

Sunday, Jul 06, 2025

Do some heavy lifting

A homilist once said, “The church serves the kingdom of God. It is not the kingdom of God.” The church is not all of the kingdom but the best way to it. And God’s kingdom is already here. Jesus taught it is among us but not quite complete. God plays a central role in bringing the kingdom to its fullness, of course, but we disciples have to do some of the heavy lifting, too, to move toward a time when evil does not get the last word; sinners who seek it receive forgiveness; the suffering of those who are poor wanes; and everyone takes up God’s offer of new life forever. It’s a pretty good deal. How are you proclaiming and working toward it?

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 66:10-14c; Galatians 6:14-18; Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 or 10:1-9 (102). *“Yet know this: the kingdom of God is at hand.”*

Monday, Jul 07, 2025

When in doubt

Some people seem to be born with the gift of deep faith. They appear to have an intuitive grasp of the spiritual side of life and to know God is always with them. The rest of us must endure long periods of doubt and uncertainty that are only occasionally interrupted by brief moments of spiritual clarity. Saint John of the Cross advises us to “Live in faith and hope, though it be in darkness, for in this darkness God protects the soul.” Ask yourself, “Where am I on the continuum between faith and doubt?” Is it possible that the Lord is with you and you don’t know it? Ask God to shine his light into your darkness.

Genesis 28:10-22a; Matthew 9:18-26 (383). *“Truly, the Lord is in this spot, although I did not know it!”*

Tuesday, Jul 08, 2025

Wrestle with your fears and doubts

When you think of an encounter with God, what’s the first image that comes to mind? Wrestling? Maybe not, but it’s a powerful biblical image. Think of Jacob, who grappled with the angel of God. At the time, Jacob feared for his life because he was in dangerous territory. Would God remain with him in his hour of need? For Jacob, a crisis of faith followed. So did a wrestling match. How often do we wrestle with God? In illness, financial hardship, and other troubles, we may try to lash out at God or try to negotiate. A monk once told author Nikos Kazantzakis that he wrestled with God. “With God!” Kazantzakis exclaimed. “And you hope to win?” The monk replied. “I hope to lose.” Pray that in your next battle with God, despite feeling bruised and battered, you emerge with greater self-knowledge and stronger faith.

Genesis 32:23-33; Matthew 9:32-38 (384). *“But Jacob said, ‘I will not let you go until you bless me.’”*

Wednesday, Jul 09, 2025

A tough job but everyone has to do it

We tend to think that the word *apostle*—which means “one who is sent”—appears only in the gospels, yet the term is also used in Saint Paul’s letters to mean “one who has seen the risen Lord and has been commissioned to proclaim the Resurrection.” And in fact all believers in Christ are commissioned to evangelize. As Pope Saint John Paul II says, “No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.” But spreading the Good News is no easy task. The early

disciples were scoffed at, scolded, beaten, and tortured for delivering a message that frightened and confused many even as it liberated and heartened a few. Prepare for blowback as you fight the good fight.

Genesis 41:55-57; 42:5-7a, 17-24a; Matthew 10:1-7 (385).

“Jesus sent out these Twelve after instructing them.”

Thursday, Jul 10, 2025

Turn the tables

The Israelite Joseph had it tough as the second youngest in a family of 12 brothers. Picked on and resented because he was his dad Jacob’s favorite, Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers. The next time he meets up with his brothers, years later, the tables are turned. Joseph is in a position of power, and his brothers are the vulnerable ones. It wouldn’t have taken much for Joseph to tap into feelings of hurt, betrayal, and rage and respond measure for measure. But instead, he draws on love and reacts with kindness and an outpouring of generosity. We, too, have that capacity for a love that is bigger than hurt. Remember that the next time a family resentment challenges you.

Genesis 44:18-21, 23b-29; 45:1-5; Matthew 10:7-15 (386). *“It was really for the sake of saving lives that God sent me here ahead of you.”*

Friday, Jul 11, 2025

What it takes to follow the Rule

Saint Benedict’s famous *Rule* was originally written as a guide for those living in monastic communities he had founded or had gathered around him. Ever since, though, the *Rule of St. Benedict* has been a source of guidance and inspiration for many people seeking to live more faithful Christian lives. “This message of mine is for you,” Benedict wrote in the prologue to the *Rule*, “if you are ready to give up your own will, once and for all, and armed with the strong and noble weapons of obedience to do battle for Christ the Lord.” All it takes is a simple, “Here I am, Lord” to be ready to follow the rule.

MEMORIAL OF BENEDICT, ABBOT

Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30; Matthew 10:16-23 (387). *“There God, speaking to Israel in a vision by night, called, ‘Jacob! Jacob!’ He answered, ‘Here I am.’”*

Saturday, Jul 12, 2025

Keep it simple

Today is National Simplicity Day in honor of the birth of Henry David Thoreau, a 19th-century U.S. transcendental philosopher and author. “Our life is frittered away by detail,” says Thoreau in *Walden*, “Simplify, simplify, simplify!” As we enter into the dog days of summer that advice is welcome. But remember that same advice as work and family obligations heat up come fall. Living simply takes effort and strict attention. As Carmelite nun Saint Thérèse of Lisieux insists, “Our Lord needs from us neither great deeds nor profound thoughts. Neither intelligence nor talents. He cherishes simplicity.” Where will simplicity lead you? Perhaps where it led Saint Oscar Romero: to live “simply and justly in solidarity with the poor.”

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Genesis 49:29-32; 50:15-26a; Matthew 10:24-33 (388). *“Do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”*

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



© 2025 TrueQuest Communications. All rights reserved. Noncommercial reprints permitted with the following credit: Reprinted with permission from TakeFiveForFaith.com. Scripture citations from the New American Bible Revised Edition. **Signup for free daily email available at TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe.**