

Sunday, Jul 07, 2019

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Peace to all who enter

A compelling prayer is recommended in the Liturgy of the Hours for Sunday nights: “Lord, we beg you to visit this house and banish from it all the deadly power of the enemy. May your holy angels dwell here to keep us in peace.” Who wouldn’t want their home sweet home, apartment, or dorm room to share in such a blessing? The world is desperate for peace, but it doesn’t start at the international level. Seek peace in your home and in your heart. Make this prayer your own.

TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 66:10-14c; Galatians 6:14-18; Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 (102). *“Into whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’”*

Monday, Jul 08, 2019

Dream on

In the world of Jewish scripture, dreams were sometimes considered revelations from God. In the New Testament Gospel of Matthew, God guides the early life of Jesus through the dreams of Saint Joseph and the Magi. These dreams came to people; they didn’t ask for them. Dreams sometimes still feel that way. Although they can take puzzling or even frightening forms, dreams can also reveal deep truths and remind us that what we consider most important is to some extent invisible to the conscious mind. Strive to grow, then, in knowledge of both God and yourself.

TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 28:10-22a; Matthew 9:18-26 (383). *“Jacob . . . came upon a certain shrine . . . and lay down to sleep at that spot. Then he had a dream.”*

Tuesday, Jul 09, 2019

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE ZHAO RONG, PRIEST, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Patience is indeed a virtue

Patience is held up by the church as one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, an aid to us as we grow in our desire to do good. Patience is also a witness to hope, especially in the midst of suffering. It is this virtue that spoke to Augustine Zhao Rong, one of 120 Chinese martyrs who suffered and died for their faith. A soldier leading a bishop to his martyrdom in Beijing, Augustine was so moved by the bishop’s patience that he asked to be baptized. He gave himself to the Christian faith knowing full well what could happen. Some years later, he too was killed for his faith. How powerful is the gift of patience! How might we allow this gift to move us this day?

TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 32:23-33; Matthew 9:32-38 (384). *“The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few.”*

Wednesday, Jul 10, 2019

Service begins at home

Perhaps you entertain grand dreams of how to live out your Christian vocation. Foreign missions or cloisters in the desert appeal to the romantic side of your nature. Why not give your life over to God’s service in a blaze of excellent fervor? On your way to holy perfection, however, it’s always a good idea to make a stop that’s more accessible and just as worthy: right where you

are. Can you love and serve the people already given to you in your family, neighborhood, and parish? Before you dash off to the save the world, share a little of that love at home.

TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 41:55-57; 42:5-7a, 17-24a; Matthew 10:1-7 (385). *“Do not go into pagan territory . . . Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*

Thursday, Jul 11, 2019

MEMORIAL OF BENEDICT, ABBOT

The big reveal

Today’s first reading is a story that has delighted and inspired for generations: Joseph and the many-colored coat. Catholics see Joseph, the story’s hero, prefiguring Christ. This story of jealousy, betrayal, and redemption lives on in art, cartoons, books, even a Broadway musical. A favorite is the big reveal when Joseph’s brothers discover his true identity. If you pay attention, you may find big and small “reveals” that God has prepared for you, surprises that form you into a better disciple.

TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 44:18-21, 23b-29; 45:1-5; Matthew 10:7-15 (386). *“I am your brother Joseph, whom you once sold into Egypt.”*

Friday, Jul 12, 2019

Check your trust fund

Spontaneity and trust are hard to cultivate and maintain, and it gets harder as responsibilities grow. We have become accustomed to planning and more planning. Not wanting to be caught off-guard, we struggle to trust the moment. In the midst of planning a vacation, for example, you might become bogged down in detail—and forget that the purpose of the trip was to relax! Imagine your potential if you could only trust more. Tonight at dinner say a spontaneous prayer, trusting that God will give you the words.

TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30; Matthew 10:16-23 (387). *“Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you a great nation.”*

Saturday, Jul 13, 2019

MEMORIAL OF HENRY

A spirited king

Emperors on the whole haven’t been the best role models for Christian humility, but Henry II (972-1024) appears to have been an exception. His first public act after being named Holy Roman Emperor was to pray for humility. When Henry traveled across the empire, he stayed in monasteries, which he also helped to found and fund. Upon arrival, he is said to have spent the first night of every visit in a prayer vigil. Henry wasn’t perfect—he mixed church and state in ways that caused both to suffer—but his commitment to monastic communities not only strengthened religious life but also served social needs, because the monks would go out into the surrounding villages to tend to the sick and needy. We could do with more leaders who shared Henry’s priorities!

TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 49:29-32; 50:15-26a; Matthew 10:24-33 (388). *“Do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”*

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



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