

Sunday, May 22, 2022

How to find the missing peace

The first step to peace is to ensure the hungry are fed. This requires that workers are fairly compensated. Labor priest George G. Higgins, who died on this day in 2002, recognized a vital connection between workers' unions and Catholic social teaching. He actively supported Cesar Chavez in arbitrating for farm workers. Higgins also advocated for the United Auto Workers and Kentucky coal miners. Higgins acknowledged that, "All members of the white community and especially those of us who have benefited most from the system are responsible, in varying degrees, for the tragic plight of black Americans." Learn about the seven themes of Catholic social teaching.

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29; Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23; John 14:23-29 (57). *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."*

Monday, May 23, 2022

Here comes everybody

We hear a lot about "inclusion" these days—in our schools, workplaces, churches, and communities at large. For Christians, inclusion isn't just a buzzword—it's at the heart of our faith. Jesus didn't just include the marginalized, he put them front and center. Saint Paul emphasized repeatedly that we are one in Christ. The very word *catholic* means "universal." And yet, humanity has never been more rife with division—from the world stage down to our own families. How can we strive to overcome differences? To respect the dignity of every person? To celebrate diversity while living in solidarity? Everyone belongs. Let's commit to that much, at least.

EASTER WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26—16:4a (291). *"The hour is coming when everyone who kills you will think he is offering worship to God."*

Tuesday, May 24, 2022

Our Lady of Sheshan, pray for us

Today marks the World Day of Prayer for the Church in China, established in 2007 by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. Benedict's original proclamation included pastoral guidelines for a church that had been driven underground by years of Communist rule, plagued with complicated issues relating to the separation of church and state. One year later, the pontiff penned a special prayer for today, seeking the intercession of Our Lady of Sheshan—the Chinese equivalent of "Mary, Help of Christians," whose feast is also today. Use Benedict's prayer as you ask God to guide and further bless China's embattled Catholic community.

EASTER WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:22-34; John 16:5-11 (292). *"His household rejoiced at having come to faith in God."*

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

This little light

The life of a mystic may seem romantic and exciting, with ecstatic visions and union with God at your fingertips. The reality is something else, as the life of Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, 16th-century Carmelite mystic from Italy, attests. It was truly a tale of agony and ecstasy. After a period of visions, at the tender age of 19 she experienced five long years of desolation. She referred to her heart as a pitch-dark room with only a feeble light shining that

only made the darkness deeper. Thankfully her trials ended in 1590 with mystical union once again. Though perhaps not so dramatic, trials of one sort or another visit all of us. Hold onto the feeble light if that is all you see at the moment. Have faith that it will brighten.

MEMORIAL OF MARY MAGDALENE DE' PAZZI, CARMELITE MYSTIC

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 17:15, 22—18:1; John 16:12-15 (293). *"When he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth."*

Thursday, May 26, 2022

Save me a seat

The epic movie version of the Ascension, today's feast, is exciting to imagine: Christ floating upward, astonished disciples gaping, full orchestra swelling as the Earth becomes a blue ball below Jesus. However it happened, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says the point is that "Christ's ascension marks the definitive entrance of Jesus' humanity into God's heavenly domain." He is there, says the catechism, preparing a place for us. The mystics tell us that we don't have to wait for death for that place next to Jesus; we can go there in prayer. Now that's epic!

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23 or Hebrews 9:24-28; 10:19-23; Luke 24:46-53 (58). *"As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven."*

Friday, May 27, 2022

Be a voice in the wilderness

Nobody ever sets out to be a prophet. And why would they? Scripture and history have both taught us that prophets are often treated poorly because people don't want to hear their message, especially when it calls them to change their ways. Prophets in scripture were people called to speak on behalf of God. Like prophets today, they called people and communities to be their best selves, to truly live as people of God and people for others. Today's prophets include folks like Pope Francis and Malala Yousafzai, Pakistani activist for female education and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate. They may even include you. Search your own heart. How is God calling you?

EASTER WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:9-18; John 16: 20-23 (295). *"Do not be afraid. Go on speaking, and do not be silent, for I am with you."*

Saturday, May 28, 2022

Who do you say he is?

People of faith have been debating the precise nature of Jesus—fully human? fully divine? both?—since the earliest days of the church. It's understandable—after all, Jesus could not be contained by our existing categories. He broke the mold, with stunning insights, powerful works, and unlimited compassion. After centuries of debate, the church at the Council of Nicaea settled the question as best we mere mortals could manage, deciding that Jesus can only be understood as fully human and fully divine. How fortunate are we that he is both relatable and unsurpassable. Spend some time with him today; he is always available!

EASTER WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:23-28; John 16:23b-28 (296). *"I came from the Father and have come into the world. Now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."*

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



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