



SUNDAY, JULY 9, 2017 FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Rest up, it's Sunday

We Americans are proud of our work ethic—perhaps too proud. We tend to value our work and busyness so much that we forget how to be still enough to hear God's quiet voice. We need leisure—not frenetic vacationing or compulsive recreational activities, but simple rest when we can unplug and *think*. Jesus says, “I will give you rest.” We may think he means *eternal* rest, but we don't have to wait until we're dead to enjoy it! Why not today?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Zechariah 9:9-10; Romans 8:9, 11-13; Matthew 11:25-30 (100)*. “My yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

MONDAY, JULY 10 Listen to your intuition

Some people seem to be born with the gift of deep faith. They appear to have an intuitive grasp of the spiritual side of life and know God is always with them. The rest of us must endure long periods of doubt and uncertainty that are only occasionally interrupted by brief moments of spiritual clarity. Whether our assessment of other people's faith is accurate, our time might be better spent considering the state of our own. We could begin by asking, “Where am I on the continuum between faith and doubt?” Is it possible that the Lord is with you and you don't know it? Can you ask God to help you to know it?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 28:10-22a; Matthew 9:18-26 (383)*. “Truly, the Lord is in this spot, although I did not know it!”

TUESDAY, JULY 11 MEMORIAL OF BENEDICT, ABBOT Humility is the good word

Among Saint Benedict's celebrated *Rules* for monastic living were guidelines for the cellarer—the person in charge of the monastery's provisions. The cellarer safeguarded and dispensed the monastery's food and drink and adhered to quotas set by the abbot. During lean times when there was little to distribute, tensions and resentments could easily surface. Therefore, in his wisdom, Benedict considered humility to be the most important characteristic of the cellarer: “Above all things let him have humility; and if he has nothing else to give let him give a good word in answer, for it is written, ‘A good word is above the best gift’ (Ecclesiastes 18:17).” Whenever you are in a position of sharing provisions with others, keep the cellarer's rule for a humble and kind heart in mind.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 32:23-33; Matthew 9:32-38 (384)*. “Jesus went around to all the towns and villages . . . curing every disease and illness.”

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12 Take a fresh look

More than anything else, Jesus has one basic message: The kingdom of God is at hand. He proclaimed it had begun and was on its way to fulfillment. In it is everything he was, taught, did, and wants us to learn and do: Love God and one another wholeheartedly, especially those who are deprived in some way. Forgive as God has forgiven you. Be open to a new and different way of seeing the world and acting, one that brings everyone together in God. Are you ready to enter the Kingdom?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 41:55-57; 42:5-7a, 17-24a; Matthew 10:1-7 (385)*. “As you go, make this proclamation: ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

THURSDAY, JULY 13 MEMORIAL OF HENRY Build on your faith

Henry II, crowned holy Roman emperor in 1014, was a ruler who cared for the church. We might think of him as “patron saint of the building fund” because of his focus on erecting churches and monasteries, many of which remain standing today (such institutional strength came in handy when he had to give refuge to a fleeing pope in the midst of one of those classic Dark Ages clashes!). When you look around and notice how quickly buildings deteriorate and are torn down, remember Henry, who knew how to build to last. Take the same care in building a stronghold of faith in your own heart!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 44:18-21, 23b-29; 45:1-5; Matthew 10:7-15 (386)*. “As you enter a house, wish it peace.”

FRIDAY, JULY 14

MEMORIAL OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA, VIRGIN

Home is where you find acceptance

Orphaned early and disfigured in a smallpox epidemic, Kateri (1656-80) may not have imagined the role she would play in her generation and beyond. Becoming a Catholic at the age of 21, she demonstrated her devotion at the expense of the goodwill of the extended family that had taken her in. After enduring derision and cruelty, the “Lily of the Mohawks” escaped to a mission settlement and there taught children and cared for the sick and elderly. She is now regarded as the special patroness of Catholic Native Americans and has united native peoples across North America. When the yoke seems heaviest, may we too find reason to hope in Christ.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30; Matthew 10:16-23 (387)*. “Be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves.”

SATURDAY, JULY 15

MEMORIAL OF BONAVENTURE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Be enlightened by the darkness

Saint Bonaventure had the “good fortune,” as his name means, of knowing other saints in his lifetime. Legend has it that he was given his name by Saint Francis of Assisi, whose order Bonaventure joined. He was also good friends with Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Louis, king of France. But you don't need to keep that kind of company to be saintly—for that, Bonaventure has some simple advice: “Let meditation of Christ's life be your one and only aim, your rest, your food, your desire, your study.”

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 49:29-32; 50:15-26a; Matthew 10:24-33 (388)*. “Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed.”



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

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