

Sunday, Oct 01, 2023

Seamless unity

We work best when we work together. A society pulling in opposite directions tears itself apart. The final prayer Jesus offers at the Last Supper is for unity among his friends. Saint Paul likewise implores his communities to be of one heart. Today, on Respect Life Sunday, we soberly confess that we can't both honor the sacred gift of life and allow poverty, injustice, exclusion, and indifference to remain unchallenged. Coincidentally, it's the International Day of Older Persons, in a world where people over 60 outnumber children under 5. Make this world a welcome place for everyone.

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 18:25-28; Philippians 2:1-11; Matthew 21:28-32 (136). *"Complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing."*

Monday, Oct 02, 2023

Watching over us

What exactly does the church teach about angels? "The existence of the spiritual, non-corporeal beings that Sacred Scripture usually calls 'angels' is a truth of faith," says the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The church venerates angels as servants and messengers of God. And one is particularly looking out for you. But, as Pope Francis says, not just to protect but to prod: "The angels help us; they push us to continue on the journey [of life]." These pure spirits who are in communication with God encourage us to "be not afraid" and take risks. Join the church in welcoming these—and your—special guardians.

MEMORIAL OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS

TODAY'S READINGS: Zechariah 8:1-8 (455); Matthew 18:1-5, 10 (650). *"I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father."*

Tuesday, Oct 03, 2023

The Lord loves justice

Mother Theodore Guerin, whose feast is today, was a missionary to the United States who established schools, a pharmacy, and orphanages. But her love of Christ made her denounce injustices, too. She described a slave auction: "These Americans, so proud of their liberty, thus make game of the liberty of others. Poor negroes! I would have wished to buy them all that I might say to them, 'Go! Bless Providence. You are free!'" Her mission continues today with her Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, who strive for peace and justice, particularly in the area of racial equality and equity, criminal justice reform, human trafficking, and immigration. Take to heart Mother Guerin's words as you work to transform the world: "Above all things; justice, justice. If any preference may be shown let it be to the poorest or most abandoned."

TODAY'S READINGS: Zechariah 8:20-23; Luke 9:51-56 (456). *"Every nationality, speaking different tongues, shall . . . say, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"*

Wednesday, Oct 04, 2023

Make mercy your song to all creation

The feast of Saint Francis of Assisi is a great date to reflect on one's care for creation, as we are often wont to think all that matters in the spiritual life is our connection to God and other humans. The great Franciscan founder showed us by his life, including preaching to the creatures of the air and the field, that all of creation is listening to hear what we have to say. Is our

message that of compassion and prudence, or rather convenience and the "throwaway culture"? Perhaps God himself is choosing to lend an ear by means of all God's creatures, great and small.

MEMORIAL OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI

TODAY'S READINGS: Nehemiah 2:1-8; Luke 9:57-62 (457). *"Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head."*

Thursday, Oct 05, 2023

Mercy prevails

Saint Faustina Kowalska is one of a long list of saints who held low status but whose intense relationship with God fueled a power that gained attention. A peasant who became a nun assigned low-level jobs, Faustina's mystical visions of Jesus—at first doubted by church authorities—eventually were embraced widely. They are the foundation of Divine Mercy Sunday, characterized by an image of Jesus with rays of mercy emanating from his heart. Faustina's focus on God's mercy is a message that helped her native Poland through harrowing years of war and repressive government, and it continues to inspire. Commit yourself to an act of mercy today.

MEMORIAL OF FAUSTINA KOWALSKA, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 5-6, 7b-12; Luke 10:1-12 (458). *"Into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this household.'"*

Friday, Oct 06, 2023

Leading indicators

The stories of the founders of religious institutes most often begin with reluctant souls who feel unworthy to accept such an important task. But, luckily for the church and all blessed by their service and legacy, they eventually take up the mantle of leadership. The decision is not without its benefits, according to Saint Bruno, founder of the Carthusians: "God gives his athletes the reward they desire: a peace that the world does not know and joy in the Holy Spirit." And, for Blessed Marie Rose Durocher, founder of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, prayer is key to finding the answers you seek when unsure of next steps: "I suggest that you pray to Our Lord that He assist you and give you the direction you need." Gain strength from the witness of these two great leaders.

MEMORIALS OF BRUNO, PRIEST; BLESSED MARIE ROSE DUROCHER, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Baruch 1:15-22; Luke 10:13-16 (459). *"Whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."*

Saturday, Oct 07, 2023

By any name

Today's celebration has seen a lot of changes over the centuries. It started out as the Feast of Our Lady of Victory to commemorate the Christian defeat of the Turkish army on this date in 1571. A few years later Pope Gregory XIII changed the name to the Feast of the Holy Rosary. Pope Clement XI in 1716 changed the date to August 5. Pius X changed it back to October 7. John XXIII changed the name to the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Rosary. Then Paul VI changed the name to Our Lady of the Rosary. However you name it, today's Joyful Mysteries invite you to celebrate Christ in your life.

MEMORIAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

TODAY'S READINGS: Baruch 4:5-12, 27-29; Luke 10:17-24 (460). *"I have given you the power 'to tread upon serpents' and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you."*

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



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