

## Sunday, Aug 27, 2017

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### Rock-solid faith

Peter got a lot of things wrong in his dealings with Christ, but on the day when Jesus asked him, “Who do you say I am?” Peter got it right and proved himself an astute and faithful disciple. Jesus’ response to Peter’s confession: “You are the Rock and upon this rock I will build my church.” Jesus chose Peter—despite his many instances of flawed thinking—to care for his faith community because Peter’s spiritual core was rock solid. The lesson here for all Christians is that it is our commitment to follow Jesus, not our perfect understanding, that creates a sturdy foundation of faith.

TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 22:19-23; Romans 11:33-36; Matthew 16:13-20 (121) *“You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.”*

## Monday, Aug 28, 2017

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

### Unsinkable Saint Augustine

While some famous people may have amazing rags-to-riches stories to tell, the drama that launched Saint Augustine (354-430) to greatness went from reprobate to repentant. A brilliant young man who indulged in earthly pleasures to excess (dismaying his mom, Saint Monica), he became “born again” and embraced the opposite extreme, condemning everything appealing to the senses. Thankfully, this champion of church teaching finally chose a more forgiving path, admitting, “Our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee!”

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 8b-10; Matthew 23:13-22 (425) *“One who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who is seated on it.”*

## Tuesday, Aug 29, 2017

MEMORIAL OF THE PASSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

### Takes criticism well

It’s human to feel pain and anger, especially at times when you’ve made a mistake and have been soundly called on the carpet for it. King Herod’s wife Herodias wanted to get even with John the Baptist after he spoke out about something she was involved in that was morally wrong. Herodias got revenge, but not a better life. Although hers is an example of extreme vengeance, the moral of her story is one worth remembering. When you make mistakes that others rightfully point out, you can punish the messenger or take the message to heart, but only by doing the latter can you make things right.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 (426); Mark 6:17-29 (634) *“Herodias harbored a grudge against [John the Baptist] and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so.”*

## Wednesday, Aug 30, 2017

### Do what you say

The word *hypocrite* comes from the Greek for “one who acts on a stage” and means “a person who puts on a false appearance of virtue or religion.” Hypocrisy was one of Jesus’ frequent targets, and the criticism of hypocrisy has played a major role in Christian moral life ever since. Those who say one thing and do another, who want people to think they are something different than what they really are, or who hold others to standards they themselves don’t keep fall under this ignominious title. The simple antidote to

hypocrisy comes from *integrity*: consistency between your thoughts and actions and between those actions and what you expect of others.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:27-32 (427) *“On the outside you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evildoing.”*

## Thursday, Aug 31, 2017

### Ready or not, here I come

On this day in 1886, America recorded its first major earthquake, in Charleston, South Carolina. Forty-one people were killed. We never know when tragedy may strike. Our faith keeps us moving forward. We can’t freeze up terrified of what might come. Living as good a life as we can is the best preparation for whatever happens. So put today in God’s hands and live well and fully. That is the way to make it through anything.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 3:7-13; Matthew 24:42-51 (428) *“Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”*

## Friday, Sep 01, 2017

### Keeping vigil

Years ago a cartoon appeared in which a monk is standing on a golf course flying a kite. In the distance, two astonished golfers are staring up at the kite, on which is written the word “repent.” This cartoon was a gentler version of the stereotypical wild-eyed, long-haired prophet roaming the streets holding a sign calling on all to mend their ways because Jesus is about to come back. While these figures may seem a little ridiculous, they have a point. We don’t know when the Lord will return, so it’s best to be ready at all times. But we do not wait for him out of fear. If we live in Christ’s presence now, we will have nothing to be afraid of when we meet him again.

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Matthew 25:1-13 (429) *“Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”*

## Saturday, Sep 02, 2017

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

### A prayer for one and all

Saturdays are not only the traditional day to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary but also the day of the week to pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, the preeminent “Marian” prayer. In prayerfully meditating on the events of the Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary, the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, the Birth of Jesus, the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, and the Finding of Jesus in the Temple, we “weave our intentions, thoughts, imagination, emotions, and desire for union with Christ,” says Alice Camille in her award-winning article for VISION Vocation Network, “Full of grace: Reclaiming the Rosary.” The Rosary is a prayer that speaks to everyone as the church but also to each person as an individual. What is it saying to you today?

TODAY’S READINGS: 1 Thessalonians 4:9-11; Matthew 25:14-30 (430) *“Well done, my good and faithful servant.”*

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



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