

## Sunday, Jul 19, 2020

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### With friends like this . . . we're blessed!

We tend to find what we're looking for. First Bishop of Boston John Cheverus, who died this day in 1836, always sought—and brought—friendship. Forced to flee France after his ordination because of the French Revolution, he arrived in the United States to become the trusted pastor of native peoples in Maine. Named Bishop of Boston, he drew resistance from Protestant leaders there, who later wept and protested when Cheverus was called back to France. His priests followed him, laypeople trusted him, poor families relied on him. However you lead, do it with love and friendship.

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 12:13, 16-19; Romans 8:26-27; Matthew 13:24-43 (106). *"The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed . . . until the whole batch was leavened."*

## Monday, Jul 20, 2020

MEMORIAL OF APOLLINARIS, BISHOP, MARTYR

### Stay the course

According to tradition, the Syrian Saint Apollinaris was made a bishop of Ravenna, Italy by Saint Peter himself. The miracles and preaching of Apollinaris won over many converts, and the Romans in charge tortured and drove him from his city multiple times, but nothing could stop him from returning to his flock, until he eventually died from his beatings. If you need help persevering in the face of great challenges, look to this early Christian leader and pray for a dose of the strength he found in staying unwaveringly true to his faith and his church.

TODAY'S READINGS: Micah 6:1-4, 6-8; Matthew 12:38-42 (395). *"There is something greater than Solomon here."*

## Tuesday, Jul 21, 2020

MEMORIAL OF LAWRENCE OF BRINDISI, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### Operate out of love

Lawrence of Brindisi, an Italian priest, surrendered everything he had to God's will. His offering consisted not only of the poverty, chastity, and obedience required of his Capuchin religious order, but also his compassion and considerable intellect. Lawrence's fluency in Latin, Hebrew, Greek, German, Bohemian, Spanish, and French meant he was tasked to translate the Bible as well as negotiate peace with other countries. None of these lofty pursuits kept him from showing love to everyone he met. May we all practice what he preached: "God is love and all his operations proceed from love."

TODAY'S READINGS: Micah 7:14-15, 18-20; Matthew 12:46-50 (396). *"Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother."*

## Wednesday, Jul 22, 2020

FEAST OF MARY MAGDALENE, APOSTLE OF THE APOSTLES

### Be the bearer of Good News

Contrary to the mistaken legend that arose later, Mary Magdalene was not a prostitute. She was a friend and follower of Jesus who accompanied him during his ministry and remained with him through the agony of his death. Compelled by unbearable grief, she is the first person in all four gospels to witness the empty

tomb. In 2016, Pope Francis issued a decree that elevated this day from a memorial to a feast day as he called Mary Magdalene the Apostle to the Apostles. What good news of Jesus can you bring to others today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Song of Songs 3:1-4b or 2 Corinthians 5:14-17; John 20:1-2, 11-18 (603). *"Jesus then said . . . 'Go to my brothers and tell them . . .'"*

## Thursday, Jul 23, 2020

### Your turn to keep the faith going

In today's gospel Jesus notes that the crowd hears him but doesn't understand. Misunderstanding the message of Jesus was a problem from the beginning, which is why we all can use help in understanding matters of faith, help that is available from the Christian community. Catholics do not isolate scripture alone as the sole basis of faith but also emphasize tradition as essential to our understanding; tradition handed on through the church. You are part of the living Body of Christ that carries on the tradition. Today recall that you help express and form the tradition through your actions—make them good ones!

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13; Matthew 13:10-17 (398). *"The disciples approached Jesus and said, 'Why do you speak to the crowd in parables?'"*

## Friday, Jul 24, 2020

MEMORIAL OF SHARBEL MAKHLUF, PRIEST

### Healing measures

Legend says healing might be gained by traveling to Lebanon and praying at the tomb of Sharbel Makhluf (1828-98), a Maronite monk known for his virtue and holiness. Closer to home, there's a mosaic shrine to Saint Sharbel located in New York City's St. Patrick Cathedral. Throughout the world, there are more than 3 million Maronite Christians, an Eastern Catholic Church established in the fifth century and in full communion with Rome. In a world with so much illness, today is a good day to ask Saint Sharbel to lend a healing hand. And we should all do the same.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 3:14-17; Matthew 13:18-23 (399). *"The seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it."*

## Saturday, Jul 25, 2020

FEAST OF JAMES, APOSTLE

### Let the storm subside

The apostle James, along with his brother John, members of Jesus' inner circle, were nicknamed the "sons of thunder" perhaps because of their fiery personalities. At one point in the gospels they asked Jesus if they should call "fire down from heaven" on a village that does not welcome them. Fortunately for the villagers (and for us) Jesus had a different idea of how power should be used—not for vengeance but for healing. Pray that those who wield great power in our own nation and world might take their cue on this point from Jesus rather than James.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15; Matthew 20:20-28 (605). *"Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant."*

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



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