



August 24, 2025

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 66:18-21 | Heb 12:5-7, 11-13 | Lk 13:22-30

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Have you ever felt as though God is punishing you? Throughout the course of our lives, we experience what might seem like a barrage of hardships. This battering down of our interior and exterior fortresses over time can test our faith and weaken our resolve. If you find yourself in this position, read today's passage from Hebrews again: "Do not disdain the discipline of the Lord," St. Paul reminds us, "for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines." In our human nature, we may find these "disciplines" painful (and rightfully so). But Paul urges us to shift our mindset, recognizing that just as a good father disciplines his children for their greater good, so our heavenly Father does the same for us. Paul goes on to explain that we may consider every trial we endure in this sense, as a loving "discipline" — a sign of the Lord's attention and desire for our sanctity.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Modern society loves the concept of a God who is soft, inviting, sweet, and tender. Of course, our Lord in his goodness and mercy can be described by those adjectives. But today's Gospel reminds us of an equally important characteristic of the Lord: He is the supreme and final judge, and at the final judgment we will be held accountable for our lives. In the end, we will stand before the Lord, and he will put all things in proper order. Will it be glorious, loving, and merciful? Yes. Painful and piercing? Perhaps. Our Lord's love knows no bounds, and he withholds his mercy from no one. It is precisely from this place of perfect love and profound mercy that rightful judgment emerges. May we live a life worthy of welcome when we meet him face to face.

REFLECT

In addition to accepting the discipline that the Lord sends our way, we can engage in voluntary practices to strengthen our spiritual lives. These practices are necessary, as Jesus tells us that many "will not be strong enough" to enter through the narrow gate that leads to life. Our second reading exhorts us to "strengthen [our] drooping hands and [our] weak knees." What spiritual disciplines have you found helpful to foster your growth in holiness? What areas are weak or need strengthening?

Church of the Ascension
ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

Masses: (Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p

(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

Confessions: (Sat) 4p-4:45p

Making an Impression on God

A teacher asked his class for examples of words that describe the current crop of college students. He expected to hear “highly educated” or “sophisticated” but was surprised at the honesty of a young woman who responded “entitlement. We think everything is owed to us.” An overstatement, yet such an attitude can often be attached to a particular social class, race, gender, ethnicity, or nationality. But scripture makes it clear that simply being a member of a chosen race or having rank upon rank of wealthy, noble, or accomplished ancestors makes no impression on God. Only one thing does: goodness.

- Takefiveforfaith.com

Attention: All Parish Volunteers

Fr. Hao and Finance Council would like to invite all volunteers to an outdoor Ice Cream Social on Saturday, August 30th.

Please bring your family, and come by anytime between 3:00 pm and 4:00 pm and get a scoop or two as Fr. Hao would like to say “thank you for your service.”

Humanitarian Relief for Gaza

August 31 - September 1

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has requested that a special collection be taken up in all parishes to support humanitarian relief, as well as medical and psychological care for the wounded, sick, and malnourished in Gaza and surrounding areas. It will be administered through the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), both of which have longstanding experience and trusted presence in the region.

By participating, our parishes will respond tangibly to Pope Leo's urgent appeal, witnessing to the Gospel's call to serve “the least among us.”

Thank you for your solidarity and generosity.

Charitable Giving through Your IRA

Individuals aged 70 ½ or older can donate as much as \$108,000 from their IRA each year to a church or charity, without incurring any income tax on that distribution. Consider a gift to Ascension Church from your IRA.

WEEKLY OFFERING - August 17

-Total: **\$5,054** (\$3,307 basket, \$1,747 WeShare). Goal: \$6,800.

-Sunday YTD: **\$42,173**. Budget: \$47,600.

-Feast of Assumption: **\$446**.

Thank you for your support.

MASS INTENTIONS

Aug 23	Sat	05 pm	John Sudano +
Aug 24	Sun	09 am	Paul Sze +
		11 am	Rhaniel & Melinda Rivera (L)
		05 pm	Sheila Kellers +

Explore Christian Faith & Life Through the Alpha Course

On 6 Sundays, starting from Sept. 14
in Worner Hall classrooms (12:15pm - 2:00pm)



Each session includes a meal, a talk, and discussion for Connection, Content, and Conversation.

Over 29 million people participated in the Alpha course worldwide. In 2024 alone, over 2,200 Alpha courses were held across the U.S. in Catholic parishes, engaging about 73,429 participants.



“One of the advantages of Alpha is that it focuses on the Kerygma. In the ancient church, there was a clear distinction between the **Kerygma** and the **Didache** or the Catechesis. The Kerygma was the starting point of faith, and the catechesis was to form the faith, but faith in itself blossoms by hearing the Kerygma.”

- Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa

Sunrise with Jesus continues

August - October | Every Wednesday at 7:30am
Dedicate 30 minutes every week to learn more about **Prayer** in the **Scriptures**, in the **Spiritual** tradition, and in the lives of the **Saints**.

Parish Picnic Sept. 7, 2025 @ Noon With Catered BBQ

\$25 per person | Children 12 and under: Free.

Tickets can be purchased after Mass and at the Parish Office: M-F, 10:00 am -2:00 pm.

Menu

Freshly grilled Hamburgers, Cheeseburgers & Veggie Burgers & Hot Dogs with fresh buns
Baked Seasoned Chicken Drumsticks & Wing Drumettes
Corn on the Cob
Tomato, Lettuce, Red Onion, Pickles
Potato Salad
Mixed Salad with Dressings
Condiments: Mustard, Ketchup, Mayo.



With Games and Prizes.

Rooms for Refugees & Parishioner

1) Catholic Charities Refugee Foster Care is in need of families or individuals who would be able to provide a room for a refugee foster youth who is 18 year or older. Contact Kimberly Lozano at 408-325-5107 or klozano@ccscc.org.

2) One female parishioner is looking for a rental in home or apartment in the Bay Area this month. Quiet private room with attached bath. Call parish office at 408-725-3939.

Kairos Ministry series will continue...