

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 5, 2025 (St. Francis of Assisi – October 4, 2025)

The just one shall live.

The Holy Spirit dwells within.

Increasing our faith.

-rvb.

Prayer Service in honor of St. Francis and the Blessing of Animals. (I am suggesting that this poem be used for the blessing of the animals on Sunday at the 9 AM Eucharist - as a parishioner I am using and sharing my gift for poetry for the sake of the greater good).

Opening song: “Peace Prayer” by John Foley

Prayer: Creator God, Francis loved creatures big and small. He revered, respected, and cared for them. May each one of us imitate the wonder and awe that Francis had for everyone and everything in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen

Presider: Two soul-shaking events in the life of Francis resulted in his change of heart; the renouncing of his worldly goods, and the rebuilding of abandoned churches. Francis embraced a leper, and he heard a voice from the cross of San Damiano. Let us once again hear the voice of God challenging us to pick up our cross, to follow in Jesus’ footsteps, and to live in the world, but not of the world.

Gospel: Matthew 16: 24-26

Blessing of the animals:

+God created animals that swim and fly,

And other creatures under the sky.

+He shaped the hippo and the rhino,

Adding color to the parrot and albino.

+He gave the wolf a sound like a howl,

While to other animals, freedom to prowl.

+The zebra was painted in black and white stripes,

God formed big, sharp teeth, and helping others to bite.

+Horses, lions and a huge, brown bear,

God covered them all with a warm, blanket of hair.

+The kangaroo, ostrich, and the snake,

God painted the chameleon to look like a fake.

+Monkeys, spiders, and eagles that soar,

Not forgetting the insects that race across the floor.

+Cats, dogs (Sophie, Rambeau, Abby, and Ivy) and turtles too,

One by one God filled up the zoo.

+God graced the giraffe with a long, slender neck,

And cursed the chicken to scratch and peck.

+The deer and gazelle God designed to leap,

adding a bunch of fluffy, docile sheep.

+The cow was enhanced with bovine eyes,

While owls hooted a word to the wise.

+ God created the animals with love and care,

Giving them to us to feed, raise, and share.

+ All God's creatures, stuffed, big and small –

Gather this colorful day of spring, winter, summer, or fall.

+Bless them all, in the name of the Father, Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

And for all of us taking this time to hear it. - rvb.

Reflection:

As a young man, Francis was not especially fond of lepers. While riding his horse, he met a leper by the roadside. His first reaction was to turn around and go the other way as he had done so often. This time, for some unknown reason, he jumped off his horse, ran over to him, and offered him comfort and some money. He made an even greater, soul-shaking gesture – he kissed the leper!

This traumatic, grace-filled experience would eventually be a turning point in his life. Francis would feel a special bond with the social outcasts of society as Pope Francis does. He would have a profound sense of reverence for all of humanity and creation. He would see the image of God in every creature and in nature. He became a nature mystic. May we handle with care all those whom God has entrusted to us and those whom we meet along the way.

Conclusion: “The Canticle of Brother Sun” selected verses from a poetic hymn written by St. Francis.

“Most high, all powerful, good Lord,

Yours are the praises, glory, honor, and all blessing.

Praised by you, my Lord, with all your creatures especially Sir Brother Sun,

Who is the day and through whom you give us the light.

Praised by you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,

In heaven you formed them clear, precious, and beautiful.

Praised by you, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air steady and serene, and every kind of weather through which you give sustenance to your creatures.

Praise be you, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Blessed are those who endure in peace for you, most high, they shall be crowned.

Praise and bless my Lord and give him thanks and serve him with great humility.

Closing hymn: “All creatures of our God and King” or “All things bright and beautiful”

-Roger J. Vanden Busch

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Reading 1

Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

How long, O LORD? I cry for help
but you do not listen!
I cry out to you, "Violence!"
but you do not intervene.
Why do you let me see ruin;
why must I look at misery?
Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and clamorous discord.
Then the LORD answered me and said:
Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets,
so that one can read it readily.
For the vision still has its time,
presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint;
if it delays, wait for it,
it will surely come, it will not be late.
The rash one has no integrity;
but the just one, because of his faith, shall live.

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

In the reading from Habakkuk, he is portrayed as the "Questioning" prophet. He cannot understand why God acts as he does. Consequently, one good question is worth a thousand answers, and he bombards God with more than one good question. In a sense, he is the "doubting" Thomas of the Old Testament. The prophet is perplexed by the contradictions between the known character of God and the present experience of his people. Note his questions, two of the three appear in today's reading: How long? Verse 2; Why? Verse 3; and Wherefore, verse 13. How confused he must have been which prompted these questions. I am one with the mind and heart of Habakkuk when it comes to our present world where we are experiencing collective verbal and physical violence globally, nationally, and locally. News commentators and historians are attempting to pinpoint the causes, combinations, and settings to explain collective violence. Before authoritarianism fully robs us of our constitutional rights, especially freedom of speech, people are being imprisoned, fired, or assassinated as they criticize leaders who think that only they can say what they want

or take action to silence them. Like the prophet, what are the best ways to confront violence and create democracies with a minimum of damage to people, property, and constitutional freedoms? Recently, people collectively challenged the violation of our freedom of speech. 'It's time for people to stand up: Demonstrators protest Jimmy Kimmel's suspension from ABC. September 19, 2025 6:52 AM ET - Heard on [Morning Edition](#) By [Steve Futterman](#) – “Demonstrators gathered outside the Hollywood studio where Jimmy Kimmel films his late night show to protest ABC's suspension of the comedian.” Several days later he returned to the studios. This is an example of “truth to power.” In addition, in the spirit of October 18, 2025 at Leicht Park in Green Bay from 3 pm to 5pm, we have an opportunity to harness all our energy to peacefully join across the country for the “No Kings Act” national mobilization.

“Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and clamorous discord.
The rash ones (certain politicians) have no integrity;
but the just one, because of his faith, shall live.”

To repeat, like the prophet, what are the best ways to confront violence and create democracies with a minimum of damage to people, property, and constitutional freedoms?

Responsorial Psalm

[Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9](#)

R. (8) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;

let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us bow down in worship;

let us kneel before the LORD who made us.

For he is our God,

and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:

"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,

as in the day of Massah in the desert,

Where your fathers tempted me;

they tested me though they had seen my works."
R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Reading 2

2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

Beloved:

I remind you, to stir into flame
the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands.
For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice
but rather of power and love and self-control.
So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord,
nor of me, a prisoner for his sake;
but bear your share of hardship for the gospel
with the strength that comes from God.

Take as your norm the sound words that you heard from me,
in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.
Guard this rich trust with the help of the Holy Spirit
that dwells within us.

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

In this reading from 2 Timothy, Paul writes his letter from prison; in a sense, this is his last will and testament. Shortly after penning this letter, Paul will face martyrdom. Paul, the seasoned veteran preacher, is counseling a young man as he faces his evangelism ministry. Consequently, about one-third of this letter is taken up with the young man himself as he faces the unknown while having faith in God. Paul states in verses 12 and 14 – What we commit to God is ever secure in faith and what God commits to us we are to keep within the depths of our soul.

“So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord,
nor of me, a prisoner for his sake;
but bear your share of hardship for the gospel
with the strength that comes from God.”

“Increase our faith” – Part 1.

1. Traits of People Who Remain Unshakable and indeed Increase Their Faith

Ever wonder why some folks stay super strong in their faith while others wobble at the first sign of trouble? It's like they have special superpowers that keep them believing

no matter what life throws their way. Looking at these faithful superheroes can teach us all something about sticking to what we believe in, even when things get tough.

2. Prayer Warriors Who Never Hang Up the Phone

These spiritual hotliners treat prayer like its unlimited data with the divine. Rain or shine, they're chatting with the big guy upstairs as casually as you'd text your BFF.

While most of us send the occasional "Help me ace this test" prayer, these folks are having full-on conversations about everything from parking spots to world peace. They've worn out more knee pads than professional volleyball players!

Fun fact: Some prayer warriors keep detailed journals of their prayer requests and answers, creating their own personal miracle scrapbooks that they love showing off at church potlucks.

3. Bible Memorizers with Built-In Scripture GPS

Lost in life? These folks have a scripture for that! They've downloaded the entire Bible into their brains and can pull up the perfect verse faster than Google.

At dinner parties, they casually drop Deuteronomy references while passing the potatoes. Their Bibles look like they've survived multiple wars, with highlights in every color of the rainbow and sticky notes popping out everywhere.

The truly dedicated ones even memorize the verse numbers, which is basically the spiritual equivalent of remembering everyone's birthday without Facebook reminders. When life gets messy, their mental scripture library keeps them standing firm.

4. Thanksgiving Champions Even When Life Stinks

Car broke down in the rain. "Thank you, Lord, for this chance to practice patience!" These gratitude ninjas find the silver lining when most people can't even see the cloud.

They've mastered the art of praising through pain with such commitment it makes everyone else feel slightly guilty. Lost your job? They'll help you list the blessings of unexpected free time while making you a casserole.

5. Volunteer Vampires Who Never Run Out of Energy

Monday: soup kitchen. Tuesday: homeless outreach. Wednesday: church cleanup. Their Google calendars look like a rainbow explosion of service opportunities that would exhaust a marathon runner.

While most people collapse on the couch after work, these service superheroes are just getting started on their second shift—helping others. They've baked more casseroles for sick church members than Betty Crocker and can set up folding chairs at supernatural speeds.

The wild part? They genuinely love it! Their faith-fueled energy seems to multiply when giving to others, leaving everyone wondering if they've discovered some secret spiritual Red Bull that keeps their servant hearts pumping 24/7.

6. Forgiveness Ninjas Who Let Go Like Pros

Someone stole their parking spot. "Bless their hurried heart." These forgiveness specialists have black belts in letting go of grudges before they even form.

While normal humans might stew for days over an insult, these faith-powered forgivers have already prayed for the offender's wellbeing and sent them a fruit basket. Their secret isn't being doormat—it's having such rock-solid identity in their faith that offenses bounce off like rubber balls.

