

## Sunday, May 17, 2020

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### Hope is nourishing

Especially in these trying times, we may be tempted to dismiss hope as something akin to wishful thinking. Yet hope is a theological virtue, along with faith and love. These three put us into position for personal union with God. Hope, in particular, orients us perpetually in a Godward direction no matter where life takes us. As Cistercian monk Aelred of Rivaulx declared: “What is hope but food for the journey to support us in the miseries of this life?” Cultivate hope by weeding out habits of negativity and cynicism.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18; John 14:15-21 (55). “*Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.*”

## Monday, May 18, 2020

MEMORIAL OF JOHN I, POPE, MARTYR

### Lean on the Lord

Pope John I was frail when he was elected to the papacy in 523, and he did not survive imprisonment by a heretical king. From permanent disabilities to occasional illness, from aging to chronic fatigue to widespread viral infection, we all experience physical weakness at some point and know that it can feel like a prison. When we hit the limits of our bodies, our inner strength can wane too. At that time—and at any time—lean on the Lord to carry you through.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26—16:4a (291). “*The Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me.*”

## Tuesday, May 19, 2020

EASTER WEEKDAY

### Always at our side and on our side

When Jesus promised his disciples the Holy Spirit, he used an interesting word. He called their holy helper a “paraclete,” the Greek word for *advocate*—literally “called to one’s side.” It was used in courts of law to describe an intercessor or counselor. From the Book of Job, we also know paraclete can mean “comforter.” What a rich, meaningful name to give that Spirit who guides us still—by our side even when we’re as clueless as can be.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:22-34; John 16:5-11 (292). “*If I do not go, the Advocate will not come.*”

## Wednesday, May 20, 2020

MEMORIAL OF BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST

### The best witness is a joyful heart

Do you know of someone whose energy and joy attracts followers of all kinds? Franciscan priest and theologian Saint Bernardine of Siena (1380-1444), whose feast we celebrate today, was one of those people. He was a human dynamo whose preaching drew thousands of fans throughout Italy even as he challenged them to practice voluntary poverty and denounced the sins of the day. His joyful eloquence defined his ministry and was impossible to ignore. Can you bring others to God through a joyful spirit?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 17:15, 22—18:1; John 16:12-15 (293). “*They were to seek God, yes . . . though he is not really far from any one of us.*”

## Thursday, May 21, 2020

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

### This isn't goodbye

After listening to the nightly news, a friend recently (and understandably) gasped: “We need Jesus!” Most believers would agree. Which is perhaps why the Ascension doesn’t feel like an event we’re much inclined to celebrate. Jesus *departs*; this sounds like a terrible idea from every standpoint except the truth—because Jesus promises to send us his Spirit as an indwelling presence. If we still feel like orphans, remember Jesus’ words: “I am with you always.” See Jesus all around: in word and sacrament, in the assembly of faith, in the disadvantaged sister and brother.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23; Matthew 28:16-20 (58). “*And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.*”

## Friday, May 22, 2020

EASTER WEEKDAY

### Identify escape routes

During stressful times and increased family togetherness, such as global “stay-at-home” orders, domestic abuse increases. Special hotlines and secret havens are set up to assist victims, and abusers are encouraged to seek help as well. Saint Rita of Cascia, whose feast we celebrate today, was mentally and physically abused by her husband for years. In the Middle Ages, she had little recourse. She chose to respond with kindness, patience, and humility. Her virtues did little to change her husband’s behavior, but she did her best to escape her situation, at least spiritually. With the many resources available today, be aware of the signs of abuse and encourage loved ones to seek both physical and spiritual refuge.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:9-18; John 16:20-23 (295). “*No one will take your joy away from you.*”

## Saturday, May 23, 2020

EASTER WEEKDAY

### Here's to life

As we adjust to new ways of living, the Easter season offers much-needed hope. Resurrection changes everything, not only in salvation history but also here and now. Life coming out of death. That is the mystery of our faith, and the mystery of the world we live in. For every story of greed and ineptitude, there are many more stories of generosity and competence. Celebrate those victories. That is the life that comes out of death.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:23-28; John 16:23b-28 (296). “*For the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have come to believe that I came from God.*”

*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](https://www.TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe).**