

Readings for the week of July 7, 2024

Sunday:

Ez 2:2-5/Ps 123:1-2, 2, 3-4 (2cd)/
2 Cor 12:7-10/Mk 6:1-6a

Monday:

Hos 2:16, 17c-18, 21-22/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5,
6-7, 8-9/Mt 9:18-26

Tuesday:

Hos 8:4-7, 11-13/Ps 115:3-4, 5-6, 7ab-8,
9-10/Mt 9:32-38

Wednesday:

Hos 10:1-3, 7-8, 12/Ps 105:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/
Mt 10:1-7

Thursday:

Hos 11:1-4, 8e-9/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16/
Mt 10:7-15

Friday:

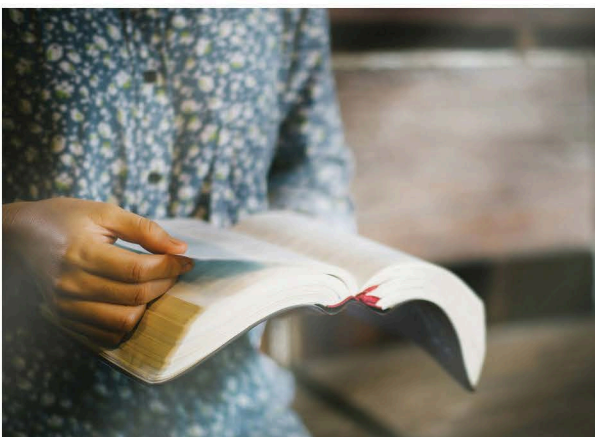
Hos 14:2-10/Ps 51:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14
and 17/Mt 10:16-23

Saturday:

Is 6:1-8/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5/Mt 10:24-33

Next Sunday:

Am 7:12-15/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 (8)/
Eph 1:3-14 or 1:3-10/Mk 6:7-13



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Recently I watched a bunch of YouTube videos on how to optimize willpower in the face of weakness. The message was: do not accept your weakness. Crush it. Dominate it. In one video, however, at the end of a rant by a willpower coach, the muscular stoic admitted, “You’ll never actually get what you want, no matter how hard you try.” Amazingly, he admitted that willpower alone is not sufficient for us weak-willed humans.

What does God want us to do with our weaknesses, if crushing them with willpower won’t work? For example, what should I do with my tendency to arrogance and self-isolation? Or my procrastination? Or my intellectual and physical limitations? Or my selfishness?

The counter-intuitive answer is clear in this week’s words from St Paul, “**I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses in order that the power of Christ may dwell in me** (2 Cor. 12:9).” Boast of our weaknesses? Paul isn’t promoting weak-mindedness or laziness. Rather, he perceives that Jesus loves us not despite our weaknesses but because of them. Boasting of our weakness means claiming human will is not all we have. It means turning to God whenever we feel weak, which—let’s face it—is almost all the time. When we do, we learn to love our weaknesses, because it’s there that we meet the strength of Christ. This week, I challenge us to find ways to boast not in willpower but in weakness.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

A Prophet and His Native Place

“A prophet is not without honor except in his native place.” It could be the slogan of high school reunions everywhere.

I speak from experience — I didn’t go to my high school reunion, but I do live in the same area in which I grew up. Ghosts from the past lurk in every grocery aisle and gas station. Former classmates fill my prescriptions at the pharmacy. I am always sure to see an old teacher or two at the Fourth of July parade.

If my teenage self knew that this was her future, she would be horrified. She wanted to grow up and move away, not because she didn’t like living in this town, but because she wanted to reinvent herself. And you can’t reinvent yourself in your native place. In your hometown, you’ll always be exactly what you are — no more, no less.

The same was true for Jesus, who was probably the only person actually worthy of admiration at his high school reunion. When he returned to his native place, he was what he had always been — God and man, Messiah, miracle-worker. This is not something he became, it was always within him.

But the people of Nazareth cannot accept it. Why?

