

**Jesus passed a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.**

- Matthew 9

## Ninth Week of Ordinary Time: June 1-7, 2008

### The Ninth Week of Ordinary Time

On the **Ninth Sunday of Ordinary Time** Jesus compares the faith of his followers to a wise man who built his house on rock. **Matthew's Gospel** tells us that storms "buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock, withstanding storms, winds and rain."

Tuesday is the **Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and his companions, martyrs**. Thursday is the **Memorial of Saint Boniface, bishop and martyr**.

The first readings this week are from the **Second Letter of Peter**, who exhorts us to "be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace" and from the **Second Letter to Timothy**: "Stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control."

In **Mark's Gospel** this week, Jesus is in the midst of a struggle with the religious leaders in Jerusalem who do not like him. He tells them the Parable of the tenant farmers, telling them that the stone rejected by builders has become the cornerstone. They almost arrest him. His opponents try to ensnare Jesus with question about the temple tax, but he isn't trapped by them. When they question him about the resurrection, Jesus tells a parable which teaches that God is the God of the living. When asked which is the first commandment, Jesus gives two - highlighting the equal importance of love of God and neighbor. Jesus is both Son of David and Messiah and Lord. Jesus warns of those who abuse widows on spiritual pretexts and tells his disciples to notice the widow who gave from her poverty.

The **10th Sunday in Ordinary Time** allows us to reflect upon the call of the tax collector, Matthew, because Jesus is criticized for eating and drinking with sinners. Jesus calls his critics and us to go learn the meaning of these words, "*I desire mercy, not sacrifice.*" *I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.*

### Daily Prayer This Week

"Take these words of mine into your heart and soul," Moses says to us in the first reading of the week. This is a good week to reflect on how deeply into our heart and soul we really want to take the words of God. How deeply will we allow Jesus to enter into our lives? What is it that holds us back, keeps us from opening our hearts?

We can listen to the readings with special attention this week as we ask God to help our faith buffet the storms of our lives. There are times when we feel overwhelmed about the situations in our lives and yet we are hesitant to turn to God. Maybe we feel that we aren't holy enough yet to ask God for help. "But as soon as my prayer life gets better..." or "when I really start going to Mass every day" or when *WE* decide we are more perfect ... then we can ask God.

But God doesn't need us to be perfect to ask for help. God is waiting for us with open arms, ready to offer love and support and comfort. God is always waiting for us - it is us who hold back.

As we wake each morning this week, and prepare to be focused when we go about our daily tasks, we can ask Jesus to help open our hearts to the love he longs to give us. We can ask for the courage to turn to God in our fear and in our grief. That moment of turning to God will bring us the comfort and peace we long for.

As we prepare for bed each night, we can sit on the side of the bed for just a moment and open our hands. We can thank God for the grace of this day and in a quiet moment right then, we can be still and simply feel God's great love and care for us.

