

Sunday, Jul 28, 2019

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Teach and learn as you go

Teaching is mostly conceived as an academic process relegated to schools or online programs. But the most meaningful lessons we learn happen far from classrooms. What did you learn simply from growing up in the environment that produced you? What did you imbibe from family members, storybooks, personal heroes, or actual experiences? When the disciples of Jesus ask for praying lessons, they've already observed how disciplined Jesus is in his own habits. Jesus teaches them the Lord's Prayer—but he'd already taught them, by his example, the importance of praying.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 18:20-32; Colossians 2:12-14; Luke 11:1-13 (111). *"When he had finished [praying], one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'"*

Monday, Jul 29, 2019

MEMORIAL OF MARTHA

Friends ask friends

Martha isn't one to beat about the bush. After her brother dies, she marches up to Jesus and tells it like it is: "Lord, if you had been here . . ." This is the same Martha who once asked Jesus to act on her behalf when she slaved away as her sister sat at his feet: "Tell her to help me." The Bible tells us that Jesus was a good friend of Martha. Thanks to Martha, it also shows how we can count on Jesus as a friend—trusting him enough to be candid about our needs. Just ask.

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 32:15-24, 30-34 (401); John 11:19-27 or Luke 10:38-42 (401/607). *"I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you."*

Tuesday, Jul 30, 2019

MEMORIAL OF BLESSED SOLANUS CASEY, O.F.M., CAP.

God opens a door

Blessed Father Solanus Casey (1870-1957) is on his way to sainthood. That might have surprised those who knew him in seminary where he was considered so academically slow that, once ordained, he was not allowed to preach or hear Confessions! What he could do was greet people as the porter (doorkeeper) at the Capuchin monastery in Detroit where he lived. More than 20,000 people attended Solanus' funeral services, for he turned the front door job into a holy and humble ministry that welcomed the stranger and consoled the many who visited daily. If today you fear you are not worthy, remember that all things are possible with God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 33:7-11; 34:5b-9, 28; Matthew 13:36-43 (402). *"Then the righteous will shine like the sun."*

Wednesday, Jul 31, 2019

MEMORIAL OF IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, PRIEST

Surrender yourself

Saint Ignatius, that wounded Spanish soldier of the 1500s—whose conversion grew a group of "soldiers for Christ"—liked bold sayings. Such as: "Go forth and set the world on fire." Not to mention his Jesuit order's motto: "All for the greater glory of God." Once Ignatius saw the Kingdom as Jesus did, there was no turning back—no price too high. The key? Be a soldier who surrenders. His Suscipe ("surrender") Prayer says it all: "Receive, Lord, all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my

whole will . . . Give me only your love and your grace. With this I am rich enough."

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 34:29-35; Matthew 13:44-46 (403).

"When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has."

Thursday, Aug 01, 2019

MEMORIAL OF ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Reconcile yourself

A shrinking number of Catholics—even those who attend Mass regularly—go to Confession. Don't be tempted to skip this sacrament; pray for help from Saint Alphonsus Liguori, the patron of confessors, who preached in the 18th-century slums of Italy. He never refused anyone absolution and even fought against a heresy that treated penitents like criminals. Part of the mission of the order he founded, the Redemptorists, is to bring people back into a life of grace through Confession. With the help of his intercession, embrace the healing of forgiveness and be reconciled with your loving God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 40:16-21, 34-38; Matthew 13:47-53 (404). *"The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous."*

Friday, Aug 02, 2019

MEMORIAL OF PETER JULIAN EYMARD, PRIEST

Receive and be transformed

Saint Peter Julian Eymard (1811-68) founded the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament dedicated to setting the "four corners of the world on fire with eucharistic love." His vision of priests, sisters, deacons, and laypeople all actively participating in the Eucharist anticipated and helped shape the liturgical renewals of the 20th century. Peter Julian saw the Eucharist as our hidden treasure that needed to be brought into the light so that Jesus could "once again take his place at the head of Christian society." "Receive Communion often," he wrote, "and Jesus will change you into himself." What can you do to help the "reign of the Eucharist" increase?

TODAY'S READINGS: Leviticus 23:1, 4-11, 15-16, 27, 34b-37; Matthew 13:54-58 (405). *"Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds?"*

Saturday, Aug 03, 2019

Be guided by good conscience

Conscience is that still small voice deep within that guides us in making moral judgements. It is a lifetime's work to form conscience using God's law of love as the measure of what is upright. How do we do that work of formation? We pray for the guidance of God's Spirit, seek the wisdom of faithful friends, read scripture, and consider teachings of the church. So formed, we "must always obey the certain judgment of conscience" as the Catechism says. Conscience has been well attended when a decision, no matter how tough or even unpopular, brings a sense of freedom and peace of heart.

TODAY'S READINGS: Leviticus 25:1, 8-17; Matthew 14:1-12 (406). *"For John (the Baptist) had said to (Herod), 'It is not lawful for you to have her.'"*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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