

Sunday, Jan 25, 2026

Lace up your walking shoes

Do you feel different this year? What insights have you gained over the past 12 months? In what ways have you changed? What areas in your life need your attention? You may feel like resting for a while. But remember, you can't stand in one place indefinitely and be a disciple of Jesus. Christianity requires transformation and conversion, and these changes can take a lifetime. Invest in the resources (people, periodicals, books, and worship) that will serve as your walking shoes on your never-ending spiritual journey.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 8:23—9:3; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17; Matthew 4:12-23 (67). *"Immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him."*

Monday, Jan 26, 2026

Truth be told

"What is truth?" Pontius Pilate asked at Jesus' trial. His question showed how little he understood of Jesus' claim that "Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice" (John 18:37). Today, people sometimes go to the opposite extreme and are a little too quick to call something, particularly their own ideas, the Truth. However, most of us recognize that truth has to do with something or someone we can trust and rely on. For Christians, God is the one who is utterly trustworthy. How do we know this? One place to look is scripture and the truth revealed there. Listen to God's word and learn it well, and you will "belong to the truth."

2 Timothy 1:1-8 or Titus 1:1-5; Mark 3:22-30 (520/317). *"Bear your share of hardship for the Gospel with the strength that comes from God."*

Tuesday, Jan 27, 2026

Think differently

Jesus continually challenged his followers (and us) to think beyond rigid definitions and long-established rules. Angela Merici (1470-1540), founder of the Order of St. Ursula, was one who accepted this challenge. At a time when women were either supposed to marry or enter a convent, Angela understood that single women could live with their families, immerse themselves in their community, and evangelize through their good works. She considered the women who joined her mission her "daughters," and thus expanded, as Jesus calls us to do, our perception of family. In what ways do your perceptions restrict you? Be open to new ways of thinking, as Jesus and Saint Angela were.

MEMORIAL OF ANGELA MERICI

2 Samuel 6:12b-15, 17-19; Mark 3:31-35 (318). *"Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."*

Wednesday, Jan 28, 2026

Put your mind to it

The formidable thinking and writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Dominican theologian and doctor of the church, are still studied today, not only by Christian scholars but by secular philosophers as well. While Aquinas did refer to his massive and unfinished *Summa Theologiae* as "so much straw" when compared with what he came to discover in his relationship with Christ, he is nonetheless an important model for us today on the

seemingly lost art of clear and logical thinking. We can also show Thomas respect by exploring the richness found in other philosophies and beliefs and seek to include rather than exclude, to understand more than proselytize.

MEMORIAL OF THOMAS AQUINAS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

2 Samuel 7:4-17; Mark 4:1-20 (319). *"Those present along with the Twelve questioned him about the parables."*

Thursday, Jan 29, 2026

Save space for learning

Read just about any string of online "comments"—chances are if you're a thoughtful person you won't be able to get far—and you'll quickly realize that many people don't think much about what they say. In most virtual spaces, expressing opinions and feelings, no matter how shallow, uninformed, and irrelevant to the topic, is everything. So please note: Carelessness doesn't fly when it comes to the gospel. Jesus wants his disciples to take time to learn and ponder and explore his message before they start sharing it. As Saint Jerome bluntly put it: "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ!" So do your spiritual homework, and after that remember to be kind.

2 Samuel 7:18-19, 24-29; Mark 4:21-25 (320). *"The measure with which you measure will be measured out to you."*

Friday, Jan 30, 2026

Put some mustard on it

The tiny mustard seed adds flavor not only to many foods but also to a number of religious traditions. Jesus used the gospel parable of the mustard seed as a model for the reign of God. To teach humility, Jewish texts compared the knowable universe to the size of a mustard seed. And the Quran states that no soul will suffer the least injustice on the Day of Judgment because even the equivalent of a mustard seed will be accounted for on God's scales of justice. Whenever you doubt that your small efforts will make a difference, remember the quiet power of that tiny seed.

2 Samuel 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17; Mark 4:26-34 (321). *"To what shall we compare the Kingdom of God ...? It is like a mustard seed."*

Saturday, Jan 31, 2026

Discover your calling

When we hear the word *vocation*, many of us think of ordained ministry or vowed religious life. Yet each of us has a unique calling that, if discerned and embraced, would make the best use of our gifts and talents. When we haven't taken time to discover that call, our lives can feel less significant or effective than they were meant to be. In honor of Saint John Bosco (1815-88), a pioneer in vocational training, take some time to ask yourself, "Who am I called to be?" A thoughtful book, such as *A Sacred Voice Is Calling* by John Neafsey, or a heartfelt conversation with a wise friend can help your process of discernment.

MEMORIAL OF JOHN BOSCO, PRIEST

2 Samuel 12:1-7a, 10-17; Mark 4:35-41 (322). *"Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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