

Sunday, Jun 14, 2020

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI)

E pluribus unum

As the United States celebrates flag day, remember that when the Revolutionary War began, no “American” flag existed. Each regiment fought under its own banner. It was another two years before the Second Continental Congress determined that 13 stars and stripes would signify the union of the colonies. An ever-expanding nation required more stars, and then more. It was wisely decided to leave the stripes alone. Holding 50 states together is a challenge in each generation. It takes even more will to hold together a church a billion strong, squatting under banners of preferred views and opinions. “One faith, one Lord, one Baptism” remains our call to unity.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; John 6:51-58 (167). *“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?”*

Monday, Jun 15, 2020

Cheeky faith

There was a time when the rite of Confirmation included a tap on the cheek—symbolic of being struck—by the bishop, who at the same time wished you peace. The custom was knightly in origin. When you are confirmed, you become a “soldier of Christ,” so you must be ready to risk danger for your faith. But the sacrament strengthens you for the spiritual battles of your lifetime, including for times of crisis. Turning the other cheek hardly means being passive in the face of trials, but rather never giving up in the struggle. Offer yourself over and over in the service of good.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Kings 21:1-16; Matthew 5:38-42 (365). *“Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles.”*

Tuesday, Jun 16, 2020

Perfectly clear

The phrase “biblical criticism” doesn't mean to criticize Sacred Scripture, though Pope Leo XIII seemed to think so when he wrote the 1893 encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, which took a dim view of the practice. Rather, it refers to the use of scholarly disciplines—such as literature and history—to uncover the Bible's deeper meanings. Fortunately, 50 years later, Pope Pius XII penned *On the Most Opportune Way to Promote Biblical Studies* to encourage what had been discouraged. Thanks to it, we can delve into the word “perfect” in Matthew 5:48 and learn it's an imperfect translation of the Greek “*teleios*,” which means to have integrity. May your actions match your words.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Kings 21:17-29; Matthew 5:43-48 (366). *“Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

Wednesday, Jun 17, 2020

Love leads the way

Doing good is not only what we are called to do as Christians, it is also a benefit to all human beings in the long run. Evolutionary studies show that cooperative behavior has long-term benefits for

human beings; whereas selfish behavior is a short-term win. In these difficult days, let love be your guide, your inner voice, and your consolation. Doing good is indeed its own reward.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Kings 2:1, 6-14; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 (367).

“Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them.”

Thursday, Jun 18, 2020

Lead on

A small change in translation can be a big deal when the words of the Lord's Prayer are at stake. After years of consideration, Italian and French bishops embraced a change in the version said at Mass, from “*lead us not into temptation*” to “*do not let us fall into temptation*.” The change intends to clarify the fact that God doesn't lead people toward evil. So, if you are tempted toward sin today, why not ask God to lead you elsewhere?

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 48:1-14; Matthew 6:7-15 (368). *“This is how you are to pray: ‘Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.’”*

Friday, Jun 19, 2020

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Get to the heart of the matter

Expressions of the meaning of the Sacred Heart of Jesus have come from everywhere—from saints and theologians to singers and tattoo artists—each trying to give shape to the meaning of the unconditional love of Jesus the Christ. The Sacred Heart reminds us to allow ourselves to experience Jesus' great love for us, to dwell in Jesus' way of being in and for the world. Use your imagination to place yourself within Jesus' heart, within love. How does this shift your view of the joys and challenges of the day?

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 7:6-11; 1 John 4:7-16; Matthew 11:25-30 (170). *“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God.”*

Saturday, Jun 20, 2020

MEMORIAL OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

What have we done?

During the coronavirus pandemic, some have asked why God would “do this” to us or what we have done to “deserve this punishment.” A similar question was asked of Jesus in the story of the man born blind. Jesus replied that it was nothing the man did and neither was it some form of punishment. Think of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose Immaculate Heart is the expression of her sinlessness. She did nothing wrong yet she suffered mightily. Even her Immaculate Heart is shown encircled with thorns and pierced with a sword. Many have suffered in this season of sickness and loss, through no fault of their own. Pray for those whose hearts are heavy with grief.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Chronicles 24:17-25 (370); Luke 2:41-51 (573). *“His mother kept all these things in her heart.”*

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



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