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8 FRIDAYFRIDAY, 27<sup>th</sup> WEEK of the YEARGal 3: 7-14  
Ps 110: 1-6  
Luke 11: 15-26

We human beings mostly don't like uncertainty, particularly about our own personal destinies. We feel uncomfortable about not being certain: will we be rich, happy, healthy, attractive, long-lived, popular, etc.etc ? Will we be saved ? We're always searching for ways to know or forecast the future --- to know "times and seasons" --- by 'reading' the stars, by consulting fortune-tellers, and even through prayer and scripture-reading and religious practices such as certain devotions. We attach a sacredness to some numbers, we look for rules and regulations, systems and habits, practices and programmes that might somehow give us a guarantee. We're tempted to try to bargain with God about our future, especially our eternal future. It's the way we tend to act. St Paul wrote strongly to the Christians of Galatia about this, insisting that (as with Abraham) it is faith that secures God's blessing and saves us. Strictly observing rules and laws cannot give life, or force or blackmail God into giving us anything or telling us anything. There is no guarantee except God's overwhelming love brought to us in Jesus Christ and His "hanging on a tree" for us. Nothing we ourselves can do will guarantee salvation, except to have complete trust and faith in God and rely utterly and exclusively on His gifts and blessings. And then, even this faith itself is a gift God gives us. With it, in the Spirit, we also receive the gift and grace of love. Let us truly treasure these gifts, with gratefulness and joy, and learn in prayer how faith and love release us from the anxieties of uncertainty and wanting to know: God knows, He cares and He loves, and this is enough.

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