Well, probably for the same reason that I wanted to reinvent myself when I was 16. We don’t often see anything worth venerating in the “right now” of our lives. We think happiness is a promotion or a pay bump away. We think we’ll finally be holy when we find the time to take that silent retreat. We think we will be beautiful when we lose ten pounds.

The Nazarenes lived with God right under their noses, and they didn’t realize it. So, when he came in all his greatness, the dissonance was too much to bear, and they rejected him. They didn’t want that God — the one they had dismissed or overlooked or ignored. They wanted a different one. A shinier one. One that didn’t look like the “right now” of their lives.

But that’s where God is, folks. He’s in the right now, and nowhere else. He’s waiting there for you, with all the happiness, holiness, and beauty your life needs.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.”
— Mark 6:4

- Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

In Year B, we hear primarily from the Gospel of Mark. Since each Evangelist has a unique perspective, what are the key issues that Mark addresses in his Gospel?

Answer:

Gospels are a particular faith community’s reflection on Jesus. Each Gospel’s author reflected that community’s faith in Jesus. Jesus’ message is made relevant to the community’s situation and context. Mark was the first Gospel to be written. When Matthew and Luke wrote theirs, they imitated and adapted Mark for their communities.

Mark’s Gospel seems to be addressed to a faith community undergoing turmoil, rejection, and persecution—forces that threaten to overwhelm them. This provides the context around which Mark fashions the story of Jesus. He presents Jesus as the One sent by God to confront the forces of evil. That is the good news of Jesus.

Jesus’ struggle with the demonic forces leads to confrontation, rejection, outright opposition, and a conspiracy to do away with him. Realizing this, Jesus is not deterred. Rather Jesus calls for total faith in God who helps us to overcome the forces of evil. Suffering and even death seem to be the consequences of this struggle. Yet, that is not the end. The one who suffers for the sake of others, the suffering servant, will be the one through whom redemption and salvation will come to all. For Mark, this is what discipleship demands and what true faith in God can and will accomplish. See if you can detect these themes as you read Mark’s Gospel.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them.

- Mk 6:4-5

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

The Lord encourages Ezekiel to be courageous in his role as a prophet, regardless of the response of the Israelites. Can you think of a time when you had to be courageous in facing uncertainty?

Second Reading:

Paul learned a “thorn in his flesh” that was given to him to teach him that God’s grace alone should be sufficient for his ministry. What are some obstacles in your life you have had to overcome?

Gospel:

We hear how the villagers of Nazareth were “offended” by Jesus and lacked faith in him. How do you support family or friends who have been hurt by others?



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Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

But you shall say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD!
And whether they heed or resist
— for they are a rebellious house —
they shall know that a prophet has been among them. (Ez 2:4-5)

Psalm:

Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy. (Ps 123)

Second Reading:

I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses,
in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me.
(2 Cor 12:9)

Gospel:

“A prophet is not without honor except in his native place
and among his own kin and in his own house.” (Mk 6:4)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

When Jesus taught in the synagogue of his native place, he didn't fit the image of the Messiah the people expected. They dismissed him. Let's learn from their example and remember that God often comes to us in forms that are surprising — even challenging.

Observances for the week of July 7, 2024

- Sunday:** 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Tuesday: St. Augustine Zhao Rong, Priest,
and Companions, Martyrs
Thursday: St. Benedict, Abbot
Saturday: St. Henry
Next Sunday: 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time




Saint of the week

Born to a noble family in Florence, St. Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi (1566–1607), has been called the “ecstatic saint” or “The Passion Flower of the Eucharist,” because of the trance-like state, or ecstasy, she entered after receiving Holy Communion.

Prayer for Truth

Dear Lord,
Your prophets were those who spoke Your Truth.
Help me to be a speaker of truth as well, one who reminds of Your love, encourages the lowly, and points ever more deeply to You.
Amen.

A person's silhouette is shown from the back, looking out a window. The window is filled with a bright, warm light, likely from a sunset or sunrise, creating a soft glow. The person's hand is visible on the left, holding the edge of a dark curtain. The overall mood is contemplative and peaceful.

OUR EYES ARE FIXED ON THE LORD.

PSALM 123

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When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!” - Mk 6:2

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