



RISEN LORD  
COMMUNITY



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS



## St. Marguerite Bays

*Memorial: 27 June*

**JUNE 2023** | DAILY READINGS & REFLECTIONS



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

JUNE  
2023

“The heart of Jesus is the  
ultimate symbol  
of God’s mercy...  
the source from which  
salvation for all humanity  
gushed forth.”

Pope Francis

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**Editors**

Lalith Perera  
Louis Benedict  
Mario Dabera

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## Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

The difficult science of love.

The “science of embrace” manifests two pillars of love: closeness and tenderness, and Jesus knows this science well. Jesus wanted to show us his heart as the heart that loved so deeply. This is why we have this commemoration of God’s love. God loved us, he loved us with such great love.

St. Ignatius pointed out two criteria on love. The first: love is expressed more clearly in actions than in words. The second: there is greater love in giving than in receiving. These two criteria are like the pillars of true love: deeds, and the gift of self. The first was God’s love symbolized by the shepherd: closeness. The shepherd close to his flock, to his sheep that he knows one by one. The second aspect of God’s love for us: tenderness: the Lord loves us tenderly. The Lord knows the beautiful science of caresses — God’s tenderness. He does not love us with words. He approaches us, and in being close to us gives us his love with the deepest possible tenderness.

However, more difficult than loving God is letting ourselves be loved by him.

Lord, I want to love you but teach me the difficult science, the difficult habit of letting myself be loved by you. (Pope Francis)

Sweet heart of Jesus, fount of love and mercy.

## Thursday June 1

Memorial of Saint Justin, Martyr

Sirach  
42:15-25

Psalm  
33:2-9

Mark  
10:46-52

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.

Today’s first reading speaks of the works of God in nature and the way nature glorifies God. The scriptures mention the power of God’s words. The psalmist is in awe of the power of God, the wonders of his creation and his mercy and forgiveness. In today’s Gospel proclamation, the blind man Bartimaeus desired to meet Jesus. Though he was blind and his livelihood was begging, he was certainly well-informed. He already knew the background of the Lord Jesus. Because of the strong faith he had, nothing could stop him from shouting out, asking for mercy. The Lord’s immediate response was: “your faith has healed you”. Jesus publicly acknowledges his faith and heals him of his blindness. Building a relationship with God after an encounter with him renews us in the depths of our beings. Instead of pleasing the world, we desire to please God. We too have this opportunity to see God clearly and experience transformation in our lives as we cry out to him and receive a touch of his love.

Prayer: Abba Father, open the eyes of my spirit to see you more clearly than before. Amen.

## Friday June 2

Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Sirach  
44:1-9-13

Psalm  
149:1-6,9

Mark  
11:11-26

See to believe, or believe to see?

We live in a world where we have got our thinking upside down, wrong way up. In our day to day life, when dealing with family, friends or business we find honour and trust being diluted to not bring out the true essence of the Word. Jesus says to his disciples "Have faith in God." God is calling us to have faith in him, to have faith in his living word so that we can call into being things we do not see. Jesus' words first call us to believe in order to see. So what happens when we do the opposite? We will simply not see it. We often focus on the scriptures and we try our best to believe, but when we place the emphasis on the other side of the coin, the reality sinks deeper and facilitates a more positive approach. Today's Gospel proclamation also highlights God's view on forgiveness. The barrier to our prayer being heard by God is if our hearts are hardened towards anyone. "I desire mercy not sacrifice" (Mark 9:13 and Hosea 6:6). Let us get our thinking straight and be a hope filled generation.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to guide us to walk by faith and not by sight. Amen.

## Saturday June 3

Memorial of Saints Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs

Sirach  
51:12-20

Psalm  
19:8-11

Mark  
11:27-33

Good and evil.

The world is becoming increasingly complex and difficult to comprehend. Sometimes those who are connected to us and the relationships we have are contributing to the complexity. Sometimes it is the struggles of daily life and sometimes it is the society and the ways in which this world operates. On the other hand, how we are made and the freewill given to us as a gift makes it difficult for us to make decisions in day-to-day life. Choosing between good and evil or responding to a question is a matter of internal wisdom. The difference between falling into a worldly trap or not could be a single word that comes out of our mouth. Today's Gospel proclamation is giving us an opportunity to understand the power of divine wisdom that anyone could depend on, when dealing with choices in such circumstances. The Lord Jesus had the courage and wisdom to avoid falling into the trap that the pharisees were setting up for him. Let us pray that we will be able to discern between good, bad, right and wrong.

Prayer: Abba Father, guide me.  
Amen.

## Sunday June 4

### Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

Exodus  
34:4-6,8-9

Daniel  
3:52-56

2 Corinthians  
13:11-13

John  
3:16-18

#### Grace in action.

Grace is a common string that ties today's readings together. Moses cries out to God to pardon the peoples' wickedness and sins, and receive them as his own. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians to receive the Spirit of grace and peace into their relationships.

