

Sunday, Aug 18, 2019

TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Get fired up!

Author Jack London told the chilling tale of a brazen traveler who failed to take the peril of extreme weather conditions seriously. Building a proper fire in the right place might have kept him alive during a blizzard. Absent such a fire, the man's fate was sealed. Jesus assures his friends that his mission in this world is to set such a blazing, saving fire in the hearts of believers. If we carry this passionate flame, no circumstances can endanger us. Contemplate an image of the Sacred Heart, and stoke the fire in your own!

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10; Hebrews 12:1-4; Luke 12:49-53 (120). *"I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!"*

Monday, Aug 19, 2019

MEMORIAL OF JOHN EUDES, PRIEST

God cares through your hands

During the plagues of 1627 and 1631, John Eudes cared for the sick, sleeping in a field to avoid infecting his fellow priests. Similar efforts made today are honored by World Humanitarian Day, commemorating 22 United Nations staff killed by a terrorist attack in Baghdad in 2003. Since then, more than 4,000 aid workers have been injured, kidnapped, or killed, targeted as they served more than 65 million people displaced from their homes and more than 26,000 civilians killed or injured in six countries. Learn more at World Humanitarian Day and ask yourself how you can help contribute to a more humane world today and every day.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 2:11-10; Matthew 19:16-22 (419). *"The Lord would be moved to pity by their groaning."*

Tuesday, Aug 20, 2019

MEMORIAL OF BERNARD, ABBOT, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Saintly? It's complicated

Bernard of Clairvaux was a brilliant and charismatic leader of the Cistercian monastic reform that encouraged a return to the original Benedictine life of prayer and manual labor. At the same time he was friend and mentor to powerful church leaders and was drawn into the geopolitical struggles embodied in the Crusades. How to reconcile the image of the prayerful monk with that of spiritual cheerleader to a militant army of Crusaders? Church history is filled with contradictions—as is each one of us. We have the simple contemplative and the militant crusader living in our own heart. Which one shall we nurture?

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 6:11-24a; Matthew 19:23-30 (420). *"Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven."*

Wednesday, Aug 21, 2019

MEMORIAL OF PIUS X, POPE

Be a warm-hearted believer

Pope Pius X pastored the universal church from 1903 to 1914, a tumultuous period in world history, which saw traditional ways of life giving way, whether in the natural sciences, politics, or economic life, to new ways of thinking, organizing, believing. Though most commonly remembered as a staunch traditionalist and "anti-modernist," Pius should also be remembered for his simple, unpretentious lifestyle (he never lost sight of his poor

roots), his personal warmth and love of children, and his generous charitable outreach. After the horrific Messina earthquake of 1908, the most destructive earthquake ever recorded in Europe with some 100,000 casualties, Pius is said by one source to have filled the Apostolic Palace with refugees long before the Italian government acted. Make sure a warm heart is front and center in your own life of faith.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 9:6-15; Matthew 20:1-16 (421). *"Are you envious because I am generous?"*

Thursday, Aug 22, 2019

MEMORIAL OF THE QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The sky is not the limit

Lumen gentium, Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, declares the "Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the Universe." Going to Orlando, Florida anytime soon? Visit the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe, a 2,000-seat church dedicated to the Queenship of Mary and established to serve the 30 million tourists who visit the Orlando area every year. Wish to be reminded of Mary's connection to the whole universe, and why that will matter into the future? Visit nearby Cape Canaveral.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 11:29-39a; Matthew 22:1-14 (422). *"The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike."*

Friday, Aug 23, 2019

MEMORIAL OF ROSE OF LIMA, VIRGIN

Care of the soul

Life isn't easy. It's good and beautiful, yes, but stressful, chaotic, and sometimes even devastating. Wouldn't it be great to "get away from it all"? One might think that this is what Saint Rose of Lima did when she became practically a recluse in her parents' house. She dedicated her life to solitude and a profound sense of solidarity with Jesus the Christ, especially the Suffering Christ. Yet within this calling, Rose found a spaciousness within herself to open a nearby room in the house to care for people in need. How do you experience this sacred dynamic of contemplative quiet and compassionate care?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22; Matthew 22:34-40 (423). *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind . . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Saturday, Aug 24, 2019

FEAST OF BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

Caught up in prayer

If you met Jesus face-to-face and he saw right through you—straight into your soul—and told you exactly what you had been doing before meeting him, what would he see and what would he say? Would he judge that you were honest and good? That you had spent the prior moment in prayer? That's what happened to the Apostle Bartholomew upon being introduced to Jesus. Let's always be ready to be "caught in the act" of communing with God, with a pure heart, recognizing our King when he greets us.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 21:9b-14; John 1:45-51 (629). *"You will see greater things than this."*

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



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