

Sunday, Nov 05, 2017

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Follow the law of love

We know the Pharisees were arch-villains in the gospels, but it's surprising that these enemies of Jesus actually had some things in common with him. Both wanted to reform their religion, and both saw personal faithfulness to be the way to that renewal. For the Pharisees, though, this effort meant zealous observance of Jewish religious law, while for Jesus it meant rethinking that law in a whole new way. The Pharisees allied themselves with those in political power. Jesus, on the other hand, was a victim of politics, and his authority was a conduit for God's healing love, not a means of control. How can you exercise your authority for good?

TODAY'S READINGS: Malachi 1:14b—2:2b, 8-10; 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13; Matthew 23:1-12 (151). *"Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah."*

Monday, Nov 06, 2017

Pay it forward

The idea of repaying a favor or someone's generosity by doing the same for a third party has been around a long time. In fact it's at the core of Jesus' radical challenge to love without condition, because God loved us first—to help the "least among us," who can't possibly pay us back. In extending a loan to a friend, Benjamin Franklin wrote: "When you . . . meet with another honest man in similar distress, you must pay me by lending this sum to him, enjoining him to discharge the debt by a like operation . . . I hope it may thus go thro' many hands . . ."

Extend the chain of giving today!

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 11:29-36; Luke 14:12-14 (485). *"Blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you."*

Tuesday, Nov 07, 2017

RSVP

In the gospel parable of the great feast, many are invited, but one by one each declines the invitation. Sometimes saying yes feels too much like hard work. We've got so many other things to do! But are we really too busy? Maybe we just don't recognize the invitation. Or maybe the place Jesus is inviting us doesn't look like a banquet. Today, let's remember that Jesus invites us every day: to say a kind word, to think of someone else first, to forgive. Then let's resolve to accept the invitation. We might be surprised.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 12:5-16b; Luke 14:15-24 (486). *"Someone gave a great dinner and invited many, saying, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'"*

Wednesday, Nov 08, 2017

Look at the bright side

When Jesus talked about being his disciple, he warned us that the road would be difficult and rocky. Instead of looking at Christ's words in a negative way, try looking at the rewards of sacrificing everything to follow him: the promise of eternal life, true happiness, joy, and peace. Now it doesn't sound so bad, does it? Keep a positive outlook as you travel the path of discipleship.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 13:8-10; Luke 14:25-33 (487). *"Every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple."*

Thursday, Nov 09, 2017

FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA

Come on in

Finding God in the marketplace is very difficult for most of us because we are easily distracted by the mundane or *profane* (from the Latin meaning "outside the temple"). A sacred place, like anything sacred, is something set apart or different from what is normal for us. When we enter a cathedral filled with masterpieces and architectural wonders or a simple country church set amid a breathtaking landscape, or any place where we know holy things have happened, we are readily transported to the dwelling place of the divine, where souls are stirred, minds are enlightened, bodies are healed, and sins are forgiven. Step out of your routine and enter a sacred space.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; 1 Corinthians 3:9c-11, 16-17; John 2:13-22 (671). *"Zeal for your house will consume me."*

Friday, Nov 10, 2017

MEMORIAL OF LEO THE GREAT, POPE, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Seek wisely

Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God is among or, in an equally valid translation of the Greek, within us. But how do we recognize the Kingdom that is among and within us? What do we look for? Solomon suggests a very good place for us to start, with his poetic words of praise for wisdom in the first reading. Where we find wisdom, we find the presence of God—within us and among us. Cultivate eyes to see and ears to hear the wisdom that comes from your own heart, and from the words and example of other prayerful people. Seek wisdom and you'll find the Kingdom.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 15:14-21; Luke 16:1-8 (489). *"For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you."*

Saturday, Nov 11, 2017

MEMORIAL OF MARTIN OF TOURS, BISHOP

Cross violence off the list

It may seem odd that we remember Martin of Tours from the fourth century on Veteran's Day because he was the first Christian pacifist on record. But he, too, was a soldier who came from a Roman military family. Serving in a war he came to view as unjust, he joined the vanguard that carried the cross ahead of the troops, risking his life rather than taking the life of another. In the centuries since Martin's time, Christians still feel ambivalent about saying no in time of war. Martin reminds us that the cross is also a response to the violence in human hearts.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 16:3-9, 16, 22-27; Luke 16:9-15 (490). *"Those who lose their life will keep it."*

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



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