The truly advanced ones even thank people who hurt them for the "growth opportunity," which is simultaneously inspiring and slightly intimidating. Their emotional freedom comes from releasing resentment faster than most people can form it. -Internet.

Alleluia

[1 Peter 1:25](#)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The word of the Lord remains forever.

This is the word that has been proclaimed to you.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

[Luke 17:5-10](#)

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

The Lord replied,

"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed,

you would say to this mulberry tree,

'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

**"Who among you would say to your servant
who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field,
'Come here immediately and take your place at table'?
Would he not rather say to him,
'Prepare something for me to eat.
Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink.
You may eat and drink when I am finished'?
Is he grateful to that servant because he did what was commanded?
So should it be with you.
When you have done all you have been commanded,
say, 'We are unprofitable servants;
we have done what we were obliged to do.'"**

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

Today's Gospel from Luke is very similar to Matthew's Gospel about moving mountains (chapter 17). The disciples are conscious of the standards of a spiritual life modeled by Jesus. If our faith is like a mustard seed rooted and nourished in the spiritual soil of Jesus, there is no challenge, obstacle, or difficulty that cannot be overcome. When we place our life in his hands, he graces us with the power to deal with life's questions and uncertainties. Lord, we have undying faith in you, nourish our seedlings of faith so spiritually we may grow into a majestic and mighty oak tree. To use a pun: It is time to leaf your former ways!

"Increase our Faith" – Part Two.

7. Traits of People Who Remain Unshakable and indeed Increase Their Faith

Ever wonder why some folks stay super strong in their faith while others wobble at the first sign of trouble? It's like they have special superpowers that keep them believing no matter what life throws their way. Looking at these faithful superheroes can teach us all something about sticking to what we believe in, even when things get tough.

8. Joy Factories During Personal Hurricanes

Life handed them lemons? They're not just making lemonade—they're running a full beverage service with a smile! These joy manufacturers somehow maintain their spiritual fizz during life's flattest moments.

Lost your job, house, and dog in the same week? They'll remind you that your Netflix subscription still works while genuinely laughing about their own similar disaster story. Their secret isn't toxic positivity—it's a deep-rooted happiness that grows from somewhere below their circumstances.

Hospital waiting rooms, funeral homes, tax audit offices—no environment can neutralize their infectious joy. They've mastered finding humor and hope in places where most people only discover stress and vending machine addiction.

9. Unbudgeable Mountain Movers Who Expect Miracles

"Impossible" isn't in their vocabulary—they've replaced it with "just watch God work!" These faith giants approach prayer requests with the confidence of someone ordering takeout, absolutely certain delivery is on the way.

Medical diagnosis looks grim? They're already planning the celebration party for when healing comes. While skeptics raise eyebrows, these miracle magnets have collected enough "God stories" to fill several bestsellers.

The doctor said, "no way"? They heard "God's way." Their faith isn't blind optimism—it's battle-tested, confidence built on a track record of answered prayers that defied logic. When everyone else has given up, they're still standing on tiptoe, watching the horizon for divine intervention.

10. Spiritual Weightlifters Who Crush Doubt Daily

Doubt tries to sneak in. These faith bodybuilders bench press those questions until they build spiritual muscles instead of weakness! They don't pretend questions don't exist—they tackle them head-on.

While others might hide their uncertainties, these truth-seekers bring their doubts into the gym of faith and work them out. They've read more theological books than most seminary professors and can discuss complex faith concepts while keeping it real.

The impressive part isn't that they never question, it's how they transform questioning into deeper conviction. Their faith isn't fragile; it's been stress-tested through intellectual honesty and personal struggle, emerging stronger like steel forged in fire.

11. Community Superglue That Sticks Through Storms

Church isn't just Sunday for these relationship experts—it's their second family address! They're the first to organize meal trains for new moms and the last to leave after helping clean up the church potluck.

Their phones buzz constantly with prayer requests and check-ins on friends going through tough times. While fair-weather believers disappear during difficult seasons, these faithful friends show up with casseroles, listening ears, and zero judgment.

The amazing thing? They're not just collecting spiritual acquaintances, they're cultivating deep, authentic relationships that challenge and support their faith journey. Their unshakable belief is reinforced by the spiritual family they've intentionally built around themselves.

12. Spiritual Marathoners Who Never Retire from Growth

Seventy years into their faith journey and still signing up for Bible studies like eager freshmen! These lifelong learners approach spiritual growth like it's the world's most exciting treasure hunt.

Their bookshelves groan under the weight of devotionals spanning decades, each one marked up with personal insights. While others might coast on yesterday's revelations, these growth addicts wake up hungry for fresh spiritual food every morning.

What's their secret? They've discovered that faith isn't a destination but a daily adventure. The truly impressive ones remain teachable into their golden years, sitting in youth services to "learn from the next spiritual kindergarteners." -Internet.

Final Prayer - God of unconditional love, increase our faith to illumine our hope for a non-violent world as we confront the evils of the day. Help us to take a stand, like the mighty oak deeply rooted and energized by the power of your presence. Amen.

Roger J. Vanden Busch