



Ministry of Praise

8-14 February

Weekly Intentions:

~For our youth, that they will see in those they meet & hear God's Word.

~For the moms in our parish, that they continue to be strong pillars of faith for their children.

~For our confirmation candidates as they continue their religious education to prepare for the next step in fully committing to the church.



Share in the
gospel's blessings.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2009

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Good intentions

Whenever we begin something, it is always a good idea to start with an intention. Take a few breaths and ask yourself, "What do I intend to get out of this day, this meeting, this work, this experience?" The dictionary defines *intention* as "the act of determining mentally upon some action or result." In Latin *intendere* means "to stretch toward." One way to think about intention is to ask yourself what you are willing to stretch toward. Then imagine that our compassionate and loving God is also stretching toward you, intending what is best for you. Now you're praying. Plan to get up 15 minutes early and write your intention for the day.

TODAY'S READINGS: *John 7:1-4, 6-7; 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23; Mark 1:29-39*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Tree cheers for Tu Bishvat

Today in the Jewish calendar is Tu Bishvat (or Tu B'Shevat), the "New Year of the Trees." Customs include planting trees and eating dried fruits and nuts, especially figs, dates, raisins, carob, and almonds. In Israel the flowering of almond trees around the country coincides with Tu Bishvat, and the holiday is often observed by planting trees or raising money to plant trees. Why not do the same in honor of our call to be good stewards? Visit www.arborday.org for green ideas.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 1:1-19; Mark 6:53-56*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

FEAST OF SCHOLASTICA, VIRGIN

How you can get God's attention

How to be sure God knows our needs? Imitate Saint Scholastica, who knew God can't resist the prayer of a holy person. Scholastica enjoyed a precious annual visit from her brother, Saint Benedict. At the end of her life Benedict visited as always but was anxious to return home at the appointed time. Scholastica entreated him to stay but he refused. So she literally "prayed up a storm" whose ferocity made travel impossible. "What have you done?" her brother asked. Scholastica answered, "I asked and you would not listen; so I asked my God and he did listen." Storm heaven with your prayers!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 1:20-2:4a; Mark 7:1-13*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES; WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Wishing you well

For 150 years visitors to the shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes have believed in the healing power of water that flows from a natural spring there. Closer to home, some parishes commemorate World Day of Prayer for the Sick by asking pastoral care ministers and ministers of Holy Communion to visit the homebound and hospitalized; placing the names of the sick in a special book displayed in church; writing the names of the sick on pieces of paper and asking parishioners to take a name, pray for the person, and send him or her a card. What can you do today?



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“In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.”

“Then God said, ‘Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.’ ”

“God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.”

“A stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground.”

“Jesus said to her, ‘Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.’ ”

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TODAY’S READINGS: *Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-17; Mark 7:14-23*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Unqualified love

There was a time not that long ago when Catholics believed that anyone who wasn’t Catholic was going straight to hell in a handbasket. The Jews during Jesus’ time held similar views toward other religions. Syro-Phoenicians, who were enemies of Israel and didn’t share in the same faith, were, in the minds of Jesus’ disciples, unworthy of God’s help. But Jesus turned that attitude on its head. For Christians, all human life has sacred dignity and is beloved by God, even the lives of our enemies. Stepping up to that truth sometimes requires repentance on our part.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 7:24-30*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Knowledge vs. wisdom

“Knowledge is power,” said Ben Franklin. The serpent said the same thing to Eve, and she bought it. Although knowledge often does give us access to the corridors of power, it doesn’t guarantee us wisdom. An attribute of God, wisdom is acquired only through the indwelling Holy Spirit. In the Bible knowledge is imagined sometimes as tantalizing fruit dangling from a forbidden tree. Wisdom, however, sets a lavish table at which her guests may dine by accepting her invitation. When faced with the choice between fast and slow food, take the opportunity to savor the meal that lasts to eternity.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Genesis 3:1-8; Mark 7:31-37*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

FEAST OF CYRIL, MONK, AND METHODIUS, BISHOP In their own words

There’s a small detail in the gospel story of how Jesus fed 4,000 people with a few loaves and fish: “Some of them have come from a great distance.” Sounds like a simple piece of common sense—the people were tired and couldn’t travel back without something under their belts. But “great distance” here was a code word for “outsider.” Even outsiders, like Gentiles, were welcome at God’s table.

Eight centuries later the brothers Cyril and Methodius were called out of monastic life to be missionaries. They not only evangelized but also translated scripture and liturgy into the language of the people (which also required them to invent an alphabet), and resisted the insistence of other missionaries that everything be in Latin. These saints recognized that truly welcoming everyone—including outsiders—to God’s kingdom called for moving out of established boundaries and starting with people where they were. And that’s a miracle we, too, can be part of.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Genesis 3:9-24; Mark 8:1-10*

