

Sunday, Jun 28, 2026

Losses and gains

In the gospel, the evangelists proclaim a paradox: Life springs from barrenness, hope rises from loss, and we find life precisely by giving it away. These truths converge in the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus, which reveal that even suffering, loss, and hardship are not meaningless, but caught up in God's saving work. A resurrection faith does not deny the cross; it embraces it and carries it toward eternal life. It does not remove the weight of the daily grind, but transforms it. As Saint Augustine says, "Our praise is marked by joy, our prayer by groans." The true evidence of such faith is not ease, but a steady hope—and a life poured out in love and service to others.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a; Romans 6:3-4, 8-11; Matthew 10:37-42 (97). *"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."*

Monday, Jun 29, 2026

Find common ground

It probably would not have been wise to invite Peter and Paul to the same party. Brash and impetuous, Peter wore his heart on his fisherman's sleeve. Paul was the proper and prayerful former Pharisee. They were known to disagree on important issues but were always able to find common ground by celebrating the sacred meal that Peter first experienced at the Last Supper and Paul described in his letters. Spiritual writer Henri Nouwen says, "A meal together is one of the most intimate and sacred human events." Indeed, he argues, "Much more happens at a meal than satisfying hunger and quenching thirst. Around the table we become family, friends, community, yes, a body." In the hopes of laying the foundation for something great, just as Peter and Paul did, share a meal with someone who doesn't share your perspective.

SOLEMNITY OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL,
APOSTLES

Acts 12:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18; Matthew 16:13-19 (591). *"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you."*

Tuesday, Jun 30, 2026

Martyrs live

Tertullian, one of the first Christian theologians, wrote: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." The church's first martyrs are commemorated a day after the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul—who tradition says were also victims of Nero's slaughter, beginning in 64. And martyrs aren't meant to be just a memory but also a model. Look no further than first responders, essential workers, and service men and women to see modern examples of those following the model of self-sacrifice for the sake of others. Offer a sign of gratitude for their brave witness.

MEMORIAL OF THE FIRST HOLY MARTYRS OF THE
HOLY ROMAN CHURCH

Amos 3:1-8; 4:11-12; Matthew 8:23-27 (378). *"Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?"*

Wednesday, Jul 01, 2026

Give yourself the full treatment

Some of us take naturally to the care of the body: eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, making sure we get to bed at a reasonable hour. Others are more attuned to the care of the soul, maintaining a routine of prayer, spiritual direction, and retreat. The spiritually mature person doesn't see this as an either-or

proposition. We are creatures of body and spirit, and Jesus regularly healed both aspects of those who came to him. Examine your habits and determine where you owe some attention. Remember this wisdom commonly attributed to Saint Augustine: "Take care of your body as if you were going to live forever; and take care of your soul as if you were going to die tomorrow."

Amos 5:14-15, 21-24; Matthew 8:28-34 (379). *"Seek good and not evil, that you may live."*

Thursday, Jul 02, 2026

Minimum daily forgiveness

In biblical times, people made a direct connection between illness and sin. If someone were sick, it must have been because they sinned. To forgive sins, then, could bring healing. Today we are less inclined to see sin and health in this way. But if we think of salvation as restoration to wholeness—in mind, body, and spirit—forgiveness and healing may be closer than we think. When we forgive or are forgiven, a healthy balance is restored in us and our relationships. A big part of how Jesus saves is his power to forgive sins, which he extends to the church. Put this power to use daily.

Amos 7:10-17; Matthew 9:1-8 (380). *"Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?'"*

Friday, Jul 03, 2026

The benefit of the doubt

Legends abound about Thomas, including his preaching, in what is now Iran. More often he is credited for bringing faith to India. When the Portuguese arrived there in 1498, Christian communities attributed to him were still functioning. Not bad for someone stuck with the title "Doubting." Thomas' life of faith gives the lie to doubt being a sign of lack of faith. Doubt brings questions that strengthen faith. Your own search for answers will lead you down many paths. Like Thomas, share your faith along the way.

FEAST OF THOMAS, APOSTLE

Ephesians 2:19-22; John 20:24-29 (593). *"Thomas answered and said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'"*

Saturday, Jul 04, 2026

Preserving old truths in new times

Ah, the flexibility of Catholic tradition! In every age, it manages to hold fast to the truths of the gospel while offering new understandings and interpretations. Pope John XXIII expressed it this way in *Gaudium et spes*: "The Church seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ under the lead of the befriending Spirit. . . . To carry out such a task, the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel." This spirit of *aggiornamento*, or adaptation, is a guiding principle of the Catholic faith. The challenges of our time—such as the dangers and disconnection brought about by advanced technology—differ from those faced by the first disciples. Yet Christians in every age are called to discern the most loving response to each situation and circumstance. That is the unchanging truth of the gospel.

Amos 9:11-15; Matthew 9:14-17 (382). *"They pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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