

Sunday, Sep 30, 2018

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Religion shouldn't scare you

Talk of hellfire was motivating in earlier generations. If it's a choice between eternal flames or fear of the Lord, what sane person wouldn't take the high road? These days, we seem to be post-hell and past fear. It's difficult for some of us to find the proper motivation to live justly, especially when it requires an uncomfortable amount of sacrifice. So here's a fear worth fearing: hurting the one we love most. We say we love God; God cherishes the vulnerable and the poor. Pray for, share with, and raise your voice for those in need.

TODAY'S READINGS: Numbers 11:25-29; James 5:1-6; Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48 (137). *"You have lived on earth in luxury and pleasure; you have fattened your hearts for the day of slaughter."*

Monday, Oct 01, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS, VIRGIN, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

God is in the details

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-97), also known as the "little flower of Jesus," entered a convent at the tender age of 15 and only lived to 24. She lived with the kind of childlike innocence that Jesus praises in today's gospel, as evidenced in her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, which is filled with insight and charm. Thérèse believed in doing simple things with great care and love. "To pick up a pin with love can convert a soul," she said, as she fulfilled her humble chores. As you go about your daily routine today, try to do one small thing with great love—who knows whose soul you may end up touching!

TODAY'S READINGS: Job 1:6-22; Luke 9:46-50 (455). *"For the one who is least among all of you is the one who is the greatest."*

Tuesday, Oct 02, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS

Someone to watch over me

According to Catholic tradition, everyone has a personal angel guarding their bodily and spiritual well-being. "Beside each believer," said the fourth-century theologian and bishop Saint Basil, "stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading [them] to life"—and he should know, having been called the "revealer of heavenly mysteries"! Guardian angels remind you that you are always in the presence of God and should act accordingly. They also remind you that God is with others, whom you should treat accordingly.

TODAY'S READINGS: Job 3:1-3, 11-17, 20-23 (456); Matthew 18:1-5, 10 (650). *"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father."*

Wednesday, Oct 03, 2018

Science in service of the sacred

An appreciation of science does not detract from our sense of wonder and awe at the mystery and beauty of the universe. Rather it enhances our understanding of how "all things work together for the good": from the tiniest invisible particles to the vast forces that govern galaxies. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "Science and technology are precious resources" that benefit humanity. Yet "by themselves they cannot disclose the meaning of existence and of human progress." Scientific

accomplishments must always be at the service of the human person. To discern that, we look to a higher source.

TODAY'S READINGS: Job 9:1-12, 14-16; Luke 9:57-62 (457). *"[God] does great things past finding out, marvelous things beyond reckoning."*

Thursday, Oct 04, 2018

MEMORIAL OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Extreme makeover

"Repair my church," said the voice of God to Francis of Assisi, who was praying in the dilapidated church of St. Damian. Francis got to work, immediately cleaning and repairing and restoring that disheveled building. It took him a while to realize God had greater plans for Francis' repair and reform movement than just one tiny chapel. But we can learn from Francis. When God's call comes, we don't have to understand it completely. We would do well to get busy tending to the challenges right in front of us: at home, on the job, in the neighborhood, and in the church.

TODAY'S READINGS: Job 19:21-27; Luke 10:1-12 (458). *"The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few."*

Friday, Oct 05, 2018

Big cities, bright light of the world

The biblical towns of Tyre and Sidon might bring to mind some modern-day big cities: prosperous, bustling, cosmopolitan—and spiritually hungry. Early in Jesus' ministry people from these distant port cities heard about the things Jesus was doing and, though they were in some sense outsiders, they responded with more enthusiasm than many of those who were closer to Jesus. Jesus held up these "pagan" cities as models of what was possible when people react out of a genuine desire for spiritual nourishment. Respond to the gospel with enthusiasm, and your spirit will be rewarded.

TODAY'S READINGS: Job 38:1, 12-21; 40:3-5; Luke 10:13-16 (459). *"If the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented."*

Saturday, Oct 06, 2018

MEMORIAL OF BRUNO, PRIEST

Silence is golden

Maybe because Saint Bruno (1030-1101) led such an active life—nearly 20 years a teacher at the prestigious cathedral school in Reims, France; joining Pope Gregory VII to denounce the decadence of bishops who acted more like royal princes than the Prince of Peace; helping depose the violent aristocratic Archbishop Manassés—this celebrated priest and chancellor resigned his church positions, gave away his money, and retired with six companions to a hermitage. Though nudged to become a bishop himself, at the urging of his former pupil Pope Urban II, Bruno and friends went on living together in silence, founding the Carthusian order of monks. Bruno reminds us that the more chaotic our life becomes, the more we need to balance it with silence.

TODAY'S READINGS: Job 42:1-3, 5-6, 12-17; Luke 10:17-24 (460). *"Although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike."*

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



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