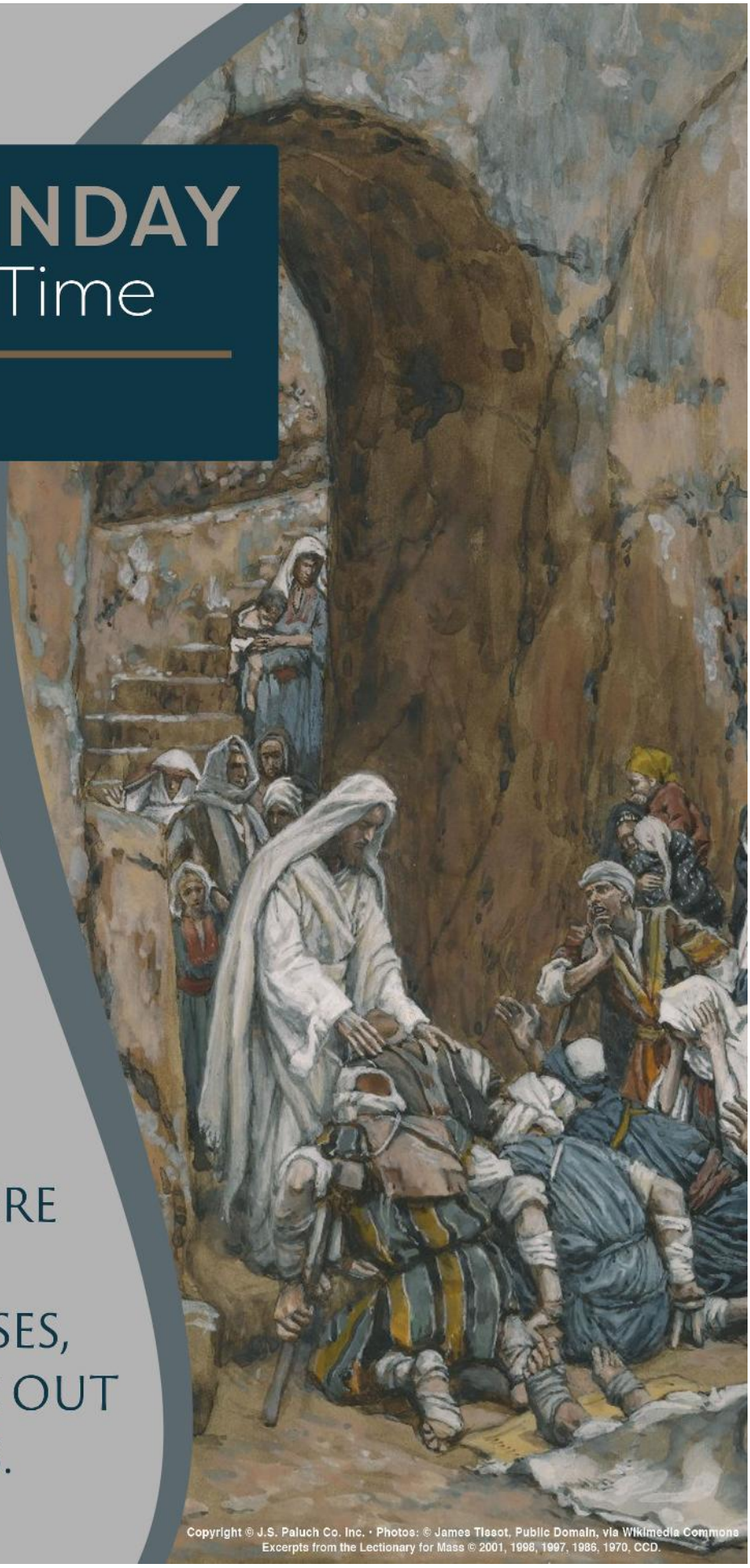
FIFTH SUNDAY
in Ordinary Time

February 7, 2021



JESUS CURED MANY WHO WERE SICK WITH VARIOUS DISEASES, AND HE DROVE OUT MANY DEMONS.

