Voices of Sisters
Spirituality



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Editor's note: *Welcome to Theologians' Corner, where each week a different woman theologian from around the world offers a fresh reflection on the Sunday readings.*



12th Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 21, 2026

There is something in today's readings that feels close to the human heart.

Fear is not absent in the Scriptures today. It is spoken aloud, held without shame, brought before God.

The prophet does not hide it. In the Book of Jeremiah 20:10-13, we hear of whispers, betrayal and the feeling of being surrounded. Many of us know that place — when trust feels fragile, when words spoken behind our backs wound deeply, when doing

what is right seems to cost us more than we expected.

And yet, even there, something deeper rises within him:

"*But the Lord is with me, like a mighty champion*" (Jeremiah 20:11).

Not escape. Not denial. But presence.

The psalmist also does not hide. There is distress, weariness, a sense of being stretched beyond strength. Yet the cry itself becomes prayer:

"*Lord, in your great love, answer me*" (Psalm 69).

Sometimes faith is only this: to keep speaking to God from within the night.

A saying, often cited as an African proverb, goes, "*However long the night, the dawn will break.*" Faith does not deny the night. It learns to wait for the dawn.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks into this same hidden space of the human heart: "*Do not be afraid*" (Matthew 10:26).

He does not remove the cost of discipleship. He does not shield us from the reality of misunderstanding or rejection. But he places everything within God's own gaze.

Not even a sparrow is forgotten before the Father. And then, almost unbearably tender: "*You are worth more than many sparrows*" (Matthew 10:31).

To be seen by God is not distant. It is a peace that quietly holds the heart.

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There are so many who carry hidden weight: those displaced from home, those searching for work, those tending families under pressure, those growing weary in care, those who feel unseen in their daily struggle. Their names may not be spoken aloud, but their lives are held.

Nothing of them is lost to God.

And so Jesus speaks again — not as command, but as invitation: Do not be afraid.

Not because there is nothing to fear, but because fear is not the deepest truth about us.

The Letter to the Romans later whispers this same widening hope: "*Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more*" (Romans 5:20).

Grace is not cautious. It does not measure itself against human limitation. It flows further than what wounds us, deeper than what breaks us.

Perhaps, then, today's word is simply inviting us to remain close. Close to God in what we do not understand. Close to one another in what we cannot fix. Close to our own hearts when they feel uncertain. And to trust, quietly, that we are already held.

Not loudly. Not always visibly. But truly.

Like a presence that does not withdraw. Like a love that does not forget. Like one who knows even the smallest sparrow — and does not turn away from us.

And in that hidden knowing, there is a stillness that remains. A gentleness that does not rush. A quiet space where the heart can rest in God, where the restless heart, as St. Augustine said, finds its home in our challenging world.

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