

Sunday, Oct 21, 2018

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Chasing greatness

Ruins of ancient empires can be found around the globe. We're awed by these traces of grandeur even as we're summoned to awareness of the passing of worldly power. Every nation in history that once sought to be great has the antiquities to testify to their achievement—and the ashes to witness to its elusiveness. The only greatness that matters is the kind that lays its privilege down for the sake of the lowly. Dare to be great in the way of the Kingdom. Use your personal authority to lift others up, not to promote your own gain.

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 53:10-11; Hebrews 4:14-16; Mark 10:35-45 or 10:42-45 (146). *"Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left."*

Monday, Oct 22, 2018

MEMORIAL OF JOHN PAUL II, POPE

Be strong through vulnerability

When we count out the qualities we would like in a leader, rarely would we cite shame. However it is precisely this sense of shame that urges leaders to search out and claim ownership of their faults and mistakes. In this sense, Saint John Paul II stands out as an example for both political and religious leaders. In his book, *When a Pope Asks Forgiveness*, Luigi Accattoli cites 94 occasions in which Saint John Paul II acknowledged either personal or institutional culpability for mistakes and social injustices. Far from being a sign of weakness, this vulnerability formed one of his true strengths as a leader. How can the leadership roles you take on become opportunities to practice humility?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 2:1-10; Luke 12:13-21 (473). *"Take care to guard against all greed."*

Tuesday, Oct 23, 2018

MEMORIAL OF JOHN OF CAPISTRANO, PRIEST

Don't take flight at signs of adversity

In 1776, when a new California mission was named in honor of John Capistran by Junipero Serra, perhaps it was to honor a vital, hardworking, and optimistic fellow Franciscan of the 15th century when church and world were torn by everything from plague to heresy. Amazingly energetic, John was a force for renewal and fidelity in a fiercely divided church. And then there are the swallows. They return to the abandoned mission every spring and leave around this time. They, too, were optimists when they began to settle at the mission after a local innkeeper destroyed their unseemly muddy nests. Ask yourself: Can I hold on to the joy and optimism of a dauntless swallow or a dedicated reformer, even when things do not unfold as I'd like?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 2:12-22; Luke 12:35-38 (474). *"But God, who is rich in mercy . . . raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*

Wednesday, Oct 24, 2018

MEMORIAL OF ANTHONY MARY CLARET, BISHOP

Live large

Some saints make their mark by doing only one thing, but doing it very well. Others, like Anthony Mary Claret, paint with a broader brush. Claret founded a religious order, fought for social change, was a writer and publisher, archbishop and refugee, even for a while chaplain to the queen of Spain—against his wishes, as he

let her know. He was especially revered in Cuba where he spoke out against the abuses of slavery, which rankled the landed class and brought no less than 14 attempts on his life. Claret lived life large. Dare to dream your own big dreams for the sake of the gospel—and get out there to make them happen.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 3:2-12; Luke 12:39-48 (475). *"You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."*

Thursday, Oct 25, 2018

Be on fire with faith

Zeal for God's mission was personified, and indeed incarnated, in the person of Jesus the Christ. Jesus' passion to serve others and to share the gospel was one of his enduring gifts to his disciples then and now. It wasn't only about the "doing" of the faith, however, but of fully becoming what one loved and believed. A story from the desert fathers and mothers illustrates that well: "Abba Lot went to see Abba Joseph and said, 'Abba as far as I can I say my little office [prayers], I fast a little, I pray and meditate, I live in peace and as far as I can, I purify my thoughts. What else can I do?' Then the old man stood up and stretched his hands toward heaven. His fingers became like ten lamps of fire and he said to him, 'If you will, you can become all flame.'"

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 3:14-21; Luke 12:49-53 (476). *"I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing."*

Friday, Oct 26, 2018

Learn the language of signs

"Signs" was the name of a 1970's pop tune that complained about the clutter and negativity of so many signs that surround us, from billboards to those of the "Keep out" and "Do not trespass" variety. But one line in the countercultural song takes a surprising turn: "And the sign said 'Everybody welcome. Come in, kneel down, and pray.'" Given the clutter of signs and messages that bombard us daily, it's difficult to make out the signs that point us to peace and spiritual growth. Any sign that encourages us to take a moment out for quiet reflection and prayer is a trustworthy sign. Keep an eye out for one today!

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 4:1-6; Luke 12:54-59 (477). *"Why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"*

Saturday, Oct 27, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Let the loving saints shine

Media resources tend to shower glory on athletes, celebrities, and winning candidates. This worldly praise and honor doesn't resemble the divine attribute of glory much. God chooses to share a reflection of divine glory with a surprisingly different cast of characters: the meek, the lowly, the little ones. This glory gives the saints their radiant haloes and makes people with loving ways shine when they walk in the room. On this final Saturday of Rosary Month, pray the Glorious Mysteries for more radiant ones to bless our world!

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 4:7-16; Luke 13:1-9 (478). *"He . . . is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things."*

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



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