

Sunday, Jun 23, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI)

Remembering makes the past present

Watching a performance of Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton* or a movie like Steven Spielberg's stirring portrait of Abraham Lincoln does more than momentarily bring these historical individuals to life again. They also thrill us with the possibilities inherent in American liberty. We are the heirs of this grand experiment. We too participate in making a better nation. In a more visceral way, sharing our Holy Communion awakens once more the life of Christ that we inherit. Christ is present in the bread, the wine—and us. What will you do with the Christ in you?

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 14:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 9:11b-17 (169). *"This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

Monday, Jun 24, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Expect the unexpected

What else would we expect from a kid whose first act in scripture is a dancing leap in the womb? Something startlingly new is afoot here. In a patriarchal culture, when the father doesn't name the child, and the mother stoutly gives his unexpected name, stand back! The stage is set. The question asked about John could be asked of every newborn: "What, then, will this child be?" God seems to enjoy unsettling the status quo. We like to hunker safely in custom and tradition. God likes surprises: Let's be attuned to those.

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 49:1-6; Acts 13:22-26; Luke 1:57-66, 80 (587). *"From my mother's womb [God] gave me my name."*

Tuesday, Jun 25, 2019

The way can be narrow

When the saints go marching in, who will be in the parade? Some would have us think only a select few will walk the road to salvation. Others feel their own unworthiness will send them permanently to the row of spectators. Still others think the road so wide that everyone will make it in the end, however they lived. The decision about who gets to go to God is ultimately up to God. It's not for us to guess the inner workings of the divine mind or put fences around God's mercy. The difficulty is not in figuring out who gets saved but in meeting the challenge of doing what God wants for us. Fortunately the gift of scripture and 2,000 years of church tradition show us the way.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 13:2, 5-18; Matthew 7:6, 12-14 (372). *"Enter through the narrow gate."*

Wednesday, Jun 26, 2019

The trees remember

There is an amazing group of olive trees surrounding Jerusalem's Church of All Nations, which itself was built around the rock on which it is said Jesus prayed in agony the night before his Crucifixion—commonly known as the Garden of Gethsemane. These olive trees are believed to be descendants of an olive tree that was present during the time of Christ. It is fascinating to think of the countless generations of these branches and leaves that have been the offspring of an original "witness" to the events leading up to Jesus' arrest, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. These

trees remind us of the roots of faith that bear the fruits of witness to the good news in our lives.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Matthew 7:15-20 (373). *"Every good tree bears good fruit . . . So by their fruits you will know them."*

Thursday, Jun 27, 2019

MEMORIAL OF CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Ponder the mystery

Cyril came to power as bishop of Alexandria during the early fifth century, a time of great contention among church leaders over the identity of the Christ: Was he really God? Was he only human? Could he be both? Who knew? The Nicene Creed of 325 had not yet been fully accepted and there was still a need to work things out. Cyril was in constant conflict with other bishops of the day over who had it right. His arguments helped define the mystical person of Christ as both truly God and truly human. Take a moment today to reflect on the mystical communion of divinity and humanity, realized in Christ and shared with us.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 16:1-12, 15-16; Matthew 7:21-29 (374). *"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock."*

Friday, Jun 28, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Wear your heart on your sleeve

The depiction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is among the most evocative in religious art. It is shown aflame, pierced with a lance, shining with light, encircled with thorns, topped with a cross, and bleeding. In some imagery, Jesus is exposing it on his chest. It's intense, to say the least. Given that the heart is the essence of life, literally, and love, figuratively, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a statement about Christ's humanity, the horror of his suffering, and ultimately the depth of his devotion to us. Express your fidelity in return.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 34:11-16; Romans 5:5b-11; Luke 15:3-7 (172). *"Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep."*

Saturday, Jun 29, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

Be a pillar of the church

It seems strange that the two most significant figures in the early church have to share a feast day! Shouldn't each get their own? Saints' feasts usually mark the days of their deaths. Not with Peter and Paul. Though they both died in Roman persecutions around the same time, it was during a later persecution that their relics were moved for safekeeping together. The two apostles, linked in death, were connected in life as well. They knew one another, argued with one another, and were the main reasons for the spread of the early faith. Both the churches of the West and the East observe their feast. In imitation of these great apostles, how can you work with others to bring unity to your community, the church, and the world?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 12:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18; Matthew 16:13-19 (591). *"Upon this rock I will build my church."*

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



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