

Sunday, Nov 18, 2018

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Christ the light shine

It used to be that sensible people shrugged off most apocalyptic talk as a religious scare tactic. After all, only Chicken Little seriously believes the sky is falling and life as we know it is ending! Yet the present global situation makes apocalypse sound pertinent, even descriptive of the texture of our times. The light of hope can seem dimmer than ever; nonetheless, when fear begins to sound like the wisest course and paralysis the only option, hold fast to the Good News and its promise of light and life!

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 12:1-3; Hebrews 10:11-14, 18; Mark 13:24-32 (158). *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."*

Monday, Nov 19, 2018

Live your faith day by day

You may know "Day by Day," the popular song from the 1970s musical *Godspell*. The refrain, which was adapted from a 13th-century English prayer, includes the lines: "Three things I pray: To see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, follow thee more nearly." Those words pretty well summarize the yearning in the heart of all Christians. It begins with "seeing clearly" because it's hard to love or follow Jesus unless you do your best to focus on him and his message. The blind man who begged Jesus "Lord, please let me see" spoke for all of us. Spend a moment today reflecting on blind spots in your own faith—areas where doubt, fear, ego, or simple neglect have carried the day thus far.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 1:1-4; 2:1-5; Luke 18:35-43 (497). *"Have sight; your faith has saved you."*

Tuesday, Nov 20, 2018

Mercy is the great equalizer

"Mercy that is truly Christian is also the most perfect incarnation of 'equality' between people," wrote Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Rich in Mercy*. Our compassion compels us to see the dignity of persons in need. They become lovable simply because they are. Despite any faults, poor choices, weaknesses, or circumstances beyond their control, those in need are worthy of alms (from the Greek words for *compassion* and *mercy*)—for Christ's sake. Strive to see in others what Jesus saw in tax collectors, sinners, and the least among us: the face of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 3:1-6, 14-22; Luke 19:1-10 (498). *"Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham."*

Wednesday, Nov 21, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Moment by moment, grace upon grace

Make a list of what you've been taught about Mary of Nazareth: virgin, mother of Jesus, Mother of God, conceived immaculately, assumed into heaven bodily—it's an astonishing list. Her life was "full of grace," yet the Bible says little of her beyond the first moments of Jesus' life and the last. Church tradition supplies the rest, not to invent history but to illustrate how this Jewish girl's life was made holy by her choices and those of the family that

nurtured her. Our families become holy in the same way, one decision at a time.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 4:1-11; Luke 19:11-28 (499). *"To everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."*

Thursday, Nov 22, 2018

THANKSGIVING DAY

Gratitude is good for the body and soul

The gratitude you feel on Thanksgiving is good for your mental health. Practicing daily gratitude, psychologists say, results in higher levels of energy, alertness, enthusiasm, and determination. Better yet, people who feel grateful are more likely to feel loved and repay kindnesses. Benedictine Brother David Stendl-Rast, one of the founders of *gratefulness.org*, says that, by freely choosing gratitude, we can "create a better life for ourselves and for others." Now there's something to be thankful for.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 50:22-24; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Luke 17:11-19 (943-947). *"Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?"*

Friday, Nov 23, 2018

MEMORIAL OF CLEMENT I, POPE, MARTYR

Take a letter

We tend to think that important letter-writing in the early church was limited to the New Testament, Saint Paul being the star correspondent. But others wrote letters to Christian communities, like the third bishop of Rome, Clement, who wrote to the same church in Corinth that Paul had tried to straighten out earlier. Though we don't know much else about Clement, we know he lived in Rome at the end of first century, only a generation or two after Peter and Paul had died there. Clement mentions their deaths, writing of Peter, "Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter . . . endured not one or two, but numerous labors, and when he had finally suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him." Let us recall those early martyrs who gave everything for Christ and his church.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 10:8-11; Luke 19:45-48 (501). *"Jesus entered the temple area and proceeded to drive out those who were selling things."*

Saturday, Nov 24, 2018

MEMORIAL OF ANDREW DŨNG-LẠC, PRIEST, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Culture gets holy; holiness gets culture

In 1988, when Pope John Paul II canonized the Vietnam martyrs whose feast we celebrate today, he used the opportunity to speak of the value of enculturation. The pope praised the martyrs and witnesses for initiating dialogue among various religious groups and proposing ways to put Christian faith in action that were suited to Asian culture, such as teaching that "one should respect and venerate one's ancestors according to the customs of the land in light of the mystery of the Resurrection." Out of respect for these humble and courageous martyrs, do your best to respect the customs and religious practices of all faiths as you freely practice your own cultural expressions of faith.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 11:4-12; Luke 20:27-40 (502). *"Some of the scribes said in reply, 'Teacher, you have answered well.'"*

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



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