

## Sunday, Jun 09, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST

### Forgiveness isn't just a nice idea

When we sit in church, forgiveness sounds like a religious ideal. We may even view forgiveness as a soft and sentimental notion: a be-nice-to-bullies ideology for Turn-the-Other-Cheek Week. But philosophers from Plato to modern thinkers like Hannah Arendt have suggested that forgiveness is also a vital and necessary political action. Forgiveness is the only action that moves history forward, releasing us all from the consequences of the past, what we did or failed to do. We can remain here, moored to old injuries and injustices. Or we can forgive, and liberate the future.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 2:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Romans 8:8-17; John 20:19-23 or 14:15-16, 23b-26 (63). *"Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."*

## Monday, Jun 10, 2019

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

### Mother by any other name

To Argentinians, she's Our Lady of Lujan. To Cubans, she's Our Lady of Charity. She's Our Lady of the Assumption in India and Our Lady of High Grace in the Dominican Republic. In the Americas, we turn to our beloved patron as Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Immaculate Conception. Entire countries and countless religious orders—think Maryknollers and Marianists and the Servants of Mary—rely on her favor and protection. While her names are many and her patronage broad, we turn to Mary for her most ancient title of all: Theotokos, "God-bearer." How will you follow Mary's example to bring God into the world today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 3:9-15, 20 or Acts 1:12-14; John 19:25-34 (572A). *"He said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother.'"*

## Tuesday, Jun 11, 2019

MEMORIAL OF BARNABAS, APOSTLE

### Let good come out of conflict

Barnabas isn't one of the 12 apostles and not mentioned in the gospels, but he's a big star in Acts of the Apostles—he was best friends with Saint Paul on their evangelical journeys through Asia Minor. Their friendship, however, fell into disagreement and they eventually parted company. Church relationships are not always a tight fit. Differences can block close friendship. At the same time, diversity in the community is the energy of creativity. How might good come from a conflicted relationship in your community?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 11:21b-26; 13:1-3; Matthew 5:13-16 (580/360). *"Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."*

## Wednesday, Jun 12, 2019

### When stone meets Spirit

Which spiritual guide governs your life: the Ten Commandments or the Holy Spirit? It may sound like an odd choice, but many Christians seem confused about the source of guidance central to followers of Jesus. Saint Paul uses the shocking phrase "ministry of death" to describe the Commandments, contrasting them to the "ministry of the Spirit." He simply means that binding yourself to

the law can only condemn you in the end, whereas surrender to the Spirit's authority can save you. Granted, it's easier to erect stone tablets, but let's enthrone the Spirit in our hearts.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 3:4-11; Matthew 5:17-19 (361).

*"Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, was so glorious . . . how much more will the ministry of the Spirit?"*

## Thursday, Jun 13, 2019

MEMORIAL OF ANTHONY OF PADUA, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### Grace through the side door

Today we celebrate the Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua, a wildly popular preacher in the early 1200s, known as the "hammer of heretics" because of his persuasive, knowledgeable oratory, aided by a loudspeaker of a voice. In fact his gift for preaching was discovered by accident when he was plugged in to give a last-minute homily. The accidental discovery of his gifts shows that God's grace can enter the world through the side door. Take a moment in honor of Saint Anthony to consider the ways God's grace has appeared unexpectedly in your own life.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 3:15—4:1,3-6; Matthew 5:20-26 (362). *"For God who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts."*

## Friday, Jun 14, 2019

FLAG DAY

### Raise the banner of faith

According to the official U.S. Flag Code, "The flag represents a living country and is itself a living thing." The Flag Code describes the flag as not merely a piece of cloth but something that embodies a nation and its ideals of independence, liberty, hope, and unity of purpose. It also stands for the sacrifices that have been made for those ideals. While the flag is not a religious symbol, it's like one in that it represents something greater than itself. The symbols of faith do the same but express something larger than even love of country, and that is the reality of God. Something to think about when you fly the flag today.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15; Matthew 5:27-32 (363).

*"We hold this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us."*

## Saturday, Jun 15, 2019

### To tell the truth

When a child looks at me and insists: "I swear I am telling the truth," I start to wonder if she is. In adult conversations, when someone feels compelled to make the same statement, I wonder why such an oath should be necessary. Telling the truth should be a given. The reality, however, is that lives of truth and integrity require courage—courage that for people of faith is rooted in grace. Ask for that grace today to speak truth with kindness and to listen to the truth of others.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Matthew 5:33-37 (364).

*"Do not take a false oath . . . let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes' and your 'No' mean 'No.'"*

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



©2019 TrueQuest Communications. TakeFiveForFaith.com; mail@takefiveforfaith.com. All rights reserved. Noncommercial reprints permitted with the following credit: Reprinted with permission from TakeFiveForFaith.com. Scripture citations from the New American Bible Revised Edition. For more information about TAKE FIVE and our regular contributors, go to PrepareTheWord.com. **Free daily email and app available online at [TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe](https://www.TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe).**