

**LITURGIES FOR THE TWENTY -
FOURTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME
AND TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME**

September 18 - 24, 2023

Monday, 9/18 † Weekday

6pm: Ryan

**Tuesday, 9/19 † Weekday, Saint Januarius,
Bishop and Martyr**

8am: Mary

9am:

**Wednesday, 9/20 † Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gon,
Priest, and Paul Chong Ha-sang, and
Companions, Martyrs**

9am: A.S.

6pm: Marina & Angelita Rocha by Allen & Soleda
Brown

**Thursday, 9/21 † Saint Matthew, apostle and
Evangelist**

8am: Nate

9am: A.S.

Friday, 9/22 † Weekday

8am: McKenzie

9am: A.S.

Saturday, 9/23 † Saint Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest

8:30am: Marilyn & Annette (Birthdays)

**Saturday, 9/23 † Vigil, Twenty-Fifth Sunday in
Ordinary Time**

4:30pm: Judy Lundell by Sister, Donna Kida

6pm: A. S. Tim & Randall (Birthdays) by Mom &
Grandma

**Sunday, 9/24 † Twenty-Fifth Sunday in
Ordinary Time**

7:30am: Antonio Betha by Allen & Soleda Brown

9am: A. S. Rosie & Olivia (Birthdays) by Great
Grandma

11am: Parishioners

This week at SS. C & M & All Saints

Thurs., Sept 21 – 2:15pm – Legion of Mary

Thurs., Sept 21– 4pm – Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Sat., Sept. 23 – 7pm - All Saints Finance/Pastoral
Council Mtng.

Sun., Sept. 24– 9:30am – Religious Education

The challenge in today's Gospel, is to forget how others have behaved toward us and to look to God's way of loving and forgiving. Our focus must be on God.

Is there a neighbor or friend of yours who is in temporary need because of a loss of a job or an illness? Please leave a message for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul...we want to help!

"For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." – Romans 14:8

This is the essence of stewardship – everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God. We aren't "owners" of anything, we are merely "stewards" of the gifts that God has given us, especially our very own lives. Pray to God, daily, and ask Him how He is calling you to live the life that He intended for you.

Starke County Food Pantry Needs

Peanut Butter, pancake mix & syrup, canned fruit, laundry soap, dish soap, toilet tissue, salt, pepper, small packages sugar & flour, sanitary pads, fresh fruits & vegetables, canned meat, canned pasta with meat.

You will notice the picture of Saint Thekla (Thecla), the picture with our Catholic September calendar. Saint Techla is not listed as one of the Saints on September 23, so I looked her up on the internet and this is what I found.

The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* is a 2nd-century text (c. AD 180) which forms part of the *Acts of Paul*, but was also circulated separately. According to the text, Thecla (Feast Day September 23rd) was a young noble virgin from Iconium who chose to leave her fiance so she could convert to Christianity and follow Paul.^[3]

In the text, it is said that Thecla spent three days sitting by her window, listening to Paul speak about the Christian God and the importance of living in chastity. Thecla's mother, Theoclia, and fiance, Thamyris, became concerned that Thecla was going to follow Paul's teachings. They turned to local authorities to punish Paul for being a Christian and "mak[ing] virgins averse to marriage." Paul was sent to prison, where Thecla visited him, kissed his bonds, and refused to leave him and return to her mother and fiance. Paul was made to leave the city and Thecla was condemned to be burned.^[4]

However, Thecla was miraculously saved from burning at the stake by the onset of a storm. She then encountered Paul outside of Iconium, where she told him, "I will cut my hair off and I shall follow you wherever you go."^[5] She then traveled with Paul to Antioch of Pisidia. There, a nobleman named Alexander desired Thecla and attempted to rape her. Thecla fought him off, tore his cloak, and knocked his coronet off his head, which caused her to be put on trial for assault. She was sentenced to be eaten by wild beasts, but was again saved by a series of miracles. In one scene, female beasts, particularly lionesses, protected her against her male aggressors. While in the arena, she baptized herself by throwing herself into a nearby lake full of aggressive seals, who were all killed by lightning before they could devour her.^{[6][7]}

Thecla rejoined Paul in Myra, "wearing a mantle that she had altered so as to make a man's cloak."^[8] As she traveled, she preached the word of God and encouraged women to imitate her by living a life of chastity.^[9] According to some versions of the *Acts*, Thecla lived in a cave in Seleucia Cilicia for 72 years, where she continued to spread Christianity.

