

Sunday, Sep 06, 2020

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Strive for rugged interdependence

Individualism—rugged or otherwise—has it perks. But what’s more rugged and infinitely more fruitful is the spirit of communal interdependence. Jesus tells us not merely that there’s safety in numbers, but that Christianity itself is in the balance. A loner Christian simply can’t be found. Even a hermit lives in communion with the greater church. Our gathering hymn at the start of each Mass tells us why we come together, whether in person or online: because Jesus is present in the love that passes between us. Practice your Christianity in all of your daily contacts.

TODAY’S READINGS: Ezekiel 33:7-9; Romans 13:8-10; Matthew 18:15-20 (127). *“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*

Monday, Sep 07, 2020

Stand for work

This year’s Labor Day is a difficult one for our country, with so many workers unemployed, underemployed, or employed in high-risk settings as a result of the pandemic. In these tough times, let’s remember the church’s teachings on the dignity of work and workers. The U.S. bishops have stated, “All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions, as well as to organize and join unions or other associations.” Stand up for workers’ rights today and every day.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 5:1-8; Luke 6:6-11 (437). *“Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?”*

Tuesday, Sep 08, 2020

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Find hope in Mary

One of the most beautiful prayers of the Catholic Church, “The Litany of Loreto” dates back to the 1500s and uses poetic language to proclaim the many titles and symbols of Mary. One of those symbols—Mary as Morning Star—describes Our Lady’s relationship to Jesus and her role in salvation history. Just as Earth’s morning star, Venus, emits the day’s first light ahead of the dawning of the sun, so too does the birth of Mary provide a glimmer of hope ahead of the birth of her son. Turn to Mary today with anything you might feel hopeless about.

TODAY’S READINGS: Micah 5:1-4a or Romans 8:28-30; Matthew 1:1-16, 18-23 (636). *“Of her was born Jesus who is called the Christ.”*

Wednesday, Sep 09, 2020

MEMORIAL OF PETER CLAVER, PRIEST

Care about body and soul

Saint Peter Claver (1581-1654) was a Spanish Jesuit missionary to the Americas who preached the Good News by first caring for the physical needs of the people. When slave ships docked in the port city of Cartagena, Colombia, Claver came with food and medicines to care for the African people who survived the journey, because he believed that, “We must speak to them with our hands before we speak to them with our lips.” In four decades in Colombia, he baptized more than 300,000 people, proof perhaps that compassion borne of faith is the best means of

evangelization. May compassion for everyone be the means of our own sainthood.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 7:25-31; Luke 6:20-26 (439).

“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude and insult you.”

Thursday, Sep 10, 2020

Bible banter

While we may quote the Bible now and then, Catholics in general are less likely to quote scripture than many Protestants, not because we don’t value scripture but because Catholics rely on tradition and teaching *alongside* scripture. Individual Bible quotes tend to be emphasized less. Most believers will spend a lifetime coming to understand and embrace their faith deeply. Next time you read the Bible, see it as one more step on the journey to God.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 8:1b-7, 11-13; Luke 6:27-38 (440). *“Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you.”*

Friday, Sep 11, 2020

What would Jesus do?

Religion has too often been weaponized. Criticism and even attacks on others are justified in the name of “God.” Many a “holy” war has been fought with little understanding of a God who can be expressed as compassion, mercy, and love in many and varied ways across religious traditions. As Christians, we are called to measure our words and actions by the gospel of Jesus the Christ. This standard should guide our choices, whether confronting injustice, voting for political leadership, or encountering a stranger. As we pause to remember the victims of 9/11 and other terrorist acts today, let’s pledge to resist all efforts to weaponize religion. How can love incarnate your entire being?

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22b-27; Luke 6:39-42 (441). *“Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own?”*

Saturday, Sep 12, 2020

MEMORIAL OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF MARY

Your litany of personal saints

Tony in *West Side Story* wasn’t the first to sing the name of his beloved, and the word “Maria” barely contains his wonder. One of the first words heard by newborns is their name, reverently whispered by parents. What name best will fit this little person? Throughout scripture, names carry significance: from John the Baptist to Cephas/Peter to Jesus at the burial site calling Mary Magdalene after his Resurrection. So is it any surprise that those who revere the Virgin Mary have cherished her name for centuries? Take a moment to create a list of names, your personal litany of people who have nourished or inspired you. Then pray it in thanksgiving for them.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 10:14-22; Luke 6:43-49 (442). *“No good tree bears bad fruit . . . for each tree is known by its own fruit.”*

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



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