



PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee

September 2025

Exultation?...The Cross?...

By S. Carla Mae Streeter

We have crossed the half-way mark of Ordinary Time. Lest we forget that our formation in discipleship comes from the Paschal Mystery, the dying and the rising of Christ Jesus, the Spirit and the Church remind us. But exultation? You've got to be kidding. I'm to exult in my recurring health issues? My nephew once again in detox for his alcoholism? My political leaders causing untold suffering for innocent people? The violence I see displayed on the media? Come now. I'm more tempted to blaspheme and accuse God of being asleep at the wheel. The cross is not pretty. Exult?

Why the cross? We might once again go to the first scripture: nature. Manure is awful stuff. It stinks. But its purpose is in how it is used. Yes. Spread it carefully on your field, and it will produce the best crops for your table. Is the secret of the cross in how we use our suffering? After all, we are baptized into Jesus' death.

What will God, the tender, loving farmer, do with all this suffering? Easter is the answer, but first there is the waiting time of Holy Saturday. Suffering tests our faith and trust as nothing else does. Its odor almost chokes us, and we find the waiting hard. But do not be deceived. The change comes. New life. Check history. Learning to exult in the cross is one of our hardest lessons in discipleship. Jesus shows us. "My God...have you forsaken me?" No. "Your will...not mine..." Yes. Spread your manure in the field of trust...and wait. Then exult in the growth. In the meantime these four Sundays will provide the soul-freshener you need.

September 7 will provide you with Son-shine. Let the Crucified's face shine on you. On September 14 listen to what the Crucified has to say to you. Then on the 21st, get your priorities straight. Finally, on the 28th mount the sweet Bridge, the Christ who shows you how to turn your pain into the love-wine of exultation.

What is your secret, Lord? Why would you run to your cross?
Did you humanly need to trust that your Father knew what he was doing? Me too?
Teach me how to make my suffering grow wonderful things...Yes.
Amen.

Thank you to Associate Mary Kay McVey for this month's reflections.

September 7, 2025 | Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wisdom 9:13-18b, Philemon 9-10, 12-17, Luke 14:25-33

How much is enough? It seems like no amount is ever enough for some people. Yet, in Luke's gospel today, we are told "anyone who does not renounce all their possessions" cannot call themselves a disciple of Jesus. Perhaps the better question is, how much can I live without? I can live without money, fame, and power, but I don't want to live without family, friends, peace, justice, and the love of God. How about you?

September 14, 2025 | Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Numbers 21:4b-9, Philippians 2:6-11, John 3:13-17

"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." The Exaltation of the Cross is not just about death and suffering. We honor the cross as a symbol of hope and faith because suffering and death are not the end. The Paschal Mystery helps us understand and accept pain and suffering. We can bear the worst because we believe the best; salvation and eternal life is yet to come.

September 21, 2025 | Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Amos 8:4-7, 1 Timothy 2:1-8, Luke 16:10-13

Luke reminds us, we cannot put things of the material world above our love for God and neighbor. Security and planning for retirement may be a concern. But should we be storing away for the future at the expense of those in dire need of our help today? It is a tricky question. And it is even trickier to balance the realities of providing for ourselves and our families without losing sight of our care for the most vulnerable.

September 28, 2025 | Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Amos 6:1a, 4-7, 1 Timothy 6:11-16, Luke 16:19-31

Amos is a prophet who doesn't mince words! "Woe to you lying on your beds of ivory!" We are lucky to live in a country where comfort, gadgets and tech toys are plentiful. But Amos would remind us that they can be traps. Do we take our bountiful gifts for granted? Or perhaps we can ponder ways to use these things to help to make the lives of others better.

