



## SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Meet Jesus once again

At a certain point in every person's life, there comes a time when everything that used to make sense no longer does. Perhaps it comes at a time of major loss—such as losing a job or the death of a loved one. Or maybe it comes at a milestone in your life such as turning 50 or having your youngest child leave the nest. As uncomfortable as this may feel, it can be a great spiritual opportunity, because you have a chance to encounter Jesus as if for the first time.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 6:1-7; 1 Peter 2:4-9; John 14:1-12* (52).  
"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

## MONDAY, MAY 15 MEMORIAL OF ISIDORE Table blessings

The feast of Saint Isidore the Farmer provides us—even city-dwellers—with an opportunity to remember our link to the land and to all those who provide our food. Not only are we in debt to them for endless and often thankless labor but also for most of what we consume to stay alive. Food is for our bodies what the Eucharist is for our spirits: nourishment. It sustains us. In his little poem "Prayer After Eating," American farmer and poet Wendell Berry makes that connection clear. "I have taken the light / that quickened eye and leaf. / May my brain be bright with praise / of what I eat, in the brief blaze / of motion and of thought. / May I be worthy of my meat."

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 14:5-18; John 14:21-26* (285). "He brought them up into his house and provided a meal."

## TUESDAY, MAY 16 EASTER WEEKDAY Work for justice, peacefully

Jesus promised peace to those who love him. But there has not been a single generation of worldwide peace in recorded history. Why is peace so elusive? Pope Paul VI noted that we are missing the necessary precondition: "Peace is more than the absence of war," he wrote. "If you want peace, work for justice." Until the balance of health, wealth, and opportunity puts the good life within reach of all people, the want that yawns between the powerful and the powerless will continue to brew pain, anger, and violence the world over. Pledge your support to an agency dedicated to providing opportunity to the socially disadvantaged.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a* (286). "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."



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

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## WEDNESDAY, MAY 17 EASTER WEEKDAY Time for some personal pruning

Gardeners know the importance of pruning. By cutting away some of a plant, you help it to direct its energy into flowering and fruitful growth. It's the same when it comes to the spirit. Trim from your life what is sapping your connection to the true vine, Jesus Christ. We all have aspects of our personality and character that need to change and develop. Is it a bad habit, a destructive situation, a negative attitude? What's separating you from God and neighbor? Cut it away. Making a clean break and strengthening your soul will let the good and healthy parts of your spirit bear much fruit.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8* (287). "Every branch that bears fruit my Father prunes to make it bear more fruit."

## THURSDAY, MAY 18 EASTER WEEKDAY Follow the joy

Ever wonder if you were born for misery? If so, cancel that concern: Jesus says we are destined for joy. Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (along with love, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) that demonstrate how well we are living under the Spirit's guidance. The more we surrender to the wisdom of the indwelling Spirit, the more joy will flower in our lives. If you're looking for a good role model in this, follow people whose joy has no end and is not dependent on their circumstances.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 15:7-21; John 15:9-11* (288). "I have said these things so that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be complete."

## FRIDAY, MAY 19 EASTER WEEKDAY Can you get that call?

There's a lot of holiness in the church, and it's not only leaders or the women and men in consecrated life but all of us. Too often we think that the "chosen" of God are the ones who are in vowed religious life or ministry positions. Yet the gospel truth is that God calls each of us. Every one of us is invited to respond to God in faith and love and to serve God in all that we are and do. Ask yourself how God has been calling you. In what ways have you responded? How might the Spirit be encouraging you to tend to a newly emerging need or possibility?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17* (289). "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you."

## SATURDAY, MAY 20 MEMORIAL OF BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST Cultivate saintly smarts

No wonder Bernardine (1380-1444) is a patron saint of public relations—professionals who use a positive spin to persuade people. Though he embraced the poverty and humility of Saint Francis of Assisi, he was "sensitive to the demands of secular life, and tried to negotiate between Christian ethics and a conflicting code of honor that stressed retaining face in a public world," says a biographer. A persuasive preacher, he got Italy's warring families to replace their coats of arms with tablets bearing "I.H.M.," the Holy Name of Jesus. When a painter of playing cards went bankrupt because Bernardine turned people off gambling, Bernardine made him wealthy by persuading him to paint I.H.M. tablets. Can we be as savvy, bringing Jesus' way to worldly ways?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21* (290). "You do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world."