It is also said that Thecla spent the rest of her life in Maaloula, a village in Syria. There, she became a healer and performed many miracles, but remained constantly persecuted. In one instance, as her persecutors were about to get to her, she called out to God, a new passage was opened in the cave she was in, and the stones closed behind her. Before her death at 90 years old, she was able to go to Rome and lie down beside Paul's tomb.^[10]

O Glorious Thekla, companion of Paul the divine, thou wast inflamed with the love of thy Creator. By the teaching of the divine Preacher thou didst despise the passing earthly pleasures and offered thyself to God as an acceptable and pleasing sacrifice, disregarding all suffering. Intercede with Christ, thy Bridegroom, to grant us his great mercy.

Good News!

September 17, 2023

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Sirach 27:30-28:7 / Romans 14:7-9 / Matthew 18:21-35

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Terry Anderson was an American reporter in Lebanon when he was abducted by terrorists in 1985. He was held captive by them until his release in 1991. After his release he was asked if he forgave his captors. His response? "I'm a Christian and a Catholic, and it's really required of me that I forgive, no matter how hard that may be."

It's been said that forgiveness is the most difficult thing we have to do, simply because all too often we do not feel like forgiving. Nor is forgiveness about overlooking the injury as if to say, "Oh, that's OK. Don't worry about it." Forgiveness may not even mean being able to be nice. Sometimes the pain may be too much. Forgiveness as Jesus lived it is a choice one makes to care about the other. It is the gift of wanting what is best for the other even at times in the midst of our own pain. "Forgive and forget" is not always possible. At times the pain not only lingers but also throbs as if the wound continues to ooze and weep. Then we cannot forget. Yet it is possible to make the choice to care.

What do we do if we cannot even bring ourselves to do that much? Perhaps then we can at least ask God to bring goodness into that person's life. And if that seems too difficult, then ask God to do what we cannot. That simple choice may very well be the seed that eventually sprouts into healing and peace in our own spirit. ●

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This is why the devil hates the Virgin Mary

According to popes and exorcists, the devil fears the Blessed Mother.

One of the surest ways of combatting the devil is by developing a close relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary. The devil hates her and runs away from those who are close to her.

According to Italian exorcist Fr. Sante Babolin, “while I was insistently invoking the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the devil answered me: ‘I can’t stand That One (Mary) anymore and neither can I stand you anymore.’”

Furthermore, he discovered that “‘the strongest reactions’ of the devil during the exorcism occur ‘when references are made to her apparitions.’” Therefore, Babolin frequently invokes the Virgin Mary under her titles of “Lourdes, Fatima or Guadalupe.”

Famed exorcist Fr. Gabriele Amorth confirmed this reality in his dialogues with the devil, where the devil said to him, “I am more afraid when you say the Madonna’s name, because I am more humiliated by being beaten by a simple creature, than by Him.”

Pope Francis related similar words in a homily at St. Mary Major, “Where the Madonna is at home the devil does not enter; where there is the Mother, disturbance does not prevail, fear does not win.”

Why is the devil so afraid of the Virgin Mary, a simple girl from Nazareth?

During the Rite of Exorcism the priest will pray, “The glorious Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, commands you; she who by her humility and from the first moment of her Immaculate Conception crushed your proud head.”

