

For the vision still has its time,  
presses on to fulfillment, and will  
not disappoint;  
If it delays, wait for it,  
it will surely come, it will not be  
late.

- Habakkuk 2

## Eighteenth Week of Ordinary Time: Aug. 3-9, 2008

### The Eighteenth Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time** we celebrate how Jesus fed the crowds by making it possible for the disciples to give the people what they had. It was not enough, but became enough because of the compassion Jesus had for the people. **Isaiah 55** invites us to come to the water when we are thirsty, to come and eat though we have no money. We can stop spending on what fails to satisfy. Paul consoles us, too, by reminding us that nothing can "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Monday is the **Memorial of Saint John Mary Vianney**. Wednesday is the **Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord** with its own special readings. Friday is the **Memorial of Saint Dominic**.

This week we complete our readings from the **Book of the Prophet Jeremiah**. Saturday has the consoling reading from the **Prophet Habakkuk**, "the vision still has its time."

We continue to read from **Matthew's Gospel** this week. The disciples watch Jesus walk across the water to reach them in a storm. "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." On Tuesday there is a choice of repeating that gospel or using another from Matthew. The Pharisees ask why Jesus' disciples don't follow the dietary laws and Jesus says, "It is not what enters one's mouth that defiles the man; but what comes out of the mouth is what defiles one." "Who do you say I am?," Jesus asks. Peter declares for all of the disciples, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus sums up our discipleship wonderfully: *"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life?"* The disciples wonder why they could not drive out a demon from a boy, Jesus answers, "Because of your

### Daily Prayer This Week

This week we can ask, in the variety of ways, in the situations of our daily lives, that our eyes might be opened to see Jesus as he really is - glorified, with the Father, and ready to renew our faith and trust in him.

As we begin our day, and at brief times throughout our day, we can pull our consciousness together by letting the themes of this week's reading guide us.

One day, we might ask to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus as we go through a day full of strong wind and waves. We can ask again and again, as things get tougher and more challenging. Another day, we might focus on what comes out of our mouths. Is there cynicism, judgments, distortions of the truth, divisive and self-serving manipulation, yelling and hurtful put-downs? How i practice using my voice to give praise to God by affirming others, forgiving them, by telling the truth, by defending the poor and the voiceless, by giving God thanks?

Later in the week, we can get in touch with the call of Jesus to deny ourselves. This is not self-denial for its own sake. This is the dying to self that comes from loving in the self-sacrificing way that Jesus did. Who in my family, friends, relative, co-workers, members of my parish or congregation need my self-denying love? How have I focused on "gaining the world" and lost some of my true self in the process? Is there some way this week that I can taste discovering my true self in giving some time, some compassion, some love, some special care to someone who needs this from me?

And throughout the week, perhaps at a special time of powerlessness or some time when I feel that I don't have the energy or gifts to do the "more," to move a mountain, I can ask for faith the size of a mustard seed.

little faith." Faith "the size of a mustard seed" is enough.

On the **Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**, Elijah finds God not in the thunder and driving wind, but in a gentle breeze. Peter's fear gets the best of him, when Jesus calls him out of his boat in a stormy sea. Peter takes his eyes off of Jesus and would have perished without Jesus' rescuing him.

And, each night I can give thanks to God for being generous to me all week, for this simple focus on our relationship every day.