



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2016

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Who are the modern-day lepers?

Every generation faces questions of exclusion and inclusion. Our parents struggled to accept interracial marriage and integrated schools, our generation grapples with gay marriage, and our children confront issues of transgendered youth and restroom use. Where are our churches when it comes to inclusion and exclusion? Journalism professor Robert Mann [writes about](#) a Baptist pastor whose soul-searching article, “[Seven things I’m learning about transgender persons](#),” went viral. For many in faith communities, transgender issues are new terrain. But Jesus called his disciples to engage the world, not to shrink from it. We do well to listen to those on the margins. Jesus welcomed them; let’s do the same.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Galatians 2 Kings 5:14-17; 2 Timothy 2:8-13; Luke 17:11-19 (144)*. “Ten lepers met him. They stood at a distance from him and raised their voices, saying, ‘Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!’”

MONDAY, OCTOBER 10

A mysterious guest at the royal court

She is a legend whose story has endured through centuries. She is Ethiopian, probably dark-skinned, powerful and independent. She inspires artists and filmmakers. She sets a high standard that is a measure of elegance still today. She is a Biblical figure, mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. She is a woman, probably a pagan, who traveled a very long way to seek the counsel of a wise Jewish king. Who is this woman? The Queen of Sheba. How does her story speak to you today?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Galatians 4:22-24, 26-27, 31—5:1; Luke 11:29-32 (467)*. “She came from the farthest corner of the world to listen to the wisdom of Solomon.”

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11

Where God is

Almsgiving is a trademark of people of faith. For Muslims, almsgiving is considered one of the five pillars of Islam. For Christians, almsgiving is a sign of care for our neighbors, a response to our call to serve Christ in our midst. We show our belief by giving donations of time, goods, or money to those in need. Charity is a reflection of the gifts we have been given and a prayerful practice of love and mercy. Let us sing with our lives—*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est*: “Where charity and love are, God is there.”

TODAY’S READINGS: *Galatians 5:1-6; Luke 11:37-41 (468)*. “For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.”



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

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12 YOM KIPPUR

A day of fasting and prayer

Fifty-one years ago, the Vatican II document, *Nostrae Aetatis* (“In our time”) began to break down barriers and animosity between Catholics and Jews. Jewish people mark today—Yom Kippur—as the holiest of their year, a day to acknowledge one’s sins before God. We have in common our utter dependence on God’s *hesed*—a Hebrew word referring to God’s irrevocable mercy or “loyal love” for us. The Council’s teaching did much to point out what Christians and Jews share, but anti-Semitism can still be found, even among Catholics who should know better. Why not join Jews this day in fasting and praying for God’s *hesed*?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Galatians 5:18-25; Luke 11:42-46 (469)*. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.”

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13

Grace and peace are a good place to start

Twenty-one of the 27 books in the New Testament are actually letters. Known as epistles, these letters were written to individuals or groups and reveal the way that the faith was transmitted in the early church. Reaching far and wide, the epistles encouraged young communities and continue to encourage us today. Most epistles begin with introductions and send blessings before getting to the heart of the matter for each specific group. As Paul greets the Ephesians at a time of internal division, he wishes them grace and peace. If you gave specific blessings to the people you greeted today, what might you wish for them?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Ephesians 1:1-10; Luke 11:47-54 (470)*. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14 MEMORIAL OF SAINT CALLISTUS

Don’t forget: It is still the Year of Mercy

Pope Callistus, who died in 250, didn’t always seem “saint-like.” Witness his life-long battle with Saint Hippolytus, who opposed Callistus, calling him too lenient for offering mercy to people whom Hippolytus wanted to excommunicate. In our own time we have another such pope, and we also see antipathy toward him from those who consider him “too lenient.” Yet Callistus understood Jesus’ “prescription” to love and accept “those who need a doctor.” How can you beg God for mercy and begrudge that same forgiveness to another? Whom have you intended to be reconciled with “some day”? How about today?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Ephesians 1:11-14; Luke 12:1-7 (471)*. “The gospel you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops.”

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

MEMORIAL OF TERESA OF JESUS, VIRGIN, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Light is a holy mystery

“God appears to the soul by a knowledge brighter than the sun,” Teresa of Avila wrote. This flash of understanding is known as illumination—a gift of the Spirit we can’t manufacture by our own efforts. One way to prepare for illumination is to contemplate the Rosary’s Luminous Mysteries: the Baptism of Jesus, the Miracle at Cana, the Proclamation of the Kingdom, the Transfiguration, and the Eucharist. These five events enabled the first disciples to see Jesus more clearly. They can open our eyes too, if we ask for such holy light.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 12:8-12 (472)*. “May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call.”