

Sunday, May 21, 2023

Consume media with care

He couldn't have foreseen the technological advances the 21st century would bring. Yet in 1967, Pope Paul VI appreciated the need for a World Communications Day. He established the Sunday before Pentecost as an annual reflection on the opportunities and challenges of presenting the gospel message to a global society. The press, movies, radio, and television all commanded great attention in his generation. The internet and cell phones exponentially increase the range today. What are we saying and absorbing through all this media? Be a discerning steward of words and images.

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER OR SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:12-14; 1 Peter 4:13-16; John 17:1-11a (59). *"The words you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them."*

Monday, May 22, 2023

Support vulnerable women

Rita of Cascia is the patron saint of abused wives because she herself was one. She endured years of verbal and physical abuse from her husband, and after he was murdered by a feuding family member, Rita became a nun. Read the U.S. Catholic Bishops' statement against domestic violence. On the USCCB website, you can also find downloadable "When I Call for Help" resource cards in English and Spanish that list signs of an abusive relationship and include the number of the National Domestic Violence Hotline. These are ideal for parish pamphlet racks, for placing in parish restrooms, and to raise awareness about domestic abuse. We owe it to Saint Rita to act.

MEMORIAL OF RITA OF CASCIA, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 19:1-8; John 16:29-33 (297). *"In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world."*

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

Peace I leave with you

Twenty-five years ago today, citizens on both sides of the Northern Ireland conflict agreed—by referendum—to honor the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, ending nearly 30 years of bloodshed that took the lives of more than 3,500 Catholics and Protestants. For his dogged commitment to the work of peace and reconciliation, Catholic politician John Hume was named co-recipient of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize. Hume, who also received both the Gandhi Peace Prize and the Martin Luther King Award—the only person ever to receive all three peace awards—said, "Bloodshed for political change prevents the only change that truly matters: in the human heart." Pray for peace today, and consider reading the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter *The Challenge of Peace*, which turned 40 this month.

EASTER WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 20:17-27; John 17:1-11a (298). *"They know that everything you gave me is from you."*

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us

Today marks the sad one-year anniversary of the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. Let us pray for the 21 people who died that day, including 19 children. Let us pray for their families. Let us pray for anyone who would ever entertain

even the slightest thought of causing such devastation. Today is also the feast of Mary, Help of Christians—a good day to pray for an end to gun violence. Consider this prayer to Mary, which begins: "Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin, Help of Christians, we place ourselves under your motherly protection. Throughout the Church's history you have helped Christians in times of trial, temptation, and danger. Time and time again, you have proven to be the Refuge of sinners, the Hope of the hopeless, the Consoler of the afflicted, and the Comforter of the dying."

EASTER WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 20:28-38; John 17:11b-19 (299). *"I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the Evil One."*

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Marching in unison

A doctor, a pope, and a mystic walked into a bar... no, actually, today's trio of saints all lived at different times but landed on the same day in the liturgical calendar. Although the number of saints far outstrips the number of days in the year, each saint is assigned a date to be honored, usually the day of their death. Many saints remain obscure, but the many books, articles, traditions, and websites devoted to saints ensures that somewhere the faithful are taking note. That's the point, to be inspired by saints to be saintly in our own lives in our own way.

MEMORIAL OF BEDE THE VENERABLE, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH; GREGORY VII, POPE; MARY MAGDALENE DE' PAZZI, RELIGIOUS MYSTIC

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; John 17:20-26 (300). *"Father ... I made known to them your name."*

Friday, May 26, 2023

The saint with an inclusive perspective

We sometimes have a difficult time holding together opposites and contradictions. Either joy *or* sorrow, good *or* bad. But what would it be like to replace *either/or* with the humble conjunction *and*? *And* serves to connect things, to show relationship. Saint Philip Neri exemplifies someone who embraced the *and*. He was deeply committed to individual prayer devotions *and* to experiencing God at the heart of community. He encouraged people to faith and joy *and* to persevering in a struggling church. What *either/or* is becoming a *both/and* for you?

MEMORIAL OF PHILIP NERI, PRIEST

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 25:13b-21; John 21:15-19 (301). *"And when [Jesus] had said this, he said to him, 'Follow me.'"*

Saturday, May 27, 2023

Hang in there

There are times in our lives when, facing adversity, we are tempted to throw in the towel, turn back, give up. Augustine of Canterbury, sent by Rome in 596 to evangelize Anglo Saxons in England, turned back after hearing of the dangers ahead. Persuaded by Pope Gregory to persevere, Augustine completed the mission. Though progress was slow and setbacks occurred, Augustine's steadfastness paid off, and he is rightfully called the "Apostle to England." Stay the course!

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, BISHOP

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; John 21:20-25 (302). *"There are also many other things that Jesus did."*

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



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