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SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 2016 TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Love is the ticket

Do you ever try to imagine what heaven is like? Do you wonder how it can possibly accommodate all people from all places and cultures from the beginning of time? Heaven is beyond all understanding and description, but as the Catechism puts it, it's a place of "supreme, definitive happiness" that will fulfill all your "deepest human longings." Sounds mighty nice, and everyone aims to get there. But how? Simple: love. However imperfectly, with faithful attempts. If you love God, there is a place for you there. Reserve it today.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 66:18-21; Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13; Luke 13:22-30 (123)*. "People will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and will take their place at the feast in the Kingdom."

MONDAY, AUGUST 22

MEMORIAL OF THE QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Live like royalty

Celebrated a week after the Assumption, the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary glorifies the Mother of God not only as a shining example of fidelity to God's call but also as Queen of Heaven, an example of wholeness and holiness in heaven and on earth. Artist Robert Graham's depiction of Mary above the bronze doors of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles captures this beautifully. Without a veil or halo, the statue has a dignity that shines from within. A life of faith is the crown we wear; Mary, be our guide.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 11-12; Matthew 23:13-22 (425)*. "We always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling."

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23 MEMORIAL OF ROSE OF LIMA, VIRGIN More than meets the eye

Saint Rose of Lima knew that outer beauty, including her own, was only skin deep. Because of her pretty face, which gained her the nickname of Rose, she could have had the fine marriage match her family wanted for her. But Rose chafed at the superficial admiration of her looks, rejected all suitors, and ignored all objections. Instead, she devoted herself to a life of prayer and penance. How can you more deeply develop your own life with the Lord? What can you do to cultivate inner beauty—your own and others'?

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a, 14-17; Matthew 23:23-26 (426)*. "Cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean."



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

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24

FEAST OF BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

Come and see

Did you know that curiosity is correlated with happiness? Studies have shown that the more curious people are, the more they engage in growth-oriented behaviors and the greater their sense of life meaning and satisfaction. The Apostle Bartholomew, also called Nathaniel, sought God with an eager heart, and the whole world opened up for him. Tradition says this humble man introduced Christianity to Armenia, left a copy of the Gospel of Matthew in India, and missioned in many other far-flung places. Curiosity about Christ can lead you, too, to the joy of discovery.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Revelation 21:9b-14; John 1:45-51 (629)*. "You will see greater things than this."

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25

MEMORIALS OF LOUIS; JOSEPH CALASANZ, PRIEST

Get dirty

There is little resemblance between Louis, a king of France, and Joseph Calasanz, the two saints celebrated today. They lived lives entirely different from one another, but both were men of extraordinary compassion and both literally got their hands dirty helping people in terrible circumstances. Although a king, Louis ministered to lepers; Joseph cared for victims of the plague. A king, an ordinary priest, *an ordinary you and me*—all of us are called to show mercy and, as Pope Francis says, not be afraid to get our hands dirty. Are your fingernails a little too clean?

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Corinthians 1:1-9; Matthew 24:42-51 (428)*. "Stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come."

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26

A place at mercy's table

This year we're invited to consider mercy as a door that stands open, ready to receive the sinner as a cherished guest. Long before it was a door, however, mercy was a table set by Jesus. Jesus offers a cup that signals a "new and everlasting covenant for the forgiveness of sins." Jesus' habit of eating with sinners and outsiders assures us that a seat at his table has never been a prize awarded to the virtuous, but a sign of his eagerness to share the wine of his compassion with those who are thirstiest for it. Have a seat!

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Corinthians 1:17-25; Matthew 25:1-13 (429)*. "Has not God made the wisdom of the world foolish?"

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27

MEMORIAL OF MONICA

Never lose heart

No discussion of Saint Monica of Hippo is complete without reference to her famous son, Saint Augustine. She would quickly fade into the background if it weren't for her legendary patience and persistence in prayer for her son's conversion. For mothers, fathers, and grandparents today praying that their children return to the practice of the faith, realize that God's love doesn't come and go. It is always present. Like you, God waits for his children who have wandered off. Like Monica, do not give up hope; place your concern in God's hands.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Matthew 25:14-30 (430)*. "Do not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up."