

“So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. **Twenty-Fourth Week in Ordinary Time: September 11-17, 2011**  
But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.”  
Luke 7

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## The Twenty-Fourth Week of Ordinary Time

For the **Twenty-Fourth week in Ordinary Time** we are invited to reflect on how we forgive. Peter asks Jesus “how often” we must forgive, asking the extent of Jesus' call for mercy. The parable of the forgiven servant who can't forgive is meant to give us clear guidance for our lives as followers of Jesus: if we are forgiven, we must forgive others.

Tuesday is the **Memorial of Saint John Chrysostom, bishop and doctor of the Church** and Wednesday is the **Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**, with their own special readings. These days give us an important contemplation on the centrality of the cross in our understanding of the mystery of God's love for us and the power of love that can die to self. Thursday is the **Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows**. Friday is the **Memorial of Saint Cornelius, pope and martyr and Saint Cyprian, bishop and martyr**.

We continue reading from Paul's **First Letter to Timothy**. It begins this week with the great prayer for our leaders. He then says how bishops and deacons should behave. He urges Timothy to be especially caring for the youth. Paul warns Timothy of the troubles of riches. Finally, Paul encourages Timothy to be faithful.

In **Luke's Gospel**, Jesus praises the faith of the Roman centurion who understands Jesus' power to heal. Jesus then raises from the dead the son of the widow of Nain. In response to constant criticism from religious authorities, Jesus compares the critics to children taunting their playmates. We read of the woman who entered a dinner Jesus was attending and wept over his

## Daily Prayer This Week

Who among us hasn't wondered about how much is enough? How many times do we need to forgive? How much of the goods of this earth do I need to have? How generous am I able to be? The parables Jesus uses often shock our attention and give us a rich fruit for reflection.

These days, the news stories are centered on war and conflict, and on financial collapse centered on greed. We are not always aware of the scope of the human tragedy that goes on in our neighborhoods, in our cities, in our world. Many people on the earth suffer in so many ways - in the Sudan, in sub-Saharan Africa and in the Middle East. We can see stories of pain and suffering on the other side of the world and we feel it here. We might be filled with horror and compassion and fear. Insecurity, powerlessness can bring us to our knees and to the Lord. This week's readings help us with continuing reflection that can guide our integration of a confidence in God's love and mercy.

One of the great things that any tragedy brings forward is examples of great heroism and generosity. We also know that the human spirit can be tempted to the worst things imaginable. But, when we see people sacrificing their own lives to help others or showing with their generosity and passionate care how deeply they value human life, it lifts our own spirits and helps us be more generous and free.

feet, washing them with her tears, showing what real love is. Luke, who highlights the role of women in his gospel, tells us of women who accompanied Jesus and his disciples. Finally, Jesus gives us the Parable of the Sower and its interpretation about how temptations and shallow roots can prevent the Word from growing in us or how “the anxieties and riches and pleasures of life” can choke the Word.

For the **Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time** we receive the powerful parable about the landlord who represents God's way of caring for us. Though workers go out into his vineyard at various times of the day, he pays them all the same. When they grumble, he simply explains that he desires to be generous. How this can change our view of God and our own sense of justice?

We could ask the Lord this week to help us assess what we really need. Do riches become a trouble for us? Do anxieties and the pleasures of life choke my reception of the Word? Can we ask for the desire to walk through our days with trust in Jesus' power to heal, to bring what is dead to life? Each of us can make this daily desire request and reflection very concrete. And, as we prepare for the weekend, we can begin reflecting on how happy I am that God is merciful and generous, even toward those that I don't think “deserve” it.

As we begin each day with a desire, we can end each day with gratitude for what we received.

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