

**Sunday, Oct 08, 2023**

### To the greater good!

Our country's second poet laureate, Richard Wilbur (1921-2017), fought in the Second World War. It convinced him that writing verse was serious business: "One does not use poetry ... to organize oneself and the world, until one's world somehow gets out of hand." Wilbur explained: "I feel that the universe is full of glorious energy ... and that the ultimate character of things is comely and good. I am perfectly aware that I say this in the teeth of all sorts of contrary evidence, and that I must be basing it partly on temperament and partly on faith." Believe in the ultimate goodness, regardless of any evidence to the contrary!

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 5:1-7; Philippians 4:6-9; Matthew 21:33-43 (139). *"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious ... think about these things."*

**Monday, Oct 09, 2023**

### Going the distance for faith

In the third century, Saint Denis evangelized the country that would come to be France (then called Gaul), and he is thought to have been the first bishop of Paris (then called Lutetia). He was so successful at making converts that the Roman governor beheaded him on the highest hill in the city, now known as Montmartre. It was said he picked up his head and kept preaching while walking many miles before reaching his burial site in a town later named after him. He is the patron saint of France and one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. Call on him for a missionary zeal that just won't quit.

MEMORIAL OF DENIS, BISHOP, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 1:1—2:1-2, 11; Luke 10:25-37 (461). *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind."*

**Tuesday, Oct 10, 2023**

### Don't shortchange charity

In 2021, Pope Francis used today, World Mental Health Day, to pray for those "affected by mental disorders and also the victims, often young, of suicide." This June, Francis mentioned teen suicide again, decrying a "culture that leads young people to think that they are 'losers.'" Francis also emphasized the basic human right to medical care and social services—so critical for mental health—but he also pointed to us individual Christians, who in our "haste" don't often stop long enough to care for each other. "It is easy to delegate charity to others, yet the calling of every Christian"—according to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan—"is to become personally involved." His advice? Learn from Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, who said, "charity must not remain locked in the depths of one's heart."

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 10:38-42 (462). *"The Lord said to her in reply, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things.'"*

**Wednesday, Oct 11, 2023**

### A shrine for the ages

In America's "first city," St. Augustine, Florida, many Catholics today will celebrate the feast of Our Lady of La Leche, dedicated to a Marian apparition first recognized during the time of the Spanish colonial empire. The devotion, depicting Mary nursing the infant child Jesus, traveled with settlers to Florida in the 16th century, and a shrine to her was built at Mission Nombre de Dios in the

new colony of St. Augustine. The shrine is the oldest in the United States, having received canonical coronation in 2021, and is a popular pilgrimage site for those seeking intercession related to a pregnancy. Maybe today is the day for you to offer a special prayer for someone in your own life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 4:1-11; Luke 11:1-4 (463). *"All the nations you have made shall come and worship you, O Lord, and glorify your name."*

**Thursday, Oct 12, 2023**

### Come as you are

Christians whose personalities would never be called pious or meek might take heart in Caryl Houselander (1901-54), whose death we commemorate today. She smoked, drank, and was said to have a sharp tongue. But people were drawn to her for good counsel, and Houselander's spiritual writing persists. A sample: "Love is most likely to spring from another's need for us, and the fact of spending ourselves for another always generates new life in us." With your own God-given personality, warts and all, take a step today toward building the Kingdom.

TODAY'S READINGS: Malachi 3:13-20b; Luke 11:5-13 (464). *"And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find."*

**Friday, Oct 13, 2023**

### The devil doesn't have a prayer

In an interview in *Exorcists against Satan* by Italian journalist Fabio Marchese Ragona, Pope Francis was asked about the devil. "It is possible that I get on the Devil's nerves," he said, "because I try to follow the Lord and do what the Gospel says. And that annoys him. At the same time, he is certainly happy when I commit some sin. He seeks man's failure, but he has no chance if there is prayer." It is a great mystery that God should permit diabolical activity, says the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "but we know that in everything God works for good with those who love him" (CCC 395). Take the simple steps of daily prayer and good works to keep the devil at bay.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joel 1:13-15; 2:1-2; Luke 11:15-26 (465). *"If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?"*

**Saturday, Oct 14, 2023**

### Redeeming qualities

There was a profound division in the church during the third-century pontificate of Callistus I. The pope believed and taught that even the most serious sins like murder and adultery could be absolved in a sincere confession. His position scandalized many church leaders in Rome who didn't agree. They believed that some sins were too serious to be forgiven, and they accused Callistus of laxity and sympathizing with heretics. Eventually Callistus prevailed and Confession became the healing sacrament for all sin, even the most serious. Thank our merciful God for guiding the church toward an ethic of redemption.

MEMORIAL OF CALLISTUS I, POPE, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Joel 4:12-21; Luke 11:27-28 (466). *"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."*

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



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