



SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2017 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Get into the Spirit

When Jesus was saying farewell to his disciples in the Gospel of John—praying that farewell, really, because what he had to say to them he said to God in prayer—he promised he would not leave them alone. He would send his Spirit, an Advocate, to be present to them until he returned. And lo and behold, at Pentecost it happened. Christ did not go away; he remained in a different form. So if you want to know what the Holy Spirit is, just think of it as Jesus' ongoing presence, which is always with you.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18; John 14:15-21 (55)*. "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you."

MONDAY, MAY 22 MEMORIAL OF RITA OF CASCIA, RELIGIOUS

The holiness code, embodied

The life of Saint Rita (1386-1457) reads like a soap opera. She wanted to be a nun, but she was married against her will at the age of 12 to a cruel and unfaithful husband until his violent death 18 years later. Her two sons took after him. As a widow she was rejected three times trying to enter an Augustinian convent. She persisted and was finally accepted. It is fitting that she is the patroness of desperate situations. In spite of and because of life's difficulties, we can all achieve some level of holiness. What has happened to you lately that can bring you closer to God?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26—16:4a (291)*. "When the Advocate comes, the Spirit of truth, he will testify on my behalf."

TUESDAY, MAY 23 EASTER WEEKDAY

Carry a get-out-of-jail holy card

It's a jail break! Paul and Silas, in the Acts of the Apostles, were arrested, beaten, and thrown into the clink by the authorities. But God caused an earthquake that sprung the doors of the prison and set the apostles free. Their first act was to comfort the jailer who was so upset by the escape that he was ready to kill himself. The jailer, moved by their kindness, brought them home with him, fed them, and bandaged their wounds. We, like the jailer, misjudge others and put them in prisons of our own self-righteousness. Let's not wait for an earthquake to set them free.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 16:22-34; John 16:5-11 (292)*. "When the Advocate comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment."



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

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 24 EASTER WEEKDAY

Mi Espiritu es su Espiritu

Very rarely do we give another person complete access to our lives and possessions. "Mi casa es su casa" is something we say only to a spouse, child, or privileged friend. Otherwise, the access people have to our lives is fairly restricted to what we choose to tell them and how long they can stay until we kick them out. Jesus tells us his relationship to the Advocate he is sending is quite intimate. Listening to the Spirit is as good as hearing it from Jesus himself. Live more thoughtfully attuned to the indwelling Spirit.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 17:15, 22—18:1; John 16:12-15 (293)*. "The Spirit of truth will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

THURSDAY, MAY 25 MEMORIAL OF BEDE THE VENERABLE, PRIEST

Venerate lifelong learning

Bede the Venerable was the embodiment of the lifelong learner. In his own words, "I ever took delight in learning and teaching and writing." Apart from his many theological works and scriptural commentaries, he wrote on subjects as varied as history, music, arithmetic, medicine, and science. Living in the Dark Ages, Bede's influence was so great that a century later a Swiss monk would write, "God . . . who raised the Sun from the East on the fourth day of Creation, in the sixth day of the world has made Bede rise from the West as a new Sun to illuminate the whole Earth." Bede's example can inspire each of us to continue our own lifelong learning.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 18:1-8; John 16:16-20 (294)*. "A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me."

FRIDAY, MAY 26 MEMORIAL OF PHILIP NERI, PRIEST

Smile at your own imperfections

Can you imagine a cheerful saint? Saint Philip Neri was one. Born in 1515 in Italy, Neri was an itinerant scholar who grew weary of knowledge for its own sake. He sold his books, gave the money to the poor, and spent his years tending to the sick. He enthusiastically invited others to join in this holy pursuit. No gloomy Christian, he said, "Cheerfulness strengthens the heart and makes us persevere in a good life. Therefore the servant of God ought always to be in good spirits." He was also realistic about his own imperfections, praying, "Lord, watch Philip, for he will betray you!" A realist with a positive outlook: What a fine holy role model.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 18:9-18; John 16:20-23 (295)*. "I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice."

SATURDAY, MAY 27

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, BISHOP

A Canterbury tale of respect

In the sixth century Pope Gregory I sent Saint Augustine and 40 other Benedictine monks on a daunting journey to bring the gospel to England. As a missionary, Augustine was sensitive to cultural differences and sought not to coerce the English with the Good News, telling the king, Ethelbert, "Do not see us as coming to force upon an unknown people benefits against their will. Be assured that only a great love constrains us to do this." In witnessing to what we believe, we should start where people are at, not where we want them to be, and try to show them that the way of faith will enrich their lives.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 18:23-28; John 16:23b-28 (296)*. "Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you."