

Sunday, May 02, 2021

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Search for the truth

We've entered an age when discovering the truth feels more complicated than ever. Some of us are leery of "facts," knowing how easily they can be manufactured, massaged, or politicized. Traditional sources of truth—government, news media, even organized religion—have proven to be subject to the same failures to which we ourselves are prone. How do we sort out truth from all the political noise that distorts what we hear? John says the Spirit's been given to us for precisely this task. Pray for the gift of holy discernment.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 9:26-31; 1 John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8 (53).
"Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth."

Monday, May 03, 2021

FEAST OF PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

Don't think less of others

Poor James the Lesser. The other apostle named James—the Greater—got the better nickname. We don't even know anything about James the Lesser, other than his name and that Jesus picked him to be one of the 12—but that alone speaks volumes about this James. We've all experienced what it feels like to have labels attached to us that make us feel less in the eyes of others, if we even feel seen or known at all. But God looks past those labels to the truth of our identity. That's where you'll find your value and dignity, even if others don't seem to. Remember that, like James, you are God's chosen.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14 (561). *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?"*

Tuesday, May 04, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

May their force be with us

Today is Teacher Appreciation Day, recognizing teachers as a force for good—especially in this pandemic year. Through John Baptist de La Salle, patron saint of all teachers, we might say the best educators naturally follow a "Lasallian" philosophy of education. "The Lasallian tradition emphasizes the fact that all people, especially the young, have an inherent dignity which comes from their being created in the image of God," explains St. Mary's College of Winona. "Education is a means of developing this dignity for the well-being of each student as well as for the well-being of our society." Thank a teacher today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a (286). *"Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid."*

Wednesday, May 05, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Celebrate the dignity of diversity

Though today's "Cinco de Mayo" celebrations commemorate but a single Mexican victory over France at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, in the United States it has become an opportunity to honor the heritage and culture of Mexican people. As folks revel in parades and festivals, enjoying Mexican cuisine and music, we recall these words from the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "Human interdependence is increasing and spreading through the world . . . embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity."

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with a prayer of gratitude for the richness of human diversity.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8 (287). *"I am the vine and you are the branches."*

Thursday, May 06, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Focus on the essentials

One of the earliest conflicts in the church had to do with whether Gentiles should have to follow the laws and customs of Judaism. Because Christianity grew out of Judaism, early church leaders had a hard time sorting out what was essential to the emerging Christian faith and what was simply the "way we've always done it." This question continues to vex church leaders to this day and has gone through many iterations—from questions about ritual practices, to prayers and social norms. What is essential to the faith? That we love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Everything else may well be a matter of custom. When it comes to faith, take time today to get back to the basics.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:7-21, John 15:9-11 (288). *"It is my judgment, therefore, that we ought to stop troubling the Gentiles who turn to God."*

Friday, May 07, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Connect with creation and Creator

If you have a garden, you might be checking the forecast these days to see if conditions are right for planting. Gardens play an outsize role in the Christian imagination. From the Garden of Eden to the Garden of Gethsemane, key events happen in gardens. For centuries communities of sisters, brothers, and priests have cultivated gardens for food, edification, and connection to a major metaphor for spiritual development. Seek out a patch of green, and whether you plant a seed or enjoy a bloom, connecting with creation will connect you with the Creator.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17 (289). *"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain."*

Saturday, May 08, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Elevate your spiritual gaze

Blessed Teresa Demjanovich (1901-27) has been called America's "Little Flower." Like Thérèse from Lisieux, France, Teresa from Bayonne, New Jersey was a spiritual writer of great insight who also died young. Because of her virtue, her writings, and a miracle healing attributed to her intercession, she was beatified in the Newark cathedral in 2014, the first-ever such ceremony held in the United States. Her elevation to sainthood awaits confirmation of a second miracle. Teresa's mother died in the 1918 pandemic, which killed well over 500,000 Americans. Sound sadly familiar? Ask Blessed Teresa's intercession for all who have suffered because of COVID-19.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21 (290). *"You do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world."*

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



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Sunday, May 09, 2021

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

See through God's eye

God does not see as we see, the prophet Isaiah reminds us. To harness the divine perspective, native peoples of western Mexico wove yarn on crossed sticks to represent the eye of God (*ojo de Dios*), which sees in four directions and in all elemental mediums: earth, wind, fire, and water. A God's eye became the portal through which God views the supplicant, or through which those who pray might share the divine vision. Sharing a God's-eye perspective on the world remains the goal of every believer. Practice seeing others as our compassionate God sees them.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; 1 John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17 (56). *"In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever . . . acts uprightly is acceptable to him."*