St. John writes that "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him". Evidently, grace is the nature of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and so it should be our own.

We look to the Father and we see grace in action. For he sent his only Son to pay the price of our sins. His act of laying down caused us to be raised up. We look to Jesus, and we see grace in action. For he bled and died so that we would be covered today, tomorrow and forever by the clothing of salvation. We look to the Holy Spirit, and we find the power to do the same – to be grace in action in this world.

Today on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, we are invited to reflect on this perfect union of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We remember that sin has no hold on us, as grace holds us now. We remember that just as grace opened a door for us, we are commissioned to lead others to that same door.

But what does this mean practically? We all sign up for the grace-led life, until we realise that it means saying no to offence and yes to peace, saying no to pride and yes to servanthood, and saying no to ego and yes to humility.

If grace is God's favour upon the unworthy, then as grace-led people we are called to love not only those we deem worthy in our eyes, but even those we judge as unworthy. Are we prepared to bow before "stiff-necked" people? Are we ready to part with our right to be understood and accepted? Can we truly share in the nature of the God of grace?

I read once that to look at Jesus is life, but to do as Jesus did, is abundant life. We may choose between adequacy and abundance, and between being filled and overflowing. There is enough of his grace for not just us, but for everyone. Do we remain reservoirs with closed gates, or do we open up the floodgates of our lives and pour out as Jesus did?

Held by the Father, in the presence of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit, let grace mark our lives. Let us allow the Lord to train us in the art of operating under his undeserved favour. Grace is our inheritance, so we must be changed by it, and then move in it.

Prayer: Abba Father, make us fountains of grace. Change our hearts, renew our minds and awaken our spirits to move and work through grace. Amen.

## Monday June 5

Memorial of Saint Boniface, Bishop and Martyr

Tobit  
1:3; 2:1-8

Psalm  
112:1-6

Mark  
12:11-12

Can we do what God expects of us?

In the First Reading from the book of Tobit, we read how devoted Tobit was to God. No matter what the opposition or persecution, he wanted to do what was pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. He was previously hunted down for execution for burying a Jew who was killed, and then he was doing the same thing again, without thinking of the consequences. He did not care about getting caught, but instead wanted to do what was right in the sight of God. He did as God expected of him. In the Gospel proclamation, the Lord Jesus is trying to illustrate this same point. Had the tenants of the vineyard known what pleased the owner of the vineyard they would not have killed the servants or ultimately his Son. Today the Lord is speaking to us and asking us if we will put his will above everything else. Are we going to follow Jesus and do as he commands or are we going to follow the crowd and do what the world tells us to do? As we continue our journey with the Lord, let us challenge ourselves to follow the example of Christ and put God first.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I follow you and do your will.  
Amen.

## Tuesday June 6

Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Tobit  
2:9-14

Psalm  
112:1-2, 7-9

Mark  
12:13-17

Trust in God.

Today's First reading and Responsorial Psalm remind us that there will be trials that we will have to go through in life. We can be righteous like Tobit, who was a pious man doing God's work but who became blind and faced many misfortunes in life. This can be similar to us where we may strive to live righteously, but it does not mean that we will be exempt from the struggles of life. Suffering is not a punishment from God, but it is a test of faith. As believers, we are called to be merciful and to trust in God no matter how hard it gets. When we please God with righteousness and unwavering faith, he promises us that even our future generations will be blessed. We will not need to fear bad news because our trust in the Lord means that nothing we go through will destroy us. Our hearts can be sure and free of fear, knowing that in the end, we will be victorious by trusting God in our circumstances. The sufferings we go through only mould and shape us into Christians with stronger trusting faith.

Prayer: Abba Father, may we be righteous and pleasing to you. May we trust you in what we endure in our lives. Amen.

## Wednesday June 7

Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Tobit  
3:1-11,16-17

Psalm  
25:2-9

Mark  
12:18-27

In Jesus, is fulness of joy.

Life is not about living the way we want, living in luxury with no problems, surrounded by things we want. That is the life many dream of. But the life our Lord is offering us is beyond material pleasures. It is a life surrendered to the will of the Father, a life filled with the Holy Spirit, a life that has a purpose, a life filled with love, peace and joy. This cannot be attained by gratifying the flesh. It is only achievable when we journey with our Lord; when God becomes the center of our lives. I used to try to satisfy my desires. I worked hard to achieve a high position. But I realized that the harder I worked the more my wants grew. I felt like I was running in the same place. When I encountered the Lord, my achievements did not matter to me. The Lord's love changed me. I quit the corporate world and became a teacher because of the Lord's calling. The more I journeyed with the Lord the more I began to have 'life'; surrendered to his will, full of love, peace and joy. Are we willing to surrender our lives?

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to surrender my life to you.  
Amen.

## Thursday June 8

Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Tobit 6:10-11;  
7:1, 9-17; 8:4-9

Psalm  
128:1-5

Mark  
12:28-34

Love God in all your ways.

"Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways" is a promise to cling onto. The first reading displays God's loyalty in rewarding that faithfulness. Jesus gives us a blueprint on loving God and walking in his ways. "With all our heart" - We are to serve him passionately using our time, our gifts, our talents and wealth. "With all our soul" - We need to follow God's leading, instead of depending on our own understanding, choices or worldly influences. "With all our mind" - We need to be true to his commands in our actions and words. This is necessary not only at major events but also little moments such as turning away from an urge to gossip or slander or turning away from temptation to take an easy way out. "With all our strength" - By the help of the Holy Spirit we need to wait in hope for God's answer for our trials no matter how long or how difficult. Let us become a living sacrifice of praise by the way we live.

Prayer: Abba Father, instill in me a steadfast spirit so that I may love as you want me to. Amen.

## Friday June 9

Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Tobit  
11:5-17

Psalm  
146:1-2,6-10

Mark  
12:35-37

Submit to God's will.

When Tobias returned to his parents' dwelling, he was instructed to rub the fish gall paste on his father's eyes and heal him. Tobit, his father allowed the son to do the same and he was healed of his sort of cataract. The result was Tobit's eyesight being healed and a long list of blessings being made complete where the family silver was recovered and Tobias was introduced to Sarah. Do we submit to God and allow God's hand to rest on us and complete the work he wants to accomplish? In the Jewish tradition, the father was greater than the son but he submitted to the son's action. Even our Lord Jesus though he was a wandering preacher was greater than King David whom the people held in great esteem. When we give God the glory we will see miracles, signs and wonders unfolding in various aspects of our family life and like Tobias we will give God praise with a loud voice. As the psalmist says, "My soul give praise to the Lord." Let us continue to praise the Lord at all times.

Prayer: Abba Father, you are in love with me and have the best in store for me and my family. I choose to submit to you. Amen.

## Saturday June 10

Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Tobit  
12:1,5-15,20

Tobit  
13:2,6-8

Mark  
12:38-44

God sees our hearts.

Does God hear our prayers? The archangel Raphael describes how our prayers are presented to God and how angels are with and around us. God's faithfulness is for those who call upon him. We should praise God, fast, give alms, and be righteous. We are called to turn to God and do what is true before God. "To give alms than to treasure up gold". The word 'alms' reminds us that our social system has injustice and unequal distribution of many things. Pope Francis once said "If money and material things become the centre of our lives, they seize us and make us slaves." Many people accumulate wealth and do some charitable work to compensate for not depending on God. Today's reading says: "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Let us examine our interior motives for giving: Am I ready to share? Am I ready to give myself to God and for others? Jesus wants us to store up treasures in heaven by giving not because God is watching but out of love for others.

Prayer: Abba Father, grant me the grace to depend on you so I may be able to share your love and mercy with others. Amen.

## Sunday June 11

### Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Deuteronomy  
8:2-3,14-16

Psalm  
147:12-15,19-20

1 Corinthians  
10:16-17

John  
6:51-58

#### Corpus Christi - the Community dimension.

Corpus Christi also known as the solemnity of the body and blood of Christ is a celebration of a great mystery. In a sense we have already celebrated the body and blood of Christ when we celebrated the Institution of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday.

Today we celebrate this solemnity in a joyful season after Easter where we are not limited by the constraints of Lent. In most cities there will be the solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament that also symbolises the community dimension of today's feast.

Jesus said in the Gospel proclamation, that he is the living bread that came down from heaven and whoever eats of this bread will have eternal life.

A simple question to ponder on, 'How hungry and thirsty are we for Christ?' Or have we allowed the cares of this world like wealth, power or human attachments to satiate us and have they sadly quenched our hunger for God?

Many of us faithfully receive the body and blood of Christ but may believe that participation at the Eucharist is an 'individual act' as we often refer to it as 'going for mass or hearing mass'. Let us avoid in being satisfied in only attending to fulfill our Sunday obligation but go further in participating through our prayers, singing hymns and giving our offerings.

Perhaps we could come a few minutes early, and prepare for Mass in prayer or by going for confession, leave after the final blessing and remember to offer a smile or 'hello' to those we meet in church.

While we receive Jesus' body and blood as individuals, the Eucharist is also essentially a community action. My participation and the value I place on the Eucharist has a ripple effect within my community circles.

In other words, to the extent I hunger and thirst to receive Jesus' body and blood, over all other things each week, is the extent to which I am empowered to take Christ to others. I cannot give something that I do not first have in me.

One day these earthly gatherings will pass away, when we all enter into glory, seeing Jesus face to face. We would be gathered around sharing in his heavenly banquet. But for now we should do all we can to bring others to this heavenly banquet like those unable to attend due to sickness or having fallen away because of disappointment or unbelief and those whom the Gospel has not yet reached. We have both a responsibility and an opportunity to reach them, one soul at a time.

Prayer: Abba Father, give me a hunger for the Eucharist that I would once again desire to reach the lost, one person at a time. Amen.

