

## Sunday, Jul 01, 2018

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### Don't be afraid to ask

Need is all around: a sick child here, a chronically ailing elder there. Meanwhile, multitudes languish with inadequate education, or possibly a simple lack of inspiration. We all wait more desperately than we imagine for healing to come, for a word to rouse our hearts. Hope seems unreasonable, until Jesus passes by. Those who seek his help—even seizing his garments to get it—are the ones who go away satisfied. Will we be among those who reach for what we truly need? Or will we allow the one who can restore us to pass by?

TODAY'S READINGS: "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured."  
*Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24; 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15; Mark 5:21-43 or 5:21-24, 35b-43 (98).*

## Monday, Jul 02, 2018

### Keep the light on

Jesus was not the first person, and certainly not the last, to experience homelessness. The problem is persistent and worldwide—an estimated 100 million people lack stable housing. The reasons are many and complex, from chronic unemployment to substance abuse to mental illness to natural disaster. But while none of us may be able to solve homelessness alone, each of us can respond to it with compassion. The website [nationalhomeless.org](http://nationalhomeless.org) offers some ideas and opportunities. Find a way to help someone—you are likely to meet Jesus along the way!

TODAY'S READINGS: Amos 2:6-10, 13-16; Matthew 8:18-22 (377).  
*"The Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head."*

## Tuesday, Jul 03, 2018

FEAST OF THOMAS, APOSTLE

### May we see your wounds?

Saint Thomas is famous for his skepticism toward initial reports of Jesus' Resurrection. Truth be told, you might wonder if you'd believe in such fabulous goings-on if they were reported to you today. Good news often seems feeble compared with the magnitude of the bad news that comes daily. Thomas is the patron saint when the reasons for hope appear frail. Early traditions say he died as a martyr in India, pierced by a sword. The one whose faith was bolstered by the wounds of Jesus proved his faith with his own torn body. What has faith cost you, and do you have the scars to prove it?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 2:19-22; John 20:24-29 (593). *"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands . . . I will not believe."*

## Wednesday, Jul 04, 2018

MASS FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

### Unchain our hearts

Demonizing enemies, including religious and political ones, is one of the unsavory ways in which religious language can be abused. One's opponent becomes not merely wrong but evil incarnate. As we celebrate the nation we love—and that we wish were always right, pure, and honorable above all others—we must acknowledge our government's sometime misuse of our wealth and power. Pray that citizen and government alike may call upon the Lord to free us from whatever possesses us that is not of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Amos 5:14-15, 21-24; Matthew 8:28-34 (379). "

*'If you drive us out, send us into the herd of swine.' And he said to them, 'Go then!'* "

## Thursday, Jul 05, 2018

MEMORIAL OF ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL

### From pain to gain

"What a life of bitterness I am leading," said Saint Elizabeth of Portugal (1271-1336). "On whom but God can I depend?" These anguished words came from a woman who was married to the king of Portugal at 12, endured his philandering, watched their son lead an armed revolt against his own father, and was banished for a time by her husband. How did she deal with all these problems? By turning to prayer and works of mercy, including founding a hospital, a house for former prostitutes, an orphanage, and a pilgrim hostel. Elizabeth's example counsels us not to endure abusive situations but to turn our pain into healing, both for others and ourselves.

TODAY'S READINGS: Amos 7:10-17; Matthew 9:1-8 (380). *"Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home."*

## Friday, Jul 06, 2018

MEMORIAL OF MARIA GORETTI, VIRGIN, MARTYR

### The power of forgiveness

The story of Maria Goretti, the young virgin and martyr whose feast we celebrate today, is one that generations have read with a mixture of fascination and horror. Maria was only 11 years old when she was murdered by a would-be rapist. That's the horrific part of her story. The fascinating part is Maria's deathbed forgiveness of her attacker and his subsequent conversion. It might seem hard, even impossible at times, but the important thing to remember about forgiveness is that it's good for us. We benefit far more than the person we have forgiven. So, do something nice for yourself today: Forgive someone.

TODAY'S READINGS: Amos 8:4-6, 9-12; Matthew 9:9-13 (381). *"I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."*

## Saturday, Jul 07, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

### Glorify the mystery

*Glory* is a funny word. We all use it; many of us want it. But what is it, really? How much does it cost, and what good does it do to have it? The Hebrew word for *glory* means "heaviness." It refers to the importance of a thing: The heavier it is, the more significant or valuable it is, like a gold bar at Fort Knox. God's glory denotes God's overall sovereignty in the world. Could anything be heavier than the authority of a God who can create a world—or destroy one!—at will? Yet God chooses to take that weighty power and use it to transform death into life for the sake of those afflicted by mortality. Pray the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary today and praise the God whose glory brings peace to the world.

TODAY'S READINGS: Amos 9:11-15; Matthew 9:14-17 (382). *"The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."*

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



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