



SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2017

SOLEMNITY OF THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER; DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY Live in the mystery

Musing about the ideal frame of mind for artists and writers, the English romantic poet John Keats wrote that they must be “capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.” He called this state “negative capability.” The prospect of abiding in uncertainty might feel uncomfortable for us ordinary folks, but Keats understood that where uncertainty, mystery, and doubt exist, anything can happen. It’s the place where miracles are possible; in fact it’s where the risen Christ resides. As the church continues the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus, today might be a good day to ponder Keats’ idea.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 4:42-47; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Victimae Paschali Laudes; John 20:19-31 (43)*. “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.”

MONDAY, APRIL 24

MEMORIAL OF FIDELIS OF SIGMARINGEN, PRIEST, MARTYR Support a bono cause

Fidelis of Sigmaringen (1577-1622) was martyred during a time of great strife between Calvinists and Catholics in Switzerland. Fidelis had a special love of the poor, often giving away his warm clothing in winter. He studied law and was known as “advocate for the poor” because he took on the cases of people who had no one else to represent them. The “pro bono” tradition of free legal aid continues to this day. Legal aid societies in many communities help needy clients find lawyers who will represent them without charge. Consider supporting such a worthy cause in the name of Fidelis. Visit www.findlegalhelp.org, a website of the American Bar Association, for more information.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 4:23-31; John 3:1-8 (267)*. “Unless one is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

TUESDAY, APRIL 25 FEAST OF MARK, EVANGELIST An early and enduring giant

Saint Mark the evangelist was one of the first 70 disciples. He is believed to have written the Gospel of Mark, our earliest gospel. But he didn’t stop there. He also founded the Church of Alexandria in Egypt back in the year 42, a few years after Jesus’ death. Alexandria became one of the great centers of early Christianity. Today three churches claim to be the direct heirs of the original Church of Alexandria: Coptic Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, and Coptic Catholic. Saint Mark looms large behind them all, a giant

of our tradition. Take him as your inspiration as you write your own “gospel” by living your faith in the world.

TODAY’S READINGS: *1 Peter 5:5b-14; Mark 16:15-20 (555)*. “They went forth and preached everywhere.”

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26 EASTER WEEKDAY

Look it up

John 3:16 (“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son . . .”) is perhaps the best-known scripture verse. A group in Alabama made a video of a bunch of guys noticing a sign with that Bible verse on it and looking it up on a smartphone to find out what it means. The video was rejected as a Super Bowl commercial because it promoted a particular religion, which may be true. But it would have been a good reminder. Sometimes we have to hold up a sign, make a phone call, visit a sick friend, or forgive a loved one in order to help one another see who is already among us.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21 (269)*. “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world.”

THURSDAY, APRIL 27 EASTER WEEKDAY

Take it to the next level

The gospel can be pretty tough on our tendency to dwell on earthly distractions and frivolous pursuits. Does that mean that indulging in celebrity gossip, office chatter, and daily political intrigues is not as harmless as we might hope? What about video games, shopping networks, and endless texting? They’re all fascinating and fun, but they can distract us from the more important work of care and compassion: A problem goes unsolved, a loved one is neglected, a friend gets snubbed. Allot a block of time each day to go above and beyond earthly things.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36 (270)*. “The one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things.”

FRIDAY, APRIL 28 MEMORIAL OF PETER CHANEL, PRIEST, MARTYR Hear the gentle rhythm

Peter Chanel, who was martyred in 1841 at the tender age of 33, was one of the original members of the Society of Mary, commonly known as Marists. Today the society consists of “men and women who strive to live the gospel the way Mary lived . . . we too can hear the gentle rhythms of the grace of God in our lives by making our own her manner of thinking, judging, feeling, and acting.” Listen to Mary and you, too, can be guided by her gentleness and grace. The world needs more of this kind of strength!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 5:34-42; John 6:1-15 (271)*. “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world.”

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

MEMORIAL OF CATHERINE OF SIENA, VIRGIN, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH Hatred cuts both ways

Here’s a new definition of crazy-busy: the saint who dies of exhaustion at age 33. Catherine started having visions at 7 and joined the Tertiary Dominicans at 13, not wasting any time. By 29 she served as the pope’s mediator, with reconciliation of conflict her mission in life. “Hatred deprives us of divine charity,” she declared. “How stupidly blind not to see that with the sword of hatred for our neighbors we are killing ourselves!” In every conflict, seek reconciliation and peace.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 6:1-7; John 6:16-21 (272)*. “It is I. Do not be afraid.”



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

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