

Sunday, Jan 17, 2021

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Lifestyles of the brave and mobile

Media coverage is thick concerning the lifestyles of the rich and famous. The lives of the truly heroic, on the other hand—faithful spouses, conscientious parents, the working poor, folks who turn their lives around after addiction or costly misdirection—are mostly hidden from view. Faithful discipleship requires effort, quiet persistence, and most of all, movement in the spirit. Followers don't stand still, unchangeable in opinions or behaviors. Growth is required. The terms of the deal are as follows: "Come—and see."

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20; John 1:35-42 (65). "'Rabbi . . . where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and you will see.'"

Monday, Jan 18, 2021

Abide your time this week

For more than 100 years, Christians around the world have been observing annually the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan. 18-25). For Catholics, this week is an opportunity to also ponder the Decree on Ecumenism from Vatican II. Is your diocese or parish participating in this healing effort? For resources, visit the World Council of Churches at Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. As you pray, call to mind this year's theme: "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit."

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 2:18-22 (311). "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

Tuesday, Jan 19, 2021

Pray the pope's prayer for peace

Exactly 60 years ago tomorrow, John F. Kennedy gave an inaugural address that quoted Romans 12:12, reminding citizens to be "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation." One year later, Pope John XXIII became a secret intermediary between Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, speaking a message of peace to the entire world during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Haunted by the experience, he penned his final encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, stressing the church's Christian duty to address international issues of peace and human rights—speaking to all persons "of good will," not only Catholics. Pray for peace and the perseverance of hope.

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 6:10-20; Mark 2:23-28 (312). "Hold fast to the hope that lies before us."

Wednesday, Jan 20, 2021

MEMORIAL OF FABIAN, POPE, MARTYR

Be open to the Spirit of surprise

In the year 236, Fabian left his farm and headed to Rome. He wanted to be in town for the election of a new pope. The furthest thing from his mind, or anyone's mind, was that he would be elected. Legend holds that as clergy discussed worthy candidates, a dove landed on the head of bystander Fabian. Thinking it was a sign from the Holy Spirit, the crowd elected Fabian by acclamation. A kind and capable administrator, he had the respect of both the faith community and three different emperors

in a period of rare peace. Although that peace eventually ended and persecution cost him his life, Fabian's legacy endures. Be open to unexpected visitations of the Holy Spirit!

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17; Mark 3:1-6 (313). "Come up here before us."

Thursday, Jan 21, 2021

MEMORIAL OF AGNES, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Draw inspiration from women of faith

Today we honor both Saint Agnes, virgin and martyr, and, in some places, Our Lady of Altagracia, protectress of the Dominican Republic. The devotion to both grew from grassroots popularity; that is, ordinary Christians were moved by their stories and lifted them up for veneration. Saint Agnes was executed for her faith in the fourth century. Our Lady of Altagracia is an image of Mary in the Dominican Republic that, according to legend, kept mysteriously moving to an orange grove until a church was built there. Centuries later memories of both women continue to inspire the faithful. Take a moment to reflect on women of faith who inspire you.

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 7:25—8:6; Mark 3:7-12 (314). "Jesus is always able to save those who approach God through him."

Friday, Jan 22, 2021

Embracing your inner apostle

How many apostles did Jesus call? If you said 12, well, you are sort of correct. Indeed, Jesus appointed 12 followers to be his close companions, to learn from him, and to preach the Good News. But it doesn't stop at 12. Jesus continues to call forth apostles in the church. We have bishops who continue the mission via the tradition of apostolic succession. We also have every single person in the church, including you! "The whole church is apostolic, in that she remains . . . in communion of faith and life with her origin: and in that she is 'sent out' into the whole world," says the Catechism of the Catholic Church. How will you respond to your call to apostleship?

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 8:6-13; Mark 3:13-19 (315). "Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him."

Saturday, Jan 23, 2021

MEMORIAL OF MARIANNE COPE, RELIGIOUS

Remarkable, two times over

Imagine leaving all that is familiar to minister in a far-off land. Now imagine doing it twice! German-born Marianne Cope came to the United States as a young woman and, as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Syracuse, New York, became a founding leader of St. Joseph's Hospital in the city, one of the first general hospitals in the country. Then in 1883 she relocated with six other sisters to Hawai'i to care for persons suffering leprosy and to help develop the medical infrastructure of the island chain. Pray today for an ounce of the courage and sacrifice she modeled for us all.

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 9:2-3, 11-14; Mark 3:20-21 (316). "Jesus came with his disciples into the house."

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



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