MARK 1:34

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Feast of Faith

The Gloria (1)

The Gloria, or Glory to God, follows the penitential rite. Both are acts of praise. In the penitential rite, we sing of the mercy of Christ. In the Gloria we praise God's saving action in the universe.

The Gloria is a relatively late addition to the Mass. It first appeared in the Roman liturgy in the sixth century, and then it was sung only by the pope—and only on Christmas! With time, the hymn came to be sung by bishops on major feasts, and then by priests; finally, it became the song of the entire assembly. With the advent of more elaborate musical settings, the people gradually stopped singing the Gloria, until this song of the people became the exclusive domain of the priest and the choir. But the liturgical reforms have restored it to its place as primarily the song of the assembly.

The language of the Gloria echoes the New Testament canticles. It may be begun by the priest, the cantor, and the entire assembly in varied combinations. The Gloria is sometimes called the "greater doxology," and in some ways it is like an extended, ecstatic version of the familiar doxology ("Glory be to the Father") prayed in the Divine Office and the rosary.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

On Love

If you would be loved, love and be lovable.

—Benjamin Franklin

The Good News

Today's readings begin with a few verses from the book of Job. First, Job complains that his nights drag on endlessly. Then, worse yet, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; / they come to an end without hope" (Job 7:6). Not exactly encouraging, these lamentations, not when taken alone.

Most of us have been there, though, and the antidote is the "good news" that Paul found so compelling that "an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it!" (1 Corinthians 9:16). Paul felt driven to announce the gospel to as many people as possible, "to save at least some" (9:22).

This good news is the mystery of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who lifted Simon Peter's mother-in-law from her sickbed with a mere touch of his hand. "The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons" (Mark 1:33–34)). Our woes and demons are as real as Job's, and Jesus is our savior.

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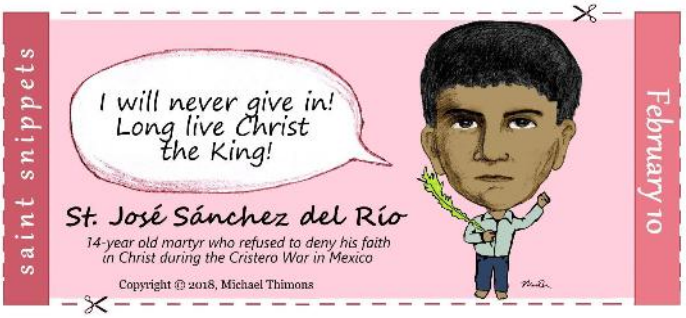
Readings for the Week

Monday:	Gn 1:1-19; Ps 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10, 12, 24, 35c; Mk 6:53-56
Tuesday:	Gn 1:20 — 2:4a; Ps 8:4-9; Mk 7:1-13
Wednesday:	Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17; Ps 104:1-2a, 27-28, 29bc-30; Mk 7:14-23
Thursday:	Gn 2:18-25; Ps 128:1-5; Mk 7:24-30
Friday:	Gn 3:1-8; Ps 32:1-2, 5-7; Mk 7:31-37
Saturday:	Gn 3:9-24; Ps 90:2-6, 12-13; Mk 8:1-10
Sunday:	Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Cor 10:31 — 11:1; Mk 1:40-45

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time; World Day for Consecrated Life; Scout Sunday
Monday:	St. Jerome Emiliani; St. Josephine Bakhita; International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking
Wednesday:	St. Scholastica
Thursday:	Our Lady of Lourdes; World Day of the Sick
Friday:	Abraham Lincoln's Birthday; Lunar New Year 4719
Saturday:	Blessed Virgin Mary



Today's Readings

First Reading — Job finds life on earth to be drudgery; he is filled with restlessness (Job 7:1-4, 6-7).

Psalm — Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted (Psalm 147).

Second Reading — Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. I have become all things to all, to save at least some (1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23).

Gospel — Jesus cured many who were sick with various diseases (Mark 1:29-39).