## Monday June 12

Tenth Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
1:1-7

Psalm  
34:2-9

Matthew  
5:1-12

God comforts us.

Scripture scholars say that St. Paul wrote at least four letters to the Corinthian church. His first and third letters were lost, and his second letter is 1 Corinthians in our Bibles, and his fourth letter is 2 Corinthians. Many think that when God comforts us, our troubles should go away. But if that were so, people would turn to God only out of a desire to be relieved of pain and not out of love for him. We must understand that being “comforted” can also mean receiving strength, encouragement, and hope to deal with our troubles. The more we suffer, the more comfort God gives us. When we feel overwhelmed, let us allow God to comfort us. Remember that every trial we endure will help us comfort others who are suffering similar troubles. Suffering for Christ refers to those afflictions we experience as we serve Christ. At the same time, Christ suffers with his people since they are united with him. Christ asked St Paul why he was persecuting him. This implies that Christ suffered with the early Christians when they were persecuted.

Prayer: Abba Father, may our sufferings be for the glory of your name.  
Amen.

## Tuesday June 13

Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua, Priest and Doctor of the Church

2 Corinthians  
1:18-22

Psalm  
119:129-133,135

Matthew  
5:13-16

God's nature is love.

In modern days, guarantees and seals are on material things. We need to see things guaranteed and have documents secured in safe places, under lock and key, or secured with passwords. This is important for us to have our future guaranteed not only for our generation but also for future generations. St. Paul is talking about a different kind of assurance or a different kind of a guarantee. This guarantee of inheritance is written in the kingdom of God, in God's heart by the Holy Spirit. It is a seal of love, written in the language of love. From the heart of God, the seal is translated to our hearts in the language of love. As God's nature is love, we are able to experience his love and share it with others. The same Spirit who placed God's love in our hearts continues to strengthen us on our journey. It may not be tangible but it could be seen through the eyes of our heart and felt in the depth of our being as “Love”. The merciful embrace of love has sealed us with the life of eternity in our human spirits.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for embracing us with your merciful love.  
Amen.

## Wednesday June 14

Tenth Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
3:4-11

Psalm  
99:5-9

Matthew  
5:17-19

Love God and love others.

The first reading describes Moses' physical glory from being in the presence of God. St Paul tells us that it happened even though the old covenant was inferior yet still impressive. How mind-blowing and more glorious is the new covenant? The Psalmist likens these to shouts of joy and clapping of hands. All of nature praises God. This gives us power to be courageous and be strengthened amid all our challenges and struggles. Our guide is the Holy Spirit. Our path is freedom. The Gospel proclamation highlights greatness in the kingdom of heaven, when we faithfully observe God's law and share it with others. It is good to reflect at the times we have failed to live out the law of love. Have we encouraged others to do the same? How can we observe this law faithfully? This law is not meant to restrict us but to help us live in freedom as children of God. Let us hold on to his promise "Heaven and earth will pass away but not one dot, not one little stroke, shall disappear from the law until its purpose is achieved".

Prayer: Abba Father, may I be faithful in observing your law of love.  
Amen.

## Thursday June 15

Tenth Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
3:15--4:1.3-6

Psalm  
85:9-14

Matthew  
5:20-26

Be reconciled with one another.

In today's Gospel Proclamation Jesus speaks to us of the importance of reconciliation and repentance. Often, we bring our offerings to the Lord but our hearts are not right with God. We carry hatred, bitterness and unforgiveness towards our brothers and sisters. The Lord is inviting us to turn towards him in repentance and be transformed into his image carrying his light to the world. As we receive this transformation, it makes it easy to forgive the unforgivable, to love the unlovable, and to live in peace with one another. In the first reading it is said: "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom". How does one receive such freedom? Can we still have freedom in a corrupt world? These were some of the questions that I had in my mind until I came into this experience. The Lord promises us this freedom when our hearts are reconciled with him and with one another. It is only when we experience the Spirit of the Lord in our lives that we will have true and everlasting freedom. Are we enjoying this freedom?

Prayer: Abba Father, by your grace, help me to be reconciled with others.  
Amen.

## Friday June 16

### Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Deuteronomy  
7:6-11

Psalms  
103:1-4,6-8,10

1 John  
4:7-16

Matthew  
11:25-30

#### Power of love.

A heart represents love. "God's love for us and our response of love for him in return is the beginning and the end of the Christian life." (*Personal Prayer by Acklin & Hicks*) To love a person is to become vulnerable. The Heart we celebrate today chose to become so vulnerable to the extent of being rejected by us. The Lord Jesus could love us so, because he was loved by the Father. He said, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love." (John 15:9) The same "power of love" is available to us when we choose to "remain" in the love of Jesus, and be totally consumed by his love. Then we can see others as he sees them. We will be empowered to love the unlovable, to not demand them to love us in return, because we are loved by the lover of our souls. He desires to fill us with his love and change us more and more into his nature, so that we too would love the weakest, the wayward and the lost, and bring them back to the Good Shepherd.

