

Sunday, Aug 19, 2018

TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Smart eating

It doesn't take our annual physical to remind us that we live in a culture of unhealthy eating. What used to be a matter of consuming enough calories for survival has become a national epidemic of obesity. It is tempting to eat when happy or sad, in gatherings or alone, to fight boredom, lift moods, or assuage anxiety. A lot of what appears in our diets isn't even useful for nutrition, and some of it's downright harmful. One thing's for sure: Eucharist is the one meal we can't do without. Better than smart food, it's the table where wisdom is served.

TODAY'S READINGS: Proverbs 9:1-6; Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58 (119). "*[Wisdom] has dressed her meat, mixed her wine, yes, she has spread her table.*"

Monday, Aug 20, 2018

MEMORIAL OF BERNARD, ABBOT, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

A consummate teacher

Some people just have a way with words. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) was one such man. Through his writing and his teachings, he stands out as one of the major spiritual leaders of the Catholic faith. Here's a quote from Bernard that you might meditate on today: "If you should see a starving man standing with mouth open to the wind, inhaling draughts of air as if in hope of gratifying his hunger, you would think him a lunatic. But it is no less foolish to imagine that the soul can be satisfied with worldly things which only inflate it without feeding it."

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 24:15-24; Matthew 19:16-22 (419). "*Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?*"

Tuesday, Aug 21, 2018

MEMORIAL OF PIUS X, POPE

Commune more often

Because he was the first pope to live in the modern age of technology, we know more about Pope Saint Pius X than many others. His life and ministry make a fascinating story, but today remember him as a leader who stressed simplicity and poverty. "I was born poor, I lived poor, and I shall die poor." He is likewise remembered as the pope who encouraged frequent Communion rather than once or twice a year as was common. His change in practice also encouraged frequent celebration of the sacrament of Penance in preparation for receiving the Eucharist. Participate in these sacraments together soon.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 24:1-10; Matthew 19:23-30 (420). "*The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior.*"

Wednesday, Aug 22, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Our most gracious advocate

The mother that bore the child Jesus and reared him into adulthood was, in turn, borne up into heaven by the power of the child. There she was deemed Queen, so that she might share the inheritance of Christ with her people. We cry out to her in the antiphon, "Hail Holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope." In doing so, we name her by her unique kingdoms, not of land but of virtues. For our share in these

virtues we may ask her, who has always concerned herself in our salvation, to intercede on our behalf.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 34:1-11; Matthew 20:1-16 (421). "*I will give you what is just.*"

Thursday, Aug 23, 2018

MEMORIAL OF ROSE OF LIMA, VIRGIN

Flower power

Given her beauty, Rose of Lima (1586-1617) could have had her pick of marriage partners, but she preferred to live a simple life of prayer and live in a small hut set in her family's garden. To help her parents financially, she sold the beautiful flowers she cultivated. Aware of the many poor people in Lima, she opened a room in her family's home to anyone who needed her care, asking nothing in return. Great crowds gathered at her death, and her coffin was carried through the city. Rose was the first saint from the Western Hemisphere, and her feast day is widely celebrated in South America with processions filled with flowers. What beautiful creation can you cultivate in the garden of your own life?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 36:23-28; Matthew 22:1-14 (422). "*Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.*"

Friday, Aug 24, 2018

FEAST OF BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

Just one of the gang

In every crowd there are leaders and there are followers. There are characters who stick out and those who simply blend in. Bartholomew was one of those invisible ones. He was so transparent in the gospel accounts that he is also identified as Nathanael. All that we know about his ministry and martyrdom is legend, some of it even based on non-Christian stories. We do know for sure that he was one of the 12 apostles chosen by Jesus. And that is enough. We don't have to be famous to get into heaven, just faithful like Bartholomew.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 21:9b-14; John 1:45-51 (629). "*Nathanael said, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip replied, 'Come and see.'*"

Saturday, Aug 25, 2018

MEMORIAL OF JOSEPH CALASANZ, PRIEST

Just doing his Job

The work of a teacher can be hard. Take the example of Saint Joseph Calasanz (1556-1648), whose great mission in life was educating the urban poor for free, with special attention to the abandoned and homeless children of Rome. He even founded a religious order devoted to this task. By 1611 his school had 1,200 students. But then one of the members of his own community led a revolt against him that resulted in his false arrest and being forced from office. Joseph went through this experience without complaint. Picking up on this fact, Cardinal Prospero Lambertini, who would become Pope Benedict XIV, said Calasanz was a "perpetual miracle of fortitude and another Job." Next time you find yourself in a position to teach someone, remember the great dedication and patience of Joseph Calasanz.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezra 43:1-7ab; Matthew 23:1-12 (424). "*The greatest among you will be your servant.*"

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



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