

SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2016

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Make your own mark

In the early days of Christianity, when its Jewish roots were prominent, Jesus was sometimes referred to as the “great high priest.” But he sure broke the mold for the typical Jewish high priest. The position had been hereditary for many generations in Jewish history, passed from father to son from the time of Aaron, brother of Moses. Later on, Roman authorities assumed the authority to appoint the high priest, thereby assuring his civil obedience (or swiftly replacing him). Jesus was anything but obedient to civil authorities—or religious ones for that matter. He answered to a higher calling. You too can live a life that is anything but ordinary—if you believe in your own sacred lineage.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19 (48)*. “The high priest questioned them, ‘We gave you strict orders, did we not, to stop teaching in that name?’”

MONDAY, APRIL 11 FEAST OF STANISLAUS, BISHOP, MARTYR

Take a stand

Saint Stanislaus was a Polish bishop in 1079 who didn’t back down, despite threats and charges of treason from the corrupt and immoral King Boleslaus the Bold. After Stanislaus excommunicated Boleslaus, the king ordered the just bishop’s death, and when soldiers refused, Boleslaus did the deed with his own hands. When leaders are out of line, let Stanislaus embolden you against injustice. You might not wield the influence of a bishop, but you can speak up, get involved, write an email, vote, protest, or boycott. Small actions can add up to make a big difference.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29 (273)*. “Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life.”

TUESDAY, APRIL 12 EASTER WEEKDAY

What just happened?

A bishop celebrating Confirmation soon after Easter asked the adults in the congregation—not the kids—“Do you know what *mystagogia* means?” Embarrassment. No takers. It means, “going deeper into the mysteries.” It’s the time after Easter when the newly baptized reflect on “what just happened” at their entrance into the church. It’s a good idea for all believers, especially adults, to deepen their faith through spiritual reading. There is much excellent material available. What’s the last book on Catholicism you’ve read? Perhaps *The Francis Effect: A Radical Pope’s Challenge to the American Catholic Church*, by John Gehring, would be a good one to turn to.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 7:51-8:1a; John 6:30-35 (274)*. “Whoever comes to me will never hunger.”

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13 FEAST OF MARTIN I, POPE, MARTYR

Provide refuge

Pope Francis has called on every parish, religious community, monastery, and sanctuary to take in one refugee family fleeing the Middle East. As you support this effort in your own locale,



remember the plight of Pope Martin I, who was driven into exile and subjected to great suffering that eventually killed him—all for refusing to capitulate to a Byzantine emperor. Pope Pius VII later wrote of the virtually abandoned Martin, “Without the assistance offered by the pious generosity of individuals, he would not have had food for himself and his few attendants.” You can help those in situations like Martin’s today.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 8:1b-8; John 6:35-40 (275)*. “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger.”

THURSDAY, APRIL 14 EASTER WEEKDAY

Death, where is your sting?

Though the “denial of death” is widespread in a youth-oriented culture, we’ve all tasted its bitterness in the loss of those we love. The [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) makes the Easter point: “Jesus, the Son of God, also himself suffered the death that is part of the human condition. Yet, despite his anguish as he faced death, he accepted it . . . [and] the obedience of Jesus has transformed the curse of death into a blessing” because “it is a participation in the death of the Lord, so that [we] can also share his Resurrection.” Easter does not happen only to Jesus.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 8:26-40; John 6:44-51 (276)*. “Whoever believes has eternal life.”

FRIDAY, APRIL 15 EASTER WEEKDAY

Fine-tune your faith

When we recite the Nicene Creed—our Catholic belief expressed in a profession of faith—we say that Jesus Christ is “consubstantial” with the Father. Before the English translation of the liturgy of the Mass was modified in 2011, we used to say “one in being” with the Father. While not everyone appreciated the change, “consubstantial” captures the original Latin term for “same substance.” The change is an opportunity to reflect on what exactly the words you say mean. Keep working to deepen your understanding of your belief.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59 (277)*. “He began at once to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.”

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

EASTER WEEKDAY

Make your kindness indispensable

We move through our days viewing events of each hour from our limited point of view. This self-at-the-center perspective can make us feel indispensable to the action whether it’s family life, our contribution at work, or our place at the parish or in the neighborhood. While we may feel that little can go on without us, history proves us wrong about that. In a little side story in Acts, a generous woman named Dorcas demonstrates what the world really can’t do without! Peter is obliged to bring her back to life to renew her service. Be indispensably kind.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 9:31-42; John 6:60-69 (278)*. “The widows came to Peter weeping and showing him the tunics and cloaks that Dorcas had made.”



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

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