Prayer: Abba Father, through Jesus, you have taught me the true meaning of love. Amen.

## Saturday June 17

### Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Corinthians  
5:14-21

Psalms  
103:1-4,9-12

Luke  
2:41-51

#### To Jesus, through Mary.

Yesterday we celebrated the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and today, we celebrate the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. These two celebrations occur one after the other to indicate the strong connection between Jesus and Mary. Despite what we do on this earth, our ultimate goal is to reach heaven. The sure way to get there is to imitate our Lord and as easy as this may sound, we need all the help we can get to make this a reality. We are reminded that we have a special companion on this journey who can take us straight to our destination: Mary, who was the closest to Jesus, who pondered his words in her heart and drew strength from it, who endured countless circumstances beyond her understanding with a quiet trust in God and whose heart was full of love and humility. She is waiting to be our guide in our walk towards her Son. Let us choose to hold Mary's hand, imitate her quiet, contemplative ways that in turn help us experience the depth of God's love for us and deepen our confidence in God.

Prayer: Lead us to Jesus your loving Son, come with us Mary come. Amen.

## Sunday June 18

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Exodus  
19:2-6

Psalm  
100:1-3.5

Romans  
5:6-11

Matthew  
9:36--10:8

God's love transforms us.

God is always present and active in our lives. He does not distance himself from our troubles and afflictions but is present with us, comforting, consoling, providing and fighting our battles.

This Sunday's readings call us to take a closer look at how God is working in our lives. In the first reading we see the Israelites being reminded of how God led them out of Egypt and he is now calling them his own... "a kingdom of priests, a holy nation". What an awesome call! A call that is extended to us through our baptism.

God's love is unlike any other love we have ever experienced. He is the author and the definition of love. The second reading expounds on the magnitude of God's love for us, a love that is unconditional, and relentless. A radical love that took the Lord Jesus to the Cross while we were still sinning against him, so that we may be reconciled once more with God.

I too was once living in the slavery of sinfulness but the Lord Jesus paid the ultimate price for my freedom. He set me free from bondage and placed me in a spacious place and called me his child. When we accept this love deep within us, it transforms us from within, we are never the same again.

Many of us experienced this love in a retreat like the 4-steps retreat where the love of God flooded us to the core of our being and we were assured that we belonged to God and we were his treasured possession.

Yet there are still so many people in this world who are lost, broken and wounded, living in affliction and bondage. They have not experienced God's love in their lives; they do not know him as their shepherd. This is what the Lord Jesus saw when he saw the crowds and his heart was moved with compassion.

Do we hear the compassionate voice of the Lord Jesus summoning us by name to do his work in the world? We are his hands, and feet in this world. The Lord Jesus is commissioning and sending us out with the same instructions he gave the apostles telling us not to go into alien territory, but to go to our homes, our work places, our families, our friends, to our own spheres of influence.

Our words and our actions, the very essence of our being is to proclaim to those around us that "The kingdom of heaven is at hand". More than our words, it is our life examples that need to proclaim the Good News. That is more inspirational and would cause more life transformations in our neighbourhoods.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for loving me and calling me your own.  
Here I am Lord, use my life to spread the Good News. Amen.

## Monday June 19

Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
6:1-10

Psalm  
98:1-4

Matthew  
5:38-42

Forgive as we have been forgiven.

Let us think of a moment where we looked at a person and thought, "his punishment fits his crime." We sinners so unworthy were given salvation, so freely and lovingly through the perfect sacrifice of the lamb of God. Jesus who sacrificed himself for us, is asking of us, for justice and mercy to others more than we demand it for ourselves. How can we hold a grudge against others when God's salvation is for all people? Let us receive the Father's forgiveness and forgive our brothers and sisters. Through the first reading God is giving us an invitation to reflect and represent him in what we do. There is no better way to depict the Father's heart than through mercy and forgiveness. Let us surrender our lives to the Lord and ask him to cleanse us by the blood of his Son. Let us ask him to create within us a heart of mercy and love. Let us ask for his grace to accept others, to forgive others, to speak with love. He is a Father who sees the image of his likeness in his children beyond all flaws. May we receive the grace to see him in others.

Prayer: Abba Father, I surrender myself to you.  
Amen.

## Tuesday June 20

Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
8:1-9

Psalm  
146:2,5-9

Matthew  
5:43-48

Living by divine providence.

In the first reading St. Paul is writing to the Corinthians about the generosity of the Macedonian church. According to St. Paul it is something that needs to be shared, as one person's testimony will help another to grow. St. Paul says that the Macedonian church was undergoing severe problems and poverty. Yet they shared beyond their ability. Everything belongs to God, we are only caretakers. God is our source of blessing and security. It is the insecurity in the depth of our hearts that makes us hold on to things. In John 16:9 Jesus explains that people sin "because people do not believe in me". When we are unable to believe that God can look after our needs, we tend to hold onto things. We may say that it is for our children or for a day of necessity. Today let us give the truth of our hearts to him. "Jesus we are trying to look after ourselves and we have hurt ourselves and others in the process, because we could not believe in your providence. Wash us in your precious blood and release us from this bondage."

