

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time

Isaiah 8:23 -- 9:3  
Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14  
1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17  
Matthew 4:12-23

### Monday January 23

Hebrews 9:15,24-28  
Ps 98:1-6  
Mark 3:22-30

### Tuesday January 24

#### St. Francis de Sales

Hebrews 10:1-10  
Ps 40:2,4ab,7-8a,10,11  
Mark 3:31-35

### Wednesday January 25

#### Conversion of St. Paul

Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22  
Ps 117:1bc,2  
Mark 16:15-18

### Thursday January 26

#### Sts. Timothy and Titus

2 Timothy 1:1-8  
or Titus 1:1-5  
Ps 96:1-3,7-8a,10  
Mark 4:21-25

### Friday January 27

Hebrews 10:32-39  
Ps 37:3-6,23-24,39-40  
Mark 4:26-34

### Saturday January 28

#### St. Thomas Aquinas

Hebrews 11:1-2,8-19  
Lk 1:69-75  
Mark 4:35-41

Who's troubling you? In this Sunday's Gospel reading, we hear of the fulfillment of the prophecy given by Isaiah in the first reading: Because of Jesus Christ, the people you know who are living in darkness have seen the light that will heal them. Who is making no effort to get out of their sin-induced misery? Who is overshadowed by the demons of spiritual death and destruction? Whose stubbornness is causing you great anguish?

Through your prayers and faithful love, Jesus has been revealed to them. Even as they fight against this truth and hide from him, the great light of Christ cannot be turned off. Soon or eventually this will cause great rejoicing, not only for you, but for those who are being rescued.

Elsewhere (Luke 12:49-50), Jesus expressed his feelings about people who live in darkness: "How great is my anguish until it is accomplished!" Thus, he knows your anguish and *shares* it, but more deeply and fervently. He is doing more than you know, more than you can

imagine, to accomplish the victory for which you've been praying. He is doing everything possible – as well as the impossible – to bring it to fulfillment.

Pray that Divine Providence will use the bad consequences of each person's stubborn rebellion to draw them to himself. Pray that God will use others to bring them into his light. Pray that God will work in his own



way to dissolve their spiritual rebellion. Pray that after their conversion they will spread the light of Christ powerfully. And pray that their conversion will be deep, definite and permanent.

We don't pray to change God's mind; he's already working to bring the light of Christ to people who live in darkness. We pray to place these people into his arms, since they're not doing it for themselves.

### Reflect & Discuss:

† Write a list of people who are living in darkness. Will you trust in the power of Christ's great light and the victory he obtained through his death and resurrection?

† Make a commitment to feel Christ's anguish more keenly; use this pain to energize you into daily prayer on behalf of darkened souls.

† Think of those who are living in darkness. Get a large candle and etch their names into it. Light the candle and offer your prayers for these loved ones. If possible, do this with a prayer community for mutual support, and light this candle at all of your community meetings.