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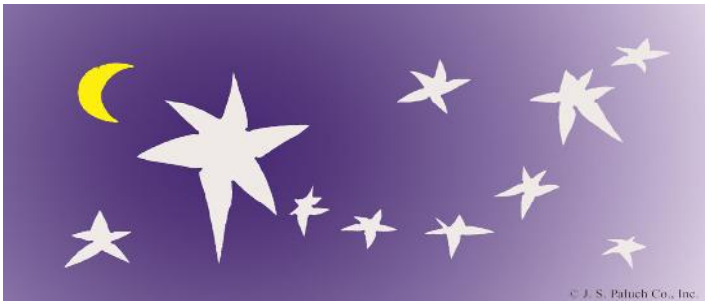

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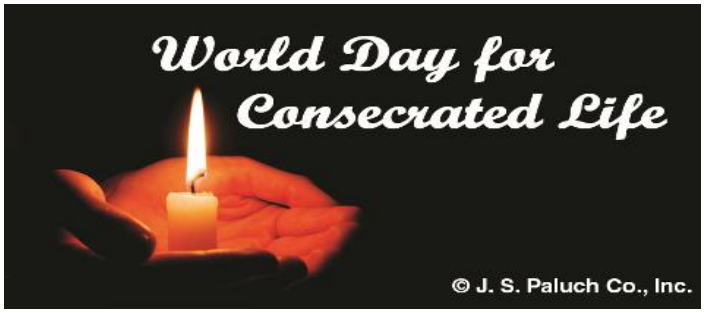
(The Lord) tells the number of the stars
and calls them by name.
—Psalm 147:4

Treasures From Our Tradition

The story of Job seems at first hearing to be an extension of February's gloom into the liturgy. The monumental suffering of a good man is so horrific that the laments of the front page of modern newspapers barely measure up. The whole story is not long to tell, but its resolution is of great comfort. We can trace in its plot the stirrings of a belief in an afterlife, and in God's great power to right every wrong and raise human beings from suffering.

In the Gospel, we see the fulfillment of these longings in the hand of Jesus, grasping an ill woman by the hand and raising her up to vibrant life. Peter's mother-in-law becomes her best self, attentive to her guests, providing hospitality, the warmth of her laughter, the delights of her kitchen. Last week, at Candlemas, candles were blessed, including baptismal candles for some not yet born. Today is a day to check the fragile flame of your own baptismal candle. Against February's customary lethargy, its background whines and ailments, the liturgy summons us to life, grasps us by the hand, and sends us to serve in Christ's name.

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
What do You Want?

Jesus was starting to become very popular, at least with the ordinary people. They had seen how he had cured the sick and cast out demons. The gospel has one unusual sentence about those demons: Jesus did not let them speak "because they knew who he was." (Mk 1:34) Apparently, the demons would have identified him as the Son of God. Jesus knew the people would not understand this and try to proclaim him as their king. Jesus had no intention of living as a worldly king, in comfort and riches. In fact, he came to free people from needing wealth and power.

Popularity and wealth do not interest St. Paul, either. When he preaches the gospel, the good news of Christ's resurrection (and ours), he needs no other recompense. (1 Cor 9:18) All he wants is to share eternal life. He specifically refuses to be paid for his preaching, to show that he will be rewarded by Christ.

So what do you hope for; what is your goal in life? Do you only feel secure when you have saved enough money and invested it wisely? Do you need other people to make you happy? Or at least a few hundred Facebook friends? Or are you like Job in the first reading: having no hope of escaping a life of drudgery? He eventually found that only by trusting God can anyone be happy, even when things go wrong.

We can follow Paul's example of love for all people no matter who they are. Paul's love was not to make others like him. He genuinely wanted to bring the good news to them: by his love for them, Paul showed that God loves them even more. He knew the gospel requires a change of heart, so his love for others helped them to be more open to change. Let us ask the Lord to fill us with his love, so that we can help each other to hear the good news.

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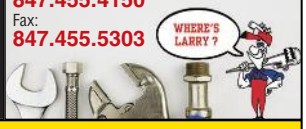

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