Prayer: Abba Father, we surrender what we hold onto,  
anoint us with your Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Wednesday June 21

Memorial of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Religious

2 Corinthians  
9:6-11

Psalm  
112:1-4,9

Matthew  
6:1-6,16-18

God loves a cheerful giver.

Saint Paul says that giving is like sowing a seed, but the rewards do not promise earthly wealth but spiritual wealth. The wonder of God's gift in Jesus can never be exhausted and the story can never be fully told and in doing so he says to them "can you who have been so generously treated by God, be anything else but generous to others?" In the Gospel of Matthew Jesus admonishes his followers about motive and intention in how we do what we do. Fasting, giving alms and praying out of love for God and his people, can bring great joy and healing in our lives. If they are humanly motivated, it will tend to draw attention to us and they can inflate our egos. Love supersedes all and the power of the Holy Spirit takes control giving us the grace and freedom to rise beyond rituals and traditional practices. Today is the Memorial of St Aloysius Gonzaga an Italian aristocrat who became a Jesuit. He died at a young age while caring for the victims of a serious epidemic. He is a patron saint of youth.

Prayer: Abba Father, may the power of your Holy Spirit rule our lives and may our actions be for your glory alone. Amen.

## Thursday June 22

Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
11:1-11

Psalm  
111:1-4,7-8

Matthew  
6:7-15

Hold fast to the true Gospel.

The first reading highlights Saint Paul's zealous love for the Church which is the Body of Christ. Saint Paul mentions that he has betrothed us to our Maker, to present us as a chaste virgin to Christ. The apostle Paul is dealing with probably the most powerful tool, the most dangerous threat to a church. The devil infiltrates and causes the destruction of a church from within by teachers who are veering off from the truth. In our own times we see this through the numerous churches that spring up presenting their own versions of the Gospel. In the Gospel proclamation, the Lord Jesus highlights that God is our good Father and his care over us is so immense that he knows our needs even before we ask of him. Since we have a Father who is in complete control over our lives, our ultimate focus should be to partner with the Father along with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in establishing his kingdom upon this land, so that his holy and loving will, will become a reality on earth as it is in heaven.

Prayer: Abba Father, may we proclaim the reality of your kingdom by loving our enemies and depending on your unfailing love. Amen.

## Friday June 23

Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

2 Corinthians  
11:18,21-30

Psalm  
34:2-7

Matthew  
6:19-23

### Christ our light.

A disciple of Christ is called to be the light of the world. The Gospel proclamation is urging us to not be overly concerned with accumulating material possessions and wealth. Jesus says that these things can be easily destroyed, and that true treasures are found in heaven. By "heaven," Jesus is referring to the eternal reward that awaits those who follow God's teachings and live a righteous life. Jesus also uses the metaphor of the eye as a lamp to illustrate the importance of having a healthy perspective. A healthy eye allows light in and illuminates the body, while an unhealthy eye fills the body with darkness. This metaphor can be interpreted to mean that if we have a clear, positive perspective on life and focus on spiritual values, we will be filled with light and goodness. But if we have a negative, materialistic perspective, we will be filled with darkness and negativity. We are advised to prioritize spiritual values over material possessions. By doing so, we will be filled with light and goodness and find true treasures in heaven.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I seek eternal treasures.  
Amen.

## Saturday June 24

Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

Isaiah  
49:1-6

Psalm  
139:1-3,13-15

Acts  
13:22-26

Luke  
1:57-66,80

### Purpose of our life.

Today's readings explain the essence of a Christian's life. Who are we? Where have we come from? What is the purpose of my life? Where am I going after death? These are perennial questions that rise up in any human being. Don't we like to have answers for these questions? We do! Well, the answers are; we come from the heart of God, I am a child of God, I have come to do your will, O God, I go back to the heart of God. Today's first reading says that God has chosen us even before we were born. The Psalmist took this reality further on to say "I praise you, for I am wonderfully made". We are children of God. This is our true identity and there is no turning back but to live God's will in our lives. That is the purpose of our lives. St. John the Baptist lived his life according to God's will. The Gospel proclamation beautifully proclaimed the identity of St. John the Baptist and described the purpose of his life. A life lived perfectly on earth, in accordance with God's will, will certainly cross the threshold to eternity.

Prayer: Abba Father, grant me grace to live your purpose in my life.  
Amen.

## Sunday June 25

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah  
20:10-13

Psalm 69:  
8-10.14.17.33-35

Romans  
5:12-15

Matthew  
10:26-33

Happily ever after.

Since our childhood and up until now, we are taught by the world that our stories should end with a “happily ever after”. Though we may not show the world or talk about it, we have this in the back of our minds and also in our daily prayers. We pray for a happy beginning and a happy conclusion.

