

# Worship & Meditation

## Readings for the week of September 14, 2025

### Sunday:

Nm 21:4b-9/Ps 78:1bc-2, 34-35, 36-37,  
38/Phil 2:6-11/Jn 3:13-17

### Monday:

1 Tm 2:1-8/Ps 28:2, 7, 8-9/Jn 19:25-27 or  
Lk 2:33-35

### Tuesday:

1 Tm 3:1-13/Ps 101:1b-2ab, 2cd-3ab, 5, 6/  
Lk 7:11-17

### Wednesday:

1 Tm 3:14-16/Ps 111:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Lk 7:31-35

### Thursday:

1 Tm 4:12-16/Ps 111:7-8, 9, 10/Lk 7:36-50

### Friday:

1 Tm 6:2c-12/Ps 49:6-7, 8-10, 17-18, 19-20/  
Lk 8:1-3

### Saturday:

1 Tm 6:13-16/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 4, 5/Lk 8:4-15

### Next Sunday:

Am 8:4-7/Ps 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8 (see 1a, 7b)/  
1 Tm 2:1-8/Lk 16:1-13 or 16:10-13



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## Gospel Meditation

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

One of my favorite movies is the 1991 comedy *What About Bob?* Bill Murray plays a troubled, paranoid hypochondriac named Bob Wiley who innocently but annoyingly hounds Dr. Leo Marvin, played by Richard Dreyfuss. Bob is paralyzed by his fear of, well, everything, and is convinced the psychologist can heal him. But Dr. Marvin's failed attempts to heal Bob end up driving the doctor to attempt to murder Bob. He fails. The surprise is that, having faced death head on, Bob is suddenly healed. He attributes his healing to Dr Marvin for break-through "death therapy." In facing the cause of his deepest illness and dysfunction, Bob is healed.

Underneath this light-hearted comedy is a dead-serious resonance with this week's feast: the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Christ is lifted up on the cross to force us to face the truth of sin and death. In that reckoning we find healing. Like Moses' snake on a pole, the cross says: this is what is causing your sickness - rebellion, disobedience, sin. Look at it! Don't run from it. Now seeing it exposed, we see life. We see our physician mercifully healing us. In this sense, we are all like Bob Wiley. The "death therapy" of the cross is our only hope for healing.

This week I invite you to "exalt the cross." If you don't have one in your house, get one. Use it for prayer. Gaze on it frequently. It teaches us to not be afraid. It heals us.

— *Father John Muir*

## ( PRACTICING ) CATHOLIC

**Mini Reflection:** When the unfaithful of the Israelites were bitten by the serpents, they were healed by looking upon the instrument of their suffering: the serpent itself, mounted on Moses' staff. To heal us, God invites us to look upon the cross.

### **The Cross is Not Negotiable**

"Holiness isn't for wimps," Mother Angelica famously said. "And the cross isn't negotiable, sweetheart — it's a requirement."

I love Mother Angelica, and I love this quote. Following God is *tough*, and to do it you have to make a decision to be *tough*, to endure tough things — and ultimately, to love the toughness of it all, because within that struggle God meets us with mercy and salvation.

But in light of today's readings, I think Mother Angelica would forgive me for tweaking her words a tiny bit.

Holiness *is* for wimps, *because* the cross isn't negotiable.

When the unfaithful among the Israelites were bitten by the serpents, they were healed by looking upon the instrument of their suffering: the serpent itself, mounted on Moses' staff. With a literary flourish that puts Homer and Shakespeare to shame, God inverts that primitive symbol. To heal us, he invites us to look upon the cross — the sacrifice which achieved our redemption.

Jesus came here to die on that cross for us. For the wimps. Because we couldn't do it ourselves, even if we tried. We couldn't right all of our wrongs, not if we had a million years to do it. We would keep screwing it up. We would keep failing. We're wimps; that's what we do.

But the cross — the cross is a magnificent invitation to something more. Divinity Himself, assuming the cloak of flesh and the weight of sin, so that when we look at the cross, we might recognize ourselves. So that we might see what we have been, what we are, what we could be.

