

Sunday, Aug 13, 2017

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Swimming lessons

If you've ever taught someone to swim, or remember what it was like for you when you learned, you'll recall the doubt and fear—and also the realization that swimming is much easier once you let go of the fear, stop fighting the water, and learn to relax and enjoy the experience. Where in your own life do fear and doubt threaten to pull you under, as happened to Peter when he started to walk on water? Try to relax and simply go with the flow.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:22-33 (115) “. . . why did you doubt?”

Monday, Aug 14, 2017

MEMORIAL OF MAXIMILIAN KOLBE, PRIEST, MARTYR

A tribute to good

In Jesus' day, people had to pay “tribute”—taxes—to their conqueror, signifying their submission to his greatness. When Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941) was canonized in 1982, a special person was on hand to pay tribute to his greatness. Yes, John Paul II, a fellow Pole, was there to do the canonizing, but equally special, so was Francis Gajowniczek, the Auschwitz inmate Kolbe died for. As they slaved away in the Nazi death camp, a prisoner escaped. Infuriated guards randomly chose 10 men to die in retaliation. When Gajowniczek cried out that he had a wife and children, Father Kolbe stepped forward to take his place. Kolbe paid tribute to Jesus. What truths do we submit to daily?

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 10:12-22; Matthew 17:22-27 (413)
“From whom do kings of the earth take tribute? From their children or from others?”

Tuesday, Aug 15, 2017

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Lifting up the lowly

A recent study showed the power of a simple compliment. Telling a proficient sales clerk, “My, you're good at your job!” or a co-worker, “I appreciate your thoughtfulness” can greatly alter their mood and improve their performance. One man who had battled daily with his teenage daughter decided to compliment her three times each day. The practice did wonders for their relationship, and it opened his eyes to all the good things she said and did. Today we celebrate the Assumption of Mary, who thanked God for “lifting up the lowly.” We're all lowly and can need a lift. Maybe God is asking you to do some of the lifting, too.

TODAY'S READINGS: Vigil: 1 Chronicles 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:54b-57; Luke 11:27-28 (621); Day: Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; 1 Corinthians 15:20-27; Luke 1:39-56 (622) “God has brought down the powerful and lifted up the lowly.”

Wednesday, Aug 16, 2017

MEMORIAL OF STEPHEN OF HUNGARY

Give from the heart

Saint Stephen of Hungary helped bring Christianity to his nation a thousand years ago and also helped popularize the ancient custom of tithing, the practice of offering a part—traditionally 10 percent—of one's income or resources to a religious organization. While in Stephen's time tithing was imposed as a mandatory obligation, in the early church donations were treated as freewill offerings. One's generosity should not be forced; it needs to come from a willing heart. Open yours and share generously.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Matthew 18:15-20 (415)
“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.”

Thursday, Aug 17, 2017

Forgiveness made real

In 1834, the Irish Catholics of Boston were ready to avenge the ransacking and burning of an Ursuline convent by a Protestant mob. But on August 17 of that year, Bishop Benedict Fenwick preached a message of forgiveness in the cathedral and effectively stopped any retribution and bloodshed. Matthew's gospel today challenges us to forgive unconditionally. It is possible. Forgiveness works. We all have someone we could forgive today. It can make a real difference.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 3:7-10a, 11, 13-17; Matthew 18:21—19:1 (416) “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive?”

Friday, Aug 18, 2017

United in love

The church teaches that marriage is a sacrament for many reasons. A commitment this profound, which leads a couple to become “one flesh,” is deserving of as much blessing and public support as the church can offer. How can we be supportive of marriage? Make a small gesture today—a kind and supportive word, a phone call, a card or email—to express your support for a marriage. And pray for happy and holy marriages—for your own marriage, if you are married, and for those of friends and family.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 24:1-13; Matthew 19:3-12 (417) “The two shall become one flesh.”

Saturday, Aug 19, 2017

MEMORIAL OF JOHN EUDES, PRIEST

All you need is love

From the beginning, John Eudes (1601-80) gave of himself. As a young priest he worked among plague victims, living alone so as not to risk infecting other members of his religious order. He became a famous preacher and confessor, and founded a community to help women who had entered prostitution. He also promoted devotion to the hearts of Jesus and Mary. Realizing the clergy needed reform as much as their flocks, he pledged another part of his life to the formation of seminaries. The call to loving service renews the church. Be part of this “reform movement”!

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 24:14-29; Matthew 19:13-15 (418)
“Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray.”

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



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