

Sunday, Aug 26, 2018

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

By invitation only

Too often we speak of faith as an obligation, when it's an invitation. Churches have some of the biggest doors around, and they open both ways. We can come and go—and plenty of people do both, at one time or another. When teachings are challenging, folks may find discipleship unacceptable—just like in the time of Jesus. We don't arrive here by mandate, and we're not prisoners of our Baptism. Come if you will, leave if you choose. But if you stay, be clear on where the path of Jesus is going, and what it will cost.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Ephesians 5:21-32 or 5:2a, 25-32; John 6:60-69 (122). *"Jesus then said to the Twelve, 'Do you also want to leave?'"*

Monday, Aug 27, 2018

MEMORIAL OF MONICA

Tears shed through the years

For years Saint Monica wept during her tireless prayers for her husband Patricius and her son Augustine to become Christians. Her dedication and devotion to God and her Christian values have earned her the title of patroness of married women, alcoholics, difficult marriages, disappointing children, and victims of unfaithfulness and verbal abuse. Despite her sorrow and grief for the path her son chose early in his life, her wholeheartedness and persistence proved true when her son became Christian. Never underestimate the power of prayer.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 11-12; Matthew 23:13-22 (425). *"Blind fools, which is greater, the gold, or the temple that made the gold sacred?"*

Tuesday, Aug 28, 2018

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

A saint for sore eyes

The practice of adopting patron saints goes back to the early days of Christianity when churches were built over the graves of martyrs who then were adopted as patrons. As one of the most prominent Christians in history, Saint Augustine has been named patron saint by countless churches, cities, and dioceses as well as by theologians, printers, brewers, and, of all things, those who suffer from soreness of the eyes! Whatever condition your eyesight is in, reading some of Augustine's *Confessions* will help clear your vision. You may just adopt him as *your* patron!

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a, 14-17; Matthew 23:23-26 (426). *"Blind guides, who strain out the gnat and swallow the camel!"*

Wednesday, Aug 29, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE PASSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Get closer to God

John the Baptist is a unique figure in the Bible. For one thing he forms a bridge between the Testaments: He looks, acts, and talks a lot like an Old Testament prophet but points beyond himself to a new faith, in Jesus. For another he gets something that's reserved only for Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary: The church celebrates his birth and death as a "nativity" and a "passion"

respectively. These words underscore John's close relationship to Christ and his important role in the story of salvation. But while no other saint receives such observances, John nonetheless does what all saints do: points out God to people and points people to God.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10, 16-18 (427); Mark 6:17-29 (634). *"Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man."*

Thursday, Aug 30, 2018

Walk on

It's that time of year again—kids are heading back to school, the days are getting shorter, the carefree summer is winding down; some evening soon there will be a hint of autumn in the air. As the calendar continues its relentless turn, the change of season may bring mixed emotions. Endings always do—whether to a relationship, a job, a dream, or the ultimate end we all will face to this mortal life. These are the moments when our faith is put to the test. Fortunately, we do not have to face final things alone. God is at our side, the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. As you say farewell to summer in the days ahead, rest assured that you never walk alone.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; Matthew 24:42-51 (428). *"He will keep you firm to the end."*

Friday, Aug 31, 2018

The future is now

On this day in 1803 Meriwether Lewis and William Clark began their famous expedition to the West Coast. In 1887 Thomas Edison patented his Kinetoscope, ushering in the age of motion pictures. In 1935 Franklin Roosevelt signed the Neutrality Act, "to avoid any action that might involve the United States in war." In 1999 Princess Diana died in a car crash. Perhaps someone you know was born, or died, or was married on this day. We assume there's plenty of time to tell loved ones what they mean to us or to reconcile with a friend. On this ordinary August day, remember the words of Mother Teresa: "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin."

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 1:17-25; Matthew 25:1-13 (429). *"Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."*

Saturday, Sep 01, 2018

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Last seen praying

Your final glimpse of a friend or loved one can impress itself powerfully on the mind. While you know the aged aunt isn't still knitting in that favorite chair or the college pal might not be kicking that football around forever, in the land of memory these folks seem frozen in place. Sometimes, of course, there's perfect unity between memory and reality. Mary of Nazareth is last seen in the New Testament praying with the church on Pentecost morning. And if you seek her intercession, you'll find she's still there.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Matthew 25:14-30 (430). *"For to everyone who has, more will be given."*

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



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