great women and men understood this and happily gave up everything. One of these is St Elizabeth of Hungary born a Princess and married at a young age to a German nobleman, she led a simple life devoting herself to works of charity.

Prayer: Abba Father, show me how you want me to invest the gifts, talents, and abilities you have given me. Amen

Thursday November 18

Dedication of the Churches of St. Peter & Paul

1 Maccabees
2: 15-29

Psalm
50: 1-6, 15-29

Luke
19: 41-44

Through Him, with Him and in Him...

The failures or disruptions we experience because of our ignorance or lack of knowledge can be pretty frustrating. The disappointment that stems from such instances often make us wish if only we had known better. In today's Gospel proclamation, we see our Lord Jesus also wishing along the same lines as He says, "If this day you only knew what makes for peace", because the people of old have failed to accept the way of salvation and were walking towards destruction. I feel we are no different. When troubles burden us, we look for quick ways to ease them, falling into ignorant ways of living. In anger we turn against our own family and friends, simply failing to remember that we are called to love one another as our Lord loves us. We follow crooked paths to get something done because we are not patient enough to wait on the Lord. However, it is never too late to turn back to the Lord, because we know that in Him, we can find perfect peace and forgiveness each time we fail.

Prayer: Abba Father, let us choose to follow in Your ways, even when things become hard, because You alone can fill us with peace. Amen.

Friday November 19

33rd Week in Ordinary Time

1 Maccabees
4: 3-37, 52-59

1 Chr
29:10-12

Luke
19: 45-48

Do not fear

Today we encounter two fearless people, both up against the odds and seemingly weaker than their opponents, but victorious. There was Judas and his 3000 ill equipped soldiers against the military might of Gorgias' extensive fortifications and cavalry. And there was Jesus, a lone ranger against the religious leaders and merchants of the Temple. Judas' cry is worth recalling, "Do not fear the number of the enemy or be afraid of their attack... cry out to God, for if he so wishes he will remember his covenant and destroy that army before us in this very day. And all the nations will know that someone saves and liberates Israel. Similarly Jesus was unafraid as he overturned the tables of the merchants and cried out, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations..but you have turned it into a den of robbers. We focus of the fearlessness of our Lord and can be convinced that when we have to fight such battles, He is and will be at our sides, edging us on and encouraging us to be fearless.

Prayer: Abba Father, I chose to surrender my fears at the feet of Jesus and take up the His cause of justice as he encourages me to be fearless. Amen

Saturday November 20

Blessed Virgin Mary

1 Maccabees
6: 1-13

Psalm
9: 2-6, 16 & 19

Luke
20: 27-40

A Glimpse of eternity!

Today's Gospel proclamation brings out the mindset of the Sadducees who did not believe in the Concept of the resurrection. When the Sadducees refer to an old law where a man is supposed to marry his brother's widow to provide a legal heir to the property, our Lord Jesus Christ raises the standards and shows the difference in earthly conditions and the heavenly realm. As we are children of the resurrection and the children of God, we are reminded that marriage and being given in marriage will not persist in the heavenly world. In the new life we will live face to face with God in eternity. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given us ample evidence about the next life. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be ..." (John 14:3) Are we prepared enough to enter this new life where we will all be equally children of God and brothers and sisters of each other?

Prayer: Abba Father, enlighten us to know the beauty and reality of the life you have called us to in the future. Amen

Sunday November 21

Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King

Daniel
7: 13-14

Psalm
93: 1-5

Revelation
1: 5-8

John
18: 33-37

Hail Redeemer, King Divine

Today we celebrate the feast of Christ the King. The concept of a king is a foreign concept to most of us as in recent centuries we are not used to being under the rule of earthly kings. But the readings today challenged me to ask Christ, what it personally means for me that He is King. How does the truth that Jesus is King affect me, personally? What am I celebrating today? In the very first reading of the day, we are told of Daniel's vision where he witnesses Christ Jesus being given authority, power and an everlasting dominion. In the book of Revelations, the writer declares that Jesus Christ is the ruler of the kings of the earth.

