

## Sunday, Apr 29, 2018

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### People change

Once England was our enemy. Ditto for France, Spain, Mexico, Germany, Japan, Italy, China, Korea, Cuba, and most of the Middle East. Our country has been in conflict with island nations and African peoples. We've fought up and down Central America, not to mention our own Native Americans. Southern states were pitted against the North. It takes our hearts time to catch up with a new reality. Paul, the Christian killer, became a signature disciple of Jesus. How long before we're prepared to call an enemy a friend?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 9:26-31; 1 John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8 (53). *"But they were all afraid of [Paul], not believing that he was a disciple."*

## Monday, Apr 30, 2018

MEMORIAL OF PIUS V, POPE

### Poor in spirit

Even though the man who was to be Pope Pius V (1504-72) would become a university professor, head of several houses of the Dominican order, a bishop and cardinal, a grand inquisitor, and eventually pope who had to implement the reforms of the Council of Trent, it seems he never forgot where he came from. Born of impoverished Italian nobility, as a boy he worked as a shepherd. After becoming pope he lived a simple and prayerful lifestyle, built hospitals, and opened the papal treasury to care for the poor, with whom he was personally involved. He kept wearing his Dominican habit, establishing the custom of popes wearing white. Prayer and service, worship and works of mercy will keep you close to God and the gospel, whatever else you do.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 14:5-18; John 14:21-26 (285). *"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him."*

## Tuesday, May 01, 2018

MEMORIAL OF JOSEPH THE WORKER

### Holy work

How do you feel about your work? For many, it's a means to an end, a paycheck, something to be endured, a distraction from other important things in their lives, or even a road to wealth and power. The church, however, views work from a somewhat different angle: Everyone has the right to meaningful work that will support them and their families. Work should help build up society for the good of all. It also participates in God's creative and redeeming work. It's a holy thing. As you work today, remember Saint Joseph, who was a worker, and work both for your daily bread and the kingdom of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a (286). *"What must we do to perform the works of God?"*

## Wednesday, May 02, 2018

MEMORIAL OF ATHANASIUS, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### Many parts, one harmony

Maybe because his own world was so full of discord—early Christians bickering about doctrine, himself repeatedly exiled by emperors for his own belief in Jesus—Saint Athanasius (295-373) kept returning to the image of harmony to teach about God's ways. "A choir is composed of a variety of men, women, and children, of both old and young. Under the direction of one

conductor, each sings in the way that is natural for him: men with men's voices, boys with boys' voices, old people with old voices. Yet all of them produce a single harmony." What a helpful reminder whenever we think others should agree with us! Unity can exist without uniformity.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8 (287). *"Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit."*

## Thursday, May 03, 2018

FEAST OF PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

### Live outside the bounds of history

Based on the sparse details history has preserved about the apostles Philip and James, it would seem that they did nothing all that noteworthy. They simply chose to follow Christ and do the works he did. But their radical, countercultural choice—one that led to their martyrdom—was really quite extraordinary. The same holds true for any modern Christians trying to do the works of Jesus. We may not capture the attention of news reporters or historians for choosing to love our neighbors and forgive our enemies, but we will certainly catch God's eye, which is imperative if we hope to enter the Kingdom that exists outside the bounds of history.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14 (561). *"Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do."*

## Friday, May 04, 2018

EASTER WEEKDAY

### Friends in high places

"On the night before he died he had supper with his friends." These words from the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass remind us of the humanness of Jesus. Though he is Lord and Savior, we can also call him friend and brother. His becoming a human being allows us both to relate to God on human terms and share in the divine life, which is life eternal. The God we worship is on intimate terms with us. Take a few moments today to ponder this incredible fact. How do everyday moments reveal God to you?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17 (289). *"I do not call you servants any longer . . . but I have called you friends."*

## Saturday, May 05, 2018

EASTER WEEKDAY

### Take the handoff

A little more than halfway through the Acts of the Apostles Saint Luke mentions the original 12 apostles for the last time. From then on the book is pretty much the story of the acts of the other great apostle, Saint Paul. While Paul felt it necessary to defend his status as an apostle from time to time, there's no doubt he was largely responsible for bringing the gospel of Jesus out of its Jerusalem center and spreading it around the Mediterranean area, from which it eventually spread to the whole world, as Christ had intended it to do. The passing along of the Good News of Jesus and the shape the church gives it have been the responsibility of Christians from the first days. They still are today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21 (290). *"They handed on to the people for observance the decisions reached by the apostles and presbyters in Jerusalem."*

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



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