And none of it is negotiable.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

## Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

### **Question:**

I have a friend who says she doesn't need to attend Mass because she prays to God every day. What are your thoughts on this justification?

### **Answer:**

If the only reason for going to church were to talk to God, your friend might be right. Prayer is not something limited to a physical place or even a holy place. If the sole purpose of the Church were prayer, it would be a narrow purpose indeed. The Church is a community of believers, formed by "one Lord, one faith, one Baptism." It is an outward sign of our faith in God instituted by Christ, and the purpose of the Church is to give us grace, that is, a share in God's life.

Coming to Mass is not really for God's sake, but for ours. If we believe that Jesus is truly present in the holy Eucharist, then we will want to be in his presence. We will want to be fed by him. Our daily prayer and good works are strengthened by our authentic encounter with our Lord. For Catholics, it is at Mass that we celebrate the source and summit of our faith. If this is true, why would we ever stay away?

# Weekly Prayer

## Sunday's Readings

### First Reading:

"We have sinned in complaining against the LORD and you.

Pray the LORD to take the serpents from us." (Nm 21:7)

### Psalm:

Do not forget the works of the Lord! (Ps 78)

### Second Reading:

He humbled himself,  
becoming obedient to death,  
even death on a cross. (Phil 2:8)

### Gospel:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him might not perish  
but might have eternal life. (Jn 3:16)

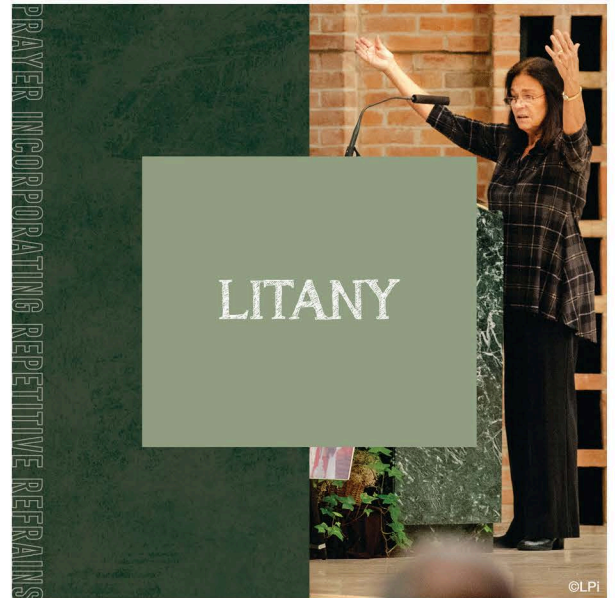
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## Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

God did not send his son into the world to condemn it. The cross is not a symbol of judgment — the cross is what mercy looks like when it is lived out. How will we bring the cross into our lives this week? How will we live the mercy which has saved us?

## Observances for the week of September 14, 2025

<b>Sunday:</b>	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
<b>Monday:</b>	Our Lady of Sorrows
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Sts. Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs
<b>Wednesday:</b>	St. Robert Bellarmine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church; St. Hildegard of Bingen, Virgin and Doctor
<b>Friday:</b>	St. Januarius, Bishop and Martyr
<b>Saturday:</b>	Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gõn, Priest, and Paul Chõng Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs [M]
<b>Next Sunday:</b>	25th Sunday in Ordinary Time; Catechetical Sunday



## Devotions, *Explained!*

A litany is an ancient form of prayer incorporating repetitive refrains (often “hear our prayer” or “pray for us”). Litanies are used in a variety of liturgical settings and in both private and public acts of devotion.

## Prayer of Love

Dear God,  
Expand my heart in new ways  
today,  
to understand the love You have  
for me,  
to take that love deeply into  
myself,  
and to act from that love.  
Amen.

Jesus said to Nicodemus: “No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man.” For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. - Jn 3:13, 17

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## Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

### First Reading:

In their desert wanderings, the Israelites learned that repentance leads to healing. What needs healing in your life?

### Second Reading:

Paul taught the Philippians that the humility and obedience of Jesus — even to the point of death by crucifixion — led to Jesus’ exaltation. When have you been challenged to be humble and obedient?

### Gospel:

Jesus reveals to Nicodemus that his death on the cross would lead believers to eternal life and save the world. What have you been taught about the meaning of the cross?



