

## Sunday, Apr 28, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER; DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

### Mercy is as mercy does

A chilling scene in the movie *Schindler's List* involves a Nazi commander playacting with the godlike power of absolution. Standing before a mirror, he raises his hand in a gesture of blessing and says, "I pardon you." Then he smiles at his reflection, impressed by the look of benevolence. Genuine mercy, of course, isn't something we grant ourselves, nor is it a superficial style to be admired. It's not a softness in the heart or a welling in the eyes when we see suffering. Mercy is real when it reaches out from thought to deed, from emotion to action. Let others judge if we are merciful.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 5:12-16; Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31 (45). "*Many signs and wonders were done among the people at the hands of the apostles.*"

## Monday, Apr 29, 2019

MEMORIAL OF CATHERINE OF SIENA, VIRGIN, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### Read between the holy lines

Saint Catherine of Siena had trouble learning to read—and didn't learn to write until she was an adult. And yet, before her death at the young age of 33, she became one of the most influential writers in Catholic history. Because of the significance of her theological writings, she is one of only four women named a doctor of the church. Few of us are destined for such greatness, but when you feel frustrated with your limitations and the progress of your life, remember that all things are possible with God, and be open to what God has planned for you on God's time schedule, not yours.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 4:23-31; John 3:1-8 (267). "*The wind blows where it wills . . . so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.*"

## Tuesday, Apr 30, 2019

MEMORIAL OF PIUS V, POPE

### Remember an artful pope

Saint Pius V, a 16th-century pope, is said to have been a patron of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, a prolific religious composer who wrote no fewer than 105 Masses along with dozens of hymns, magnificats, litanies, and lamentations. In earlier centuries, the Catholic Church was the principal patron of the fine arts. The investment was worth it, as the church's sponsorship fostered the creation of countless musical treasures. Encourage your own parish or diocese to carry on the tradition and be a benefactor of the arts. Great art sheds light on the beauty and mystery of God's creation.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 4:32-37; John 3:7b-15 (268). "*You must be born from above.*"

## Wednesday, May 01, 2019

MEMORIAL OF JOSEPH THE WORKER

### In praise of brotherly love

Today we're invited to celebrate the gift of Catholic brothers, a group that—like Saint Joseph, whose feast day we also celebrate today—tends not to be flashy or well publicized. But religious brothers are good examples of what every Christian is called to: faithfulness in community. Brothers can be found living and

ministering together in many ways, from education to social service to art. On this Religious Brothers Day, let's thank all brothers in religious life for their service and ask ourselves what action rooted in faithfulness we might perform today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21 (269); or Genesis 1:26—2:3 or Colossians 3:14-15, 17, 23-24; Matthew 13:54-58 (599). "*But whoever lives the truth comes to the light.*"

## Thursday, May 02, 2019

MEMORIAL OF ATHANASIUS, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### A beautiful mind

The life of Saint Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria in Egypt, reflects the frequent turmoil in the early church. As an assistant to his predecessor, he attended the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. After becoming bishop himself he embarked on a nearly lifelong struggle against the then-powerful Arian heresy. In a span of 30 years he was exiled no fewer than five times—to Germany, Rome, and in hiding near Alexandria—before establishing his authority for good and defeating Arianism, which denied the Trinity. Because the weapons in these kinds of conflicts were theological as well as political, a bishop had to have a fine theological mind, as Athanasius did. Though our disputes are different today, thoughtful argument is always in order.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36 (270). "*For the one whom God sent speaks the words of God.*"

## Friday, May 03, 2019

FEAST OF PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

### A man of mystery

Philip we know. He's mentioned several times in the gospels, usually coming up with the wrong answer to a question from Jesus. But James, son of Alphaeus, is more the mystery man. Although he appears number nine in all three lists of the apostles, details of his life are unknown. Like most of us, he moved through his life in relative obscurity. Yet something about him drew the attention of Jesus and got his name on the list. What is there about you that would include your name among those of the Lord's followers?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14 (561). "*After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.*"

## Saturday, May 04, 2019

EASTER WEEKDAY

### Community with a capital "C"

The church is built on community. Together, the people of God welcome new members in Baptism, come together to be fed in the Eucharist, and witness faith proclaimed at Confirmation. Such community nurtures, supports, and affirms the universality and unity of church. When gathering around the table to celebrate, give thanks, and worship, it is helpful from time to time to look and see those around us. Who isn't present? Who isn't being served at the table? Who have I shut out? Our call is to spread the Good News . . . and sometimes the greatest news is that all are welcome.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 6:1-7; John 6:16-21 (272). "*It is I. Do not be afraid.*"

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



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