This prayer is referring to a prophecy foretold in the book of Genesis, where God said to the serpent, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:15). The verse can also be translated as “she will strike your head,” and has traditionally been applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Her humility was so radical that it crushes the “proud head” of Satan and is the surest defense against him and his attacks. As the devil told Fr. Amorth, “She makes me angry because she is the humblest of all creatures, and because I am the proudest; because she is the purest of all creatures, and I am not; because, of all creatures, she is the most obedient to God, and I am a rebel!”

Thus, if someone wants to defeat the work of evil in their own lives and the world, one of the strongest responses is to fly to the Virgin Mary. St. Padre Pio agreed with this when he said, “Some people are so foolish that they think they can go through life without the help of the Blessed Mother. Love the Madonna and pray the Rosary, for her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today. All graces given by God pass through the Blessed Mother.”

Padre Pio's secret weapon against the evils in the world today

When Padre Pio wanted to combat evil, he brought out his most powerful weapon.

St. Pio of Pietrelcina (commonly known as "Padre Pio") witnessed many evils during his lifetime. He lived through both world wars and saw the great violence and hatred that existed in the hearts of many people in Europe. In the face of such profound evil, Padre Pio had a single weapon.

He said once, "Some people are so foolish that they think they can go through life without the help of the Blessed Mother. Love the Madonna and pray the Rosary, for **her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today**. All graces given by God pass through the Blessed Mother."

Padre Pio prayed the Rosary fervently on a daily basis and even kept a few rosaries under his pillow. One night he wasn't able to find his rosaries, so he called Fr. Onorato of San Giovanni Rotondo and said to him, "**Young man, get me my weapon; give me my weapon.**"

The Rosary for Padre Pio was not a rote string of "Hail Marys," but an intimate offering to his beloved Mother in Heaven. He possessed a great love of the Virgin Mary and remained close to her during his many times of trial. He attributed everything to the Blessed Mother and believed her powerful intercession could heal both soul and body.

While many of us might struggle to pray the Rosary on a daily basis, Padre Pio would encourage us to persevere. He believed that when the Rosary is prayed devoutly and with the heart, anything is possible.

St. John Bosco highlights the power of the Rosary over the devil

St. John Bosco was a holy priest whose deep spiritual life led to frequent visions or "**dreams**," as he would call them. He wrote about one of them in a letter to his students. The dream occurred on the eve of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and in it **a stranger came up to him and asked him to look at something on the ground**. He took me to a meadow alongside the playground and pointed to a huge, ugly snake, over twenty feet long, coiled in the grass. Frightened, I wanted to run off, but the stranger held me back. "Get closer and take a good look," he said. "What?" I gasped. "Don't you realize that monster could spring on me and gobble me up in no time?"

"Don't be afraid! Nothing of the sort will happen. Just come with me.

The stranger went to get a rope and asked St. John Bosco to slap the snake with the rope.

We stretched the rope and then snapped it across the snake's back. The monster immediately sprang up and struck at the rope, but, as it did so, it ensnared itself as in a noose.

The snake began to struggle and quickly died. Then the stranger picked up the rope and put it in a box.

What happened next was astonishing, and then the stranger explained the spiritual symbolism behind what happened. Within a few moments he opened the box. We looked in and were astounded to see the rope shaped into the words Ave Maria. "How did that happen?" I asked. "The snake," the man replied, "is a symbol of the devil, whereas the rope stands for Ave Maria or, rather, the Rosary, a succession of Hail Marys with which we can strike, conquer, and destroy all of hell's demons."

St. John Bosco took the lesson to heart and wrote to his students, "**Let us devoutly say a Hail Mary whenever we are tempted, and we'll be sure to win.**"

The experience confirms what many exorcists have said about the power of the Virgin Mary over the devil. Satan is greatly humiliated by the purity and simplicity of the Blessed Mother and flies as fast as he can whenever he hears her name. It's a powerful reminder, one that urges us to pray the Rosary devoutly whenever we feel threatened by the Evil One.