



SUNDAY, JULY 17, 2016 SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Live dangerously; make friends

Saint Francis de Sales wrote that “friendship is the most dangerous of all love.” Why? “Because other loves can exist without communication, exchange, closeness.” Not friendship, though. To love a friend is to open yourself to them—warts and all—to communicate and to be a better person because of it. As the Book of Sirach says, “Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter; whoever finds one finds a treasure.” A good friend is priceless, deepening your faith, calling you to see Christ in the world, and allowing you to be your best self. Martha, Mary, and their brother Lazarus had this kind of friendship with Jesus. Choose to live dangerously: Make friendships that matter.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Genesis 18:1-10a; Colossians 1:24-28; Luke 10:38-42 (108)*. “*You are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing.*”

MONDAY, JULY 18 FEAST OF CAMILLUS DE LELLIS, PRIEST The original red cross

Imagine the sorrow Saint Camillus de Lellis’ mother felt when she dreamt her son would wear a red cross, which was the sign of a death sentence in 16th-century Italy. Her dream came true, but not in the way she feared. After a colorful life, Camillus felt called to serve the sick, founding the Order of Clerks Regular, Ministers of the Infirm, better known as the Camillians. With cassocks marked with a large red cross, they helped wounded soldiers on the battlefield, saving countless lives and transforming the red cross into a sign of charity and service for sick people everywhere.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Micah 6:1-4, 6-8; Matthew 12:38-42 (395)*. “*This is what the LORD requires of you: Only to do right and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God.*”

TUESDAY, JULY 19 God on the run

Each day the prayer of the church contained in the breviary begins with the same words: “O God, come to my assistance. O Lord, make haste to help me.” This invocation from Psalm 70 is a surprising way to address God. It’s as if the church prays every morning: “Hey God, I’m in need here! So come help and be quick about it!” As scripture witnesses, God has come running to our aid as long as there have been people. And what’s more, God delights in being asked, like a dotting parent of a favorite child. Go on, just ask.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Micah 7:14-15, 18-20; Matthew 12:46-50 (396)*. “*Who is there like you, the God who . . . does not persist in anger forever, but delights rather in clemency?*”

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

FEAST OF APOLLINARIS, BISHOP, MARTYR

Keep the stories alive

Apollinaris lived in the first century, was the first bishop of Ravenna, Italy, and was a martyr as well. That’s all we really know for sure. So how to celebrate so obscure a person, and why? Some say that as long as someone remembers your name, you are not really gone. Perhaps that is why we put names on gravestones. Pray for your dearly departed and visit their graves—and take children along if you can. Pass on the stories of your ancestors, especially stories of their faith. If you don’t know any stories, is there still someone alive you may ask?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah 1:1, 4-10; Matthew 13:1-9 (397)*. “*But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.*”

THURSDAY, JULY 21

First steps

On this day in 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first person to step on the moon. After stepping on the surface of the moon, he spoke the famous words: “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” Everything we achieve begins with one small step, a step of faith. Today is a good day to begin.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13; Matthew 13:10-17 (398)*. “*But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.*”

FRIDAY, JULY 22

FEAST OF MARY MAGDALENE

What’s in a name?

There was a time when most Catholic children were named after saints at Baptism, but that was tradition, not a church rule. According to canon law, the only requirement is that baptismal names be “not foreign to Christian sentiment.” It was also a tradition, also less practiced today, of taking a new name, also of a saint, at Confirmation. Regardless of how you came upon your name(s), God knows you and calls you by name, with the intimacy and love of One who knew you before you had a name.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah 3:14-17 (399); John 20:1-2, 11-18 (603)*. “*Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni,’ which means Teacher.*”

SATURDAY, JULY 23

FEAST OF BRIDGET, RELIGIOUS

Share from your abundance—and your poverty

When you read that 14th-century Bridget of Sweden married at the age of 14, it is easy to disregard her life because it is so different from your own. How could her life speak to yours? But the driving force in Bridget’s life was not marriage at 14 but her wish to give all she had to the poor. From her family home to the monastery she founded to the streets of Rome where she eventually lived, she was consumed by the desire to share the little she had with those in need. Her life reminds us that whether we are giving or receiving, Christ is present in our poverty. Look for an opportunity to be generous today.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah 7:1-11; Matthew 13:24-30 (400)*. “*If each of you deals justly with your neighbor . . . I will remain with you.*”



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

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