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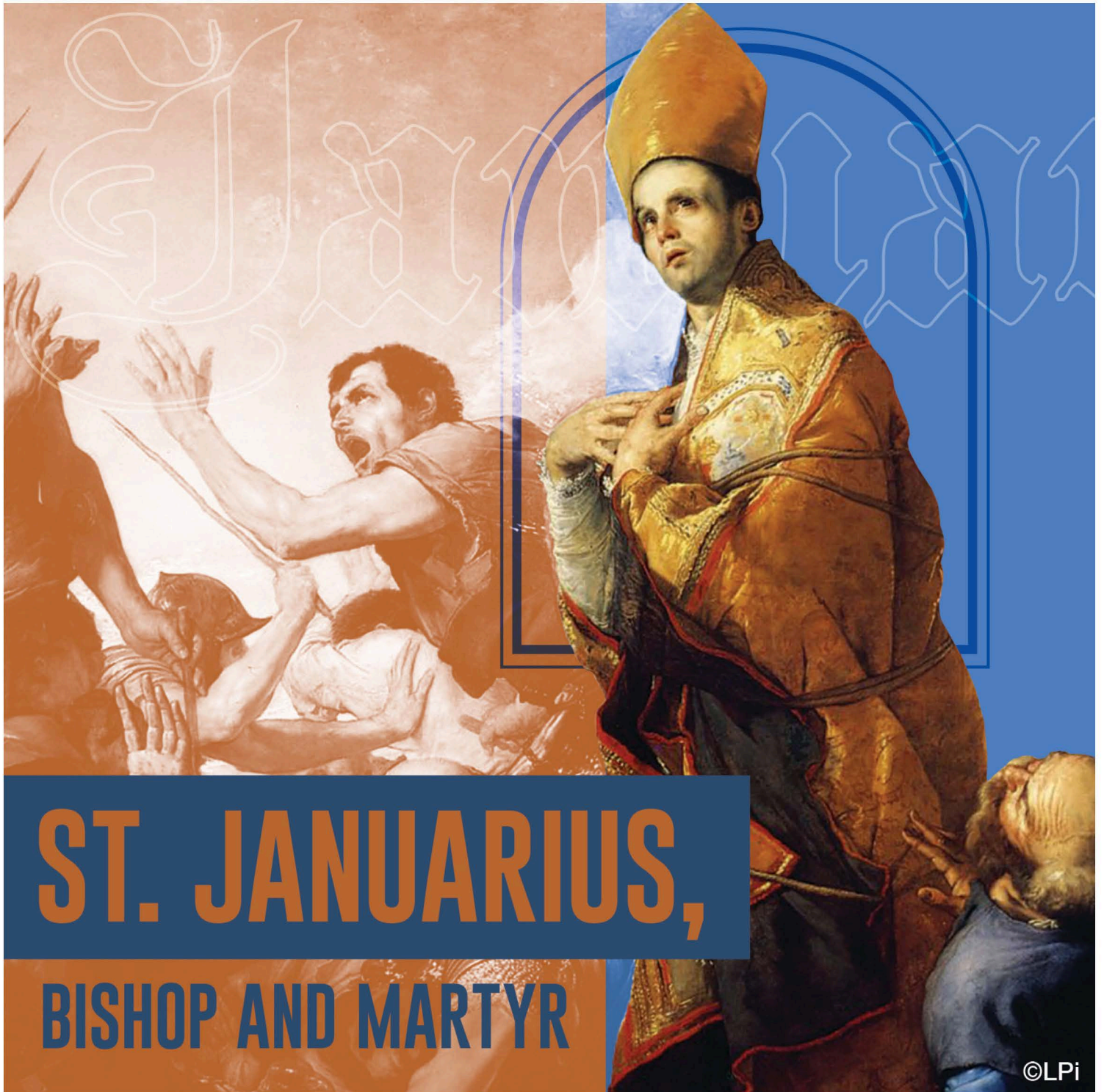
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**ST. JANUARIUS,**

**BISHOP AND MARTYR**

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“And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. - Jn 3:14-16

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