If we look closely at the lives of Mary and Jesus, can we come to a conclusion that their lives ended up similar to the fairytale endings we want in life?

We want Christ Jesus in our life but are we ready to drink the cup he wants us to drink? This is the question he asks his two disciples who ask for the positions on his left and right. We may be in the position of the other 10 disciples who did not ask this from the Lord directly, but deep down in our hearts, isn't it what we want as well? Power, recognition, money, and a “happily ever after”.

Today's readings invite us to remember the true meaning of our lives. We are here to share the Good News with our family and friends and lead them to the Lord in the simplest ways possible. He expects us to preach the Good News with simple acts of love and share his love with others.

What we should worry about in life is not what others are going to think of us when we decide to take the side of the Lord or talk about him, or if that is going to shake our expectations of the “happily ever after” we have been waiting for, but the true meaning of this life and the Life-Giver himself.

Most people come to the realization of this truth when they have spent their life chasing behind their ‘happily ever after’ and then they regret the same for the rest of the time they have left. But we are truly blessed to be called and come into this understanding. Therefore, let us hope that we will not lose this belongingness to the Lord.

The Lord is assuring us that we are so precious that every hair on our head is counted. There is nothing we should be afraid of. He will recognize our efforts and love in front of our Father if we do the same in this world.

Jesus understood and lived in the truth of what he came into this world for. We all have similar purposes just like how Christ did, but it is a matter of understanding what it is. Doing the will of God, was Jesus' primary purpose. It is our primary calling as well. Let us seek God's grace to do it. Let this be the truth of our lives.

Prayer: Abba Father, you know me better than I know myself.  
Let not my desires blind me from your will. Amen.

## Monday June 26

Twelfth Week in Ordinary Time

Genesis  
12:1-9

Psalm  
33:12-13,18-20,22

Matthew  
7:1-5

### The favour of God.

In today's first reading we see how Abraham responded to God's calling. He lived a life of surrender to God: trusting God and not hesitating to say "yes" to him. Because of this Abraham was highly favored by God. Wherever he went the hand of God was upon him. In the Gospel proclamation, Jesus is reminding us to surrender our lives when we are tempted to judge and criticize others. I am often tempted to judge others, specially my brothers and sisters in the church and in our community. During my prayer time the Holy Spirit showed me that unless I am surrendered to him I cannot walk in God's favour. I prefer my Lord's favour more than giving into the natural inclinations. The Lord is inviting us to look at others with his eyes, and intercede when we are tempted to judge and lift them up to his hands. Then we too can experience his favour like Abraham. Let us walk away from our natural ways and old habits to the Promised Land he is offering us where we could live a life of surrender.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for holding us in love.  
Help us to respond to you by surrendering to your will. Amen.

## Tuesday June 27

Twelfth Week in Ordinary Time

Genesis  
13:2,5-18

Psalm  
15:2-5

Matthew  
7:6,12-14

### Love others as Jesus loves us.

In our interactions, we meet different kinds of people, some are good and humble and some are the opposite. However, today the Lord asks us to treat them all with loving hearts as we love ourselves. It is a challenging act, how can we lovingly treat people who are against us? God invites us to enter through the narrow gate to find true joy. In this context, we can hear a deeper calling from the Lord, which we might hesitate to accept. The calling is to believe him when it is difficult to believe, to trust in him when we are in darkness and to hope in him when we are lost, since he is the Almighty. He can change any pain, any darkness, any hopelessness into joy. We have seen how God helped his people when they were in the middle of storms. The question is, are we ready to trust him? Are we ready to give up our ways for the sake of his name? Often, the answer is not. But if we keep trusting in him, no matter what comes our way, he will raise us up and make a new path for us to walk on.

Prayer: Abba Father, show me how to love like you have loved me.  
Amen.

## Wednesday June 28

Memorial of Saint Irenaeus, Bishop, Martyr and Doctor of the Church

Genesis  
15:1-12.17-18

Psalm  
105:1-4.6-9

Matthew  
7:15-20

Remain united to God.

Today's first reading reminds us that God is always faithful. He is a God who keeps his promises. Just like Abraham had faith and trusted in the Lord's promises, we are called to trust in God and in him alone. Through today's Gospel proclamation, Jesus reminds us to be aware of the things that may lead us astray. The world may teach us that gaining wealth, glory, power and fame is the path that leads to happiness. It also may lead us to believe that indulging in our selfish desires is the only way to find contentment. These however, are false promises which reach out to us like wolves in sheep clothing. They lead us away from God who is the source of true joy. God promises us everlasting happiness and if we want to bear the fruits of the promises of God, we must be united to him. Just like a good tree bears good fruits, as long as we remain united to God, we will bear fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Our lives will be a testament for his glory.

Prayer: Abba Father, fill us with your Holy Spirit that we will be united to you.  
Amen.

