

Sunday, May 10, 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Equal actions of the spiritually mature

There's some disagreement between those who consider prayer the number-one obligation for believers and those convinced that actions speak louder than words. Monastic leader Benedict of Clairvaux wrote his *Rule* to ensure his monks understood that *ora et labora*—prayer and labor—are partner activities in reaching spiritual maturity. Some people are clearly called to devote themselves primarily to spiritual matters in full-time religious vocations. Others can better serve elbow-deep in more worldly arenas. Try to balance the mix between spiritual rejuvenation and gritty action in your life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 6:1-7; 1 Peter 2:4-9; John 14:1-12 (52). *"It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table."*

Monday, May 11, 2020

EASTER WEEKDAY

Be an advocate

Jesus promised to send his followers an advocate—the Holy Spirit—to come to our aid, to strengthen and plead our Christian cause and defend us from evil. (We can use all the help we can get in these trying times!) As part of our church's social teaching, Catholics are to be advocates for the poor. Add your voice to those urging policymakers to take action on critical issues from malnutrition to forced migration. Confrontglobalpoverty.org is a good place to start.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 14:5-18; John 14:21-26 (285). *"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name."*

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

MEMORIAL OF PANCRAS, MARTYR

A child shall lead us

Not much is known about Saint Pancras—other than he was martyred, like many Christians, by the Roman Emperor Diocletian around the year 303. Historic churches and a famous train station in London bear his name because Augustine of Canterbury brought devotion to Pancras with him to northern Europe. A truly defining characteristic of Pancras, though, is that he was only 14 when he was tortured and beheaded, putting him in the same "child saint" category as martyrs Maria Goretti, Agnes of Rome, and José Luis Sánchez del Río. How can your own faith benefit from a childlike trust?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a (286). *"Do not let your hearts be troubled."*

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

MEMORIAL OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Pray as if your (eternal) life depends on it

Beginning May 13, 1917 and continuing through that fall, three children (Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta) of Fatima, Portugal reported several Marian apparitions. Much has been written about the message of Our Lady of Fatima, whose feast was added to the church calendar in 2002. The defining document on Fatima comes from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In sum: The apparitions did *not* predict the future or announce the end of the world. They *did* "exhort" us to pray,

because "prayer is the salvation for souls." Good advice in any guise!

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8 (287). *"No more than a branch can bear fruit of itself apart from the vine, can you bear fruit apart from me."*

Thursday, May 14, 2020

FEAST OF MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

Ready and willing

Not much is known about Matthias except that he replaced Judas as one of the 12 apostles. Tradition has it that he preached in the areas around Judea and possibly farther afield and was persecuted and martyred, but details are few and unreliable. Today's first reading tells us he stepped in when needed and agreed to join the apostles following Jesus' death and Resurrection. Like most Christians, he lived a life of quiet faithfulness without much glory. Be ready to step in to serve others. Never mind the glory.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; John 15:9-17 (564). *"Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven apostles."*

Friday, May 15, 2020

EASTER WEEKDAY

That they might be one

The call to unity is woven throughout our Catholic faith. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis writes that we share with our ancestors in faith the conviction "that everything is interconnected, and that genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice, and faithfulness to others." Recent events bring this truth home in forceful ways. Today let's commemorate International Day of Families and Endangered Species Day, both of which are ways to help nurture our essential connectedness with each other and the world.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17 (289). *"This is my commandment: love one another as I love you."*

Saturday, May 16, 2020

EASTER WEEKDAY

Being Christian has a cost

Religious persecution was commonplace in the story of the Early Church. Two thousand years later, persecution of Christians continues. In a 2019 trip to the Catacombs of Priscilla in Rome, Pope Francis remarked, "Still today Christians are persecuted—even more than in the first centuries." Play your part in stopping all religious persecution by expressing zero tolerance for it in your own backyard.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21 (290). *"If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."*

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



©2020 TrueQuest Communications. TakeFiveForFaith.com; mail@takefiveforfaith.com. All rights reserved. Noncommercial reprints permitted with the following credit: Reprinted with permission from TakeFiveForFaith.com. Scripture citations from the New American Bible Revised Edition. For more information about TAKE FIVE and our regular contributors, go to PrepareTheWord.com. **Free daily email and app available online at TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe.**