God gave man dominion over all the earth. We were to rule this earth under the rule of God. Through our sin we lost this dominion and it was satan who had his way. Through the cross and resurrection of Jesus, the dominion man so foolishly lost was reclaimed by Jesus. He is now given all authority, dominion and power. My life now belongs to our Lord Jesus. He is perfectly in control over the events of this world and over the events of my life. He has dominion over this earth and He has shared that dominion with His followers. The book of revelations say that not only is our Lord given all authority, not only is He the magnificent ruler of all the kings of the earth but He has loved us and in His love, He has freed us from our sins through His precious blood. My precious Lord, King Jesus, seated on His throne and yet a servant leader – He sits there with absolute love for me. His heart is for me. He is concerned about the things that concern me. He does not sit aloof. He does not make me work to come before Him. He does not want me grovelling or pleading – He does not need me to bribe or plead with anyone to get access to Him – My King, seated on His throne, has given me access to come before Him boldly and unafraid. And He reassures me that He is perfectly in control. Even when it feels like the world around me is falling apart, He is in control. He never stopped being King. To live under the rule of a king means to adjust to the rules and regulations of His Kingdom. It means to adapt to the culture of that kingdom. In the culture of heaven, in this Kingdom of God, I am asked to bring captive to Jesus Christ every thought that raises itself against the knowledge of God. As I declare that Jesus is King over my life and I submit myself to His authority, I do so with the renewed knowledge and conviction that He is so perfectly in control of my life. That every area of my life is under His control. Even when it seems otherwise, I can trust Him.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, King of my life, I rededicate myself to you. Lead me Jesus. Rule me Jesus. I belong to You. Amen

Monday November 22

St. Cecilia, Virgin & Martyr

Daniel
1: 1-6, 8-20

Daniel
3: 52-56

Luke
21: 1-4

I choose to live and give my best to you

Today's readings are about giving the best we have to the Lord. In the 1st reading, when the Babylonian King captured Israel Daniel & his friends offered to give them the best of service to honor the Almighty God. In the gospel today we are told that our Lord Jesus stood to watch a poor widow offer everything she had to the Lord. We are told how much he was pleased and moved by this offering. How often do we give what is spare to the Lord & what is used & put away to the poor. We seek pleasure & satisfaction by giving a mere few minutes of the day to say a short prayer when the Lord has given the best of 24 hours to us each day thus far. What will you give the Lord? St. Cecilia is the patron saint for Music & it is said that on the night of her wedding she sang to the Lord till her husband agreed to convert to Catholicism and was able to see an angel that was guarding her. She too gave the best of her life to the Lord & suffered martyrdom in exchange for a place in eternity. Let us give our best to him as well.

Prayer: Abba Father, through your great love for me you have given the opportunity for me to live & give the best to you. Amen

Tuesday November 23

St. Clement, St. Columban, Bl Miguel Augustin

Daniel
2: 31-45

Daniel
3: 57-61

Luke
21: 5-11

Remaining faithful to the end

What we are facing today has been foretold by Christ. In today's gospel proclamation the Lord mentioned, that nations will rise against nations, kingdoms against kingdoms, there will be persecutions, wars, earthquakes, famines and pestilences. Daniel explained this in interpreting King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Kingdoms would come and go, he said. Some strong, some weak and some even divided. Yet it is God's Kingdom, built from stone not cut by human hands that will last forever. If there is one thing this pandemic has taught us, it is that no political or medical system can offer us a perfect or viable solution. Only the Lord through His indelible love and mercy having given it all for us, could save us not just from a virus but from a greater death of our souls. Through our patient endurance we will gain our souls. The Lord assures us if He will remain faithful to the end, He will guide us with His power and wisdom and give us the prize of the heavenly kingdom

Prayer: Abba Father, Empower me daily to press on and make heaven my goal until the end. Amen

Wednesday November 24

St. Andrew Dung-Lac & Companions

Daniel
5: 1-6, 13-28

Daniel
3: 62-67

Luke
21: 12-19

Praise & Worship

In the today's world of social media stars and television wanna be's, we are so used to giving praise and admiring people for their various skills. We see thousands of comments on youtube or facebook heaping praises on an artistic expression. But when it comes to giving praise to God, most people have a huge problem. Many say that they are contemplative and not charismatic. There is nothing wrong with either of the camps but the issue is when we cannot offer childlike simple praise to our God and creator. In the reading from Daniel when the king and his courtiers offered praise to the gods for the gold vessels, the hand appeared as warning on the wall. Do we need to see or hear a warning for us to start offering praise to God? Our Lord tells us that we will be taken before kings and governors and the reason is not that we will be praised but that we will witness to the love of God and that His name will be lifted up and witnessed to.