## Thursday June 29

Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles

Acts  
12:1-11

Psalm  
34:2-9

2 Timothy  
4:6-8.17-18

Matthew  
16:13-19

Bearing witness to Christ.

Today we celebrate the solemnity of the pillars of the Church. St. Peter being the first Pope was called to carry out the mission to the Jews while St. Paul was called to do the same for the Gentiles. Both of these prominent characters had to suffer for the sake of Christ and be martyred. St. Peter was willing to be crucified head down and St. Paul was beheaded. Both had a strong conviction and were willing to face obstacles carrying out their mission. If the same question is raised by Christ "Who do you say I am?", like St. Peter do we answer saying: "You are the Christ, the son of the living God"? Having professed our faith, are we convinced to be engaged in mission whole heartedly with a zealous missionary zeal for the Lord? Let us invoke the power of the Holy Spirit to be empowered in a special way to fulfill this calling. As we are called to be involved in the triple functions of Christ through Baptism, as priests, prophets and kings let us be prepared to do our part for the sake of Christ our Lord.

Prayer: Abba Father, make me strong and bold to witness to your Son.  
Amen.

## Friday June 30

Twelfth Week in Ordinary Time

Genesis  
17:1.9-10.15-22

Psalms  
128:1-5

Matthew  
8:1-4

Faith is the gateway for miracles.

Today's first reading presents one of the greatest promises in the Old Testament. It is beyond comprehension to believe that a 100 year old man could be capable of producing an offspring. This promise came from God when Abraham was 75 years old and took another 25 years to be fulfilled. The faithfulness of God is manifested as Isaac is born and all the other promises are fulfilled. I too, experienced the birth of my daughter in a miraculous way as I was not able to conceive for many years. 28 years ago, the Lord spoke to me through Judges 13:3 where my faith was supernaturally raised high by God's grace and I conceived. Another testimony was shared recently at a retreat, of a person who had been unable to conceive for 8 years and conceived after believing in a word of knowledge. Our God is the God of the impossible. Let us believe in the many promises of God that we have in his Word and apply it to the situations in our lives and receive miracles for the ultimate glory of God.

Prayer: Abba Father, you are waiting to place the crown of victory on our heads, if we say yes to your mighty plan and not our own. Amen.

## Holy Spirit

Light of our hearts.

We ought to pray to and invoke the Holy Spirit, for each one of us greatly needs his protection and his help. The more a person is deficient in wisdom, weak in strength, borne down with trouble, prone to sin, so ought he to fly to him who is the never-ceasing fount of light, strength, consolation, and holiness. Forgiveness of sins, must be sought for from him: "It is the special character of the Holy Spirit that he is the Gift of the Father and the Son. Now the remission of all sins is given by the Holy Spirit as by the Gift of God."

We earnestly implore him to wash, heal, water our minds and hearts, and to give to us who trust in him "the merit of virtue, the acquirement of salvation, and joy everlasting." It cannot be doubted in any way that he will listen to such prayer, since we read the words written by his own inspiration: "The Spirit himself asks for us with unspeakable groanings"

We ought to continually beg of him to illuminate us daily with his light and inflame us with his charity: for, thus inspired with faith and love, we may press onward earnestly towards our eternal reward, since he "is the pledge of our inheritance." (Pope Leo XIII)

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts.

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## Feedback

Dear brothers and sisters, we are always looking for ways to improve the **On Our Knees** magazine. Please take a minute and send us your comments by filling the feedback form below:

					
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# St. Marguerite Bays

Marguerite Bays was born to simple, pious farmers on 8 September 1815 in Switzerland. She was educated locally and worked as a dressmaker.

In her parish she was an exemplary committed lay person, especially dedicated to children and young girls. She also visited the sick and the dying with tireless ardour. She was a true friend of the poor, whom she called "God's favourites". She introduced missionary activities into the parish and contributed to founding the Catholic press.

She developed intestinal cancer at the age of 35 and asked Our Lady to intercede to her Son to exchange her suffering for the kind of pain that would enable her to share more directly in the Passion of Our Lord. She was miraculously cured on 8 December 1854 at the moment when Pius IX pronounced the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Instead, she had to bear a "mysterious affliction" which immobilized her in ecstasy every Friday when, physically and spiritually, she relived the phases of Jesus' passion from Gethesmane to Calvary. She also received the stigmata, like St Francis, which she did her best to hide.

She had deep love for Our Lady, whom she venerated by frequently reciting the Rosary and visiting her shrines. She also had immense love for Jesus in the Eucharist, before which she spent long hours in adoration.

Marguerite identified increasingly with the suffering of Jesus on the Cross. Happy to be called to follow him, she showed no sign of suffering, and on the contrary could be heard to utter words of adoration and submission to God's holy will. She died at 3:00 PM on Friday, 27 June 1879, absorbed in her love for the crucified Lord. She was canonized by Pope Francis on 13 October, 2019.

**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.