Prayer: Abba Father, I praise and thank you for the gift of life and love I experience through your Son Jesus. Amen

Thursday November 25

St. Catherine of Alexandria

Daniel
6: 12-28

Daniel
3: 68-74

Luke
21: 20-28

Our God who saves

in the First Reading, the declaration that King Darius makes is true not only for today but for all eternity. The God who saved Daniel from the den of lions, still delivers and saves His people even today. Maybe today, our den of lions is a representation of the circumstances we are placed in. Do we allow them to devour us or do we cling on to God as our Saviour in the midst of the most tragic circumstances? In the Gospel Proclamation, we are given a vivid description of the end times. However, it sounds familiar to what have faced, in the midst of the Global Pandemic, when we are in lockdown and not able to enter into other cities or travel to other countries. In the midst of this, we are given a glimpse of hope. Even though, it may seem like our situations are hopeless like the lion's den and the description of the end times, the Lord Jesus is showing us that it has only just started. We are called to live the Gospel, stand erect and raise our heads and gaze to Heaven.

Prayer: Abba Father, let your light shine in the darkness of our hearts today. Amen

Friday November 26

34th Week in Ordinary Time

Daniel
7: 2-14

Daniel
3: 75-81

Luke
21: 29-33

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. - Luke 21:33

The first reading today is taken from the Book of Daniel which describes his vision of the four beasts. Visions are a way that God communicates to us. We have seen and heard of many stories of visions in the lives of Saints who are mystics. However, what should interest us is the fact that Mystics believe that visions are not the goal of the spiritual life. Most of them had their visions early in their journey and moved into a greater interiority of a spiritual communion with God. For those who have had similar experiences where we truly believe the Lord has spoken to us, His will for us is not to stop there but rather find Him more and more in this greater reality. As mentioned in today's Gospel, we've become experts to analyse current situations and fix our future with regard to family, finances, work life. But it is always important to read the signs of the times not in the eyes of the world but through the Word of God. His invitation is clear today. We need to go deeper in this journey without getting stuck at certain milestones.

Prayer: Abba Father, I pray for spiritual vision, open my eyes to see Your will for my life and keep me from following my own natural inclinations. Amen

Saturday November 27

Blessed Virgin Mary

Daniel
7: 15-27

Daniel
3: 82-87

Luke
21: 34-36

Father dear Father teach me how to pray

Though we often believe we grow in spirituality at church services and prayer meetings, we need to remember that personal prayer is the most important part of our lives. In the Gospel of St. Luke, there are at least nine instances where He refers to Lord Jesus going to a lonely place, like a mountain and praying till early dawn. In his letters St Paul also tells us to rejoice always, pray constantly and give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. - 1 Thes: 15-18. This is one of the main lessons the Lord taught me as He anointed me. As soon as I wake up, whatever the time I go into the vital dimension of personal prayer, then I praise and thank God and ask Him in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to fill me with the Holy Spirit. The Lord gives me the power of repentance. He also gives the desire to do God's will so that He can give me inner revelations or insights and the grace to handle various situations with His Creative, imaginative skill and innovative excellence.

Prayer: Abba Father, teach me how to pray and pray deeply every day. Amen

Sunday November 28

1st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah
33: 14-16

Psalm
25:4-14

1 Thess
3: 12-4:2

Luke
21: 25-28, 34-36

Get your act together

Today's readings centre on the promise of a Messiah and a likely time when that promise will be fulfilled. Further there is advice on how we should journey while waiting for the Messiah to make his final coming.

In these two years, countless people have met their untimely end. People from all age brackets were infected with the Covid-19 virus and breathed their last. While it was heartbreaking for us, it revealed to us the fleeting nature of our earthly life and the imminent arrival of our final departure.

Many people focus on that last day and how it will happen and what the signs are, but one pertinent question crops up - pray that you will be able to stand before the Son of Man.

In this day and age, reality entertainment shows which highlight the talent of individuals are a rage. The participants in their quest to get the most votes practice their song or act to perfection and then gain millions of followers online.

Based on what we have read today let us for a few days, during our prayer time, practice to stand before the King of kings and Lord of Lords. As we get into your prayer time, let us imagine ourselves in the Heavenly courts before our Lord Jesus. 'What will we tell him?' Will we be able to stand there rejoicing or will we be ashamed?

How can we avoid a situation where, we will tremble at the sight of the Lord? The second reading tells us - May the Lord increase more and more - not wealth, relationships, properties, achievements. And then it says - may your love for one another increase and may you increase in holiness. Holiness is separation from the world's way of thinking and acting and an increase in intimacy with the Lord. We are encouraged to live in a way that pleases the Lord. When we opt for such a life, it will often displease people around us. As I chose to be a fulltimer, I began to be misunderstood. A dear family member whom I met was frothing mad with me. The person told me to get a regular 9 to 5 job and not waste my time and life saying I was doing Church work. The person was so convinced my life was a failure and that I was trying to live depending on others. Though at no point did I request any such help. I did not and could not offer up any defence. But a short time later when the person saw me on their Gospel channel, it was an eye opener to them about what I was doing and how God's hand is upon my life. I had not gathered immense savings or built my own home but God is using me with what he has gifted me. The word says stand erect and lift up your heads for your deliverance is near.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I see the face of your Son every time I pray that I may be prepared for that day when I will stand before him. Amen

Monday November 29

1st Week of Advent

Isaiah
2: 1-5

Psalm
122: 1-9

Matthew
8: 5-11

Growing in Faith

How wonderful to possess faith that could astonish the Messiah? The faith of the centurion, is a fresh reminder of how much faith we leave unexercised. The centurion's example is simple. He first understands the Lord's authority. Despite the power he held in his position, he recognises his unworthiness before Christ, and understands that however great he may be, Christ is infinitely greater. Secondly, he trusts in power of the spoken word of God. The centurion does not rely on the seen but believes that if only the master speaks the word, healing shall flow. For him, the confirmation of the healing is not in seeing the dying servant restored but is in knowing that Jesus has spoken the word. His open and limitless faith makes way for the glory of God to be magnified. We serve a God who reigns exalted above "the highest of mountains", to whom "nations will stream", and before whom every power and circumstance bow down. In the presence of such power & authority, can't we too then, pursue an astonishing faith?

Prayer: Abba Father, we desire to walk in the light of your glory. May you always be magnified through us. Amen

Tuesday November 30

Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle

Romans
10: 9-18

Psalm
19: 8-11

Matthew
4: 18-22

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19)

The first reading explained two important elements of our Christian journey. The first is to know that Christ Jesus is Risen and that He is our Saviour. The other challenging end is to proclaim this truth from our lips, lives and believe He is our Saviour. We are called to a missionary activity by our Baptism. Therefore it is our primary call to believe in our hearts that Christ Jesus is risen and He is God. Our mission call is to go out and announce this truth that our sins are forgiven and we have a God who loves us and is our Father. The call of the first disciples is the Gospel proclamation. Today is the feast of St. Andrew. He is the brother of St. Peter. According to the Gospel of St. John, St. Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. He followed the Lord Jesus when the Lord said to him; "come and see". St. Andrew announced the good news to his brother Peter and said "we found the Messiah" (Jn 1:41). St. Andrew preached this good news everywhere he went. He is the Patron Saint of Scotland and Russia.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to share your love. Amen.

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St. Martin de Porres

St. Martin de Porres was born in Lima, Peru on December 9, 1579. At a young age, Martin's father abandoned him, his mother and his younger sister, leaving Martin to grow up in deep poverty. After spending just two years in primary school, Martin was placed with a barber / surgeon where he would learn to cut hair and medical arts.

As Martin grew older, he experienced a great deal of ridicule for being of mixed-race. In Peru, by law, all descendants of African or Indians were not allowed to become full members of religious orders. Martin, who spent long hours in prayer, found his only way into the community by asking the Dominicans of Holy Rosary in Lima to accept him as a volunteer who performed the most menial tasks in the monastery. When he was 15, he asked for admission into the convent, and was received as a servant boy and eventually was moved up to the church officer in charge of distributing money to deserving poor. He took his old trades of barbering and healing. He also worked in the kitchen, did laundry and cleaned.

After eight more years with the Holy Rosary, Martin was granted the privilege to take his vows as a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic by the prior Juan de Lorenzana who decided to disregard the law restricting Martin based on race. However, not all of the members liked this decision. Martin was called horrible names and was mocked for being illegitimate and descending from slaves.

Martin grew to become a Dominican lay brother in 1603 at the age of 24. Ten years later, he was assigned to the infirmary where he would remain in charge until his death. He became known for encompassing the virtues need to carefully and patiently care for the sick, even in the most difficult situations. His life reflected great love for God and all of God's gifts. It is said he had many extraordinary abilities, including aerial flights, bilocation, instant cures, miraculous knowledge, spiritual knowledge and an excellent relationship with animals.

When Martin was 60-years-old, he became very ill with chills, fevers and tremors causing him agonizing pain. He would experience almost a year full of illness until he passed away on November 3, 1639. 25 years after his death, he was exhumed, and his body exhaled a splendid fragrance and he was still intact.

He is the patron saint of people of mixed race, innkeepers, barbers, public health workers and more. His feast day is November 3.

On Our Knees - In His Hands is a book of reflections and aid to prayer, based on the daily readings of the mass. Its purpose is to help Catholics and other Christians engaged in the normal hustle and bustle of life to discover God's presence and direction in the practical situations they are placed in. This is made possible by a group of writers who themselves are lay people living at the heart of busy day-to-day life.