Monday, May 10, 2021

MEMORIAL OF DAMIEN DE VEUSTER, PRIEST

Pray for those who heal

The story of Saint Damien de Veuster, a Belgian priest who missioned to quarantined lepers in Hawaii and died of the disease, is extraordinary—although often echoed these days as legions of medical professionals all over the world put themselves in harm's way to treat the sick and dying of COVID. Father Damian is a "martyr of charity," and we've been blessed with multitudes of fearless, generous heroes like him who've expended themselves physically and emotionally to get us through this pandemic. Give thanks to God for our modern martyrs of charity and ask for Father Damian's intercession to keep them safe and send them spiritual strength.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26-16:4a (291). *"And you also testify, because you have been with me from the beginning."*

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Cultivate an appreciation of rural traditions

Though they've disappeared from most modern calendars, two older Catholic observances converge today. One is the petitioning of the "Ice Saints"—Boniface of Tarsus, Pancras, and Servatius—so named because their feasts fall during what were believed in some northern nations to be the last days of spring when a cold snap might damage spring plantings. The other observance, beginning on the Tuesday before Ascension Thursday, is known as the Minor Rogation Days. These two, along with the Catholic observance of Ember Days, are religious celebrations more commonly tied to the rhythms of rural life. They include the blessing of fields for a good harvest and prayers for good weather. Learn more at CatholicRuralLife.org.

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

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

MEMORIALS OF NEREUS AND ACHILLEUS, MARTYRS; PANCRAS, MARTYR

Religious freedom is a timeless concern

Sometimes it is difficult to relate to the martyrs of the early church because their lives are so different from our own. Nereus and Achilleus were Roman soldiers who had participated in carrying out persecutions of Christians. In a "miracle of faith," they were converted and died their own martyred deaths in the late first

century. Pancras was a 14-year-old martyr of the same era who was beheaded because he publicly affirmed his faith in Jesus Christ. On this Easter weekday, give thanks for the ability to freely worship and pray for those around the world who do not enjoy such freedom.

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

Thursday, May 13, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

Rise to the occasion

Today's Feast of the Ascension gives wide recognition to a rather complex idea—that Christ both ascended to heaven *and* remains with us. In fact, we get a taste of heaven when we unify ourselves with Jesus in spirit and action. Saint Augustine taught "although he ascended alone, we also ascend, because we are in him by grace." From attending Mass to aiding the needy, on this feast day we can all take a step toward unity with Christ.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 4:1-13 or Ephesians 1:17-23; Mark 16:15-20 (58). *"So then the Lord Jesus . . . was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God."*

Friday, May 14, 2021

FEAST OF MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

Abstinence makes the faith grow stronger

Although self-denial is celebrated in all major religions as a virtue, the value isn't so much in the practice as in the motivation. For Christians the virtuous motivation for abstinence of food, drink, or particular desires comes from love. We deny ourselves for God's sake and for the sake of others. Saint Matthias, patron of alcoholics, encouraged abstinence as a way to grow closer to God. He kept his focus on his vocation to spread the gospel and let little distract him from his purpose. What can you do today to keep your focus on love?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; John 15:9-17 (564). *"This I command you: love one another."*

Saturday, May 15, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Honor the forces of reconciliation

Pope Saint John XXIII taught that wars are never justified. Pope Saint John Paul II wrote to President George W. Bush that the Iraq War was unjust. Pope Benedict XVI questioned whether any war could be called just. Pope Francis, speaking in Hiroshima during his 2019 visit, repeated the positions of the previous popes. Christians face a dilemma, wanting world peace but also needing some protection from those who don't think the same way. The church recognizes a need for the military. But the task of the military should be to maintain peace and set the conditions for reconciliation. On this Armed Forces Day, pray for all our military service members. They have a difficult job.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:23-28; John 16:23b-28 (296). *"For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have come to believe that I came from God."*

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



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Sunday, May 16, 2021

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Good things come from unlikely places

It may bring a smile to our lips to hear the argument for why we're obliged to love others: because God loves us first. And if God can love us (be honest here!) then clearly love need not be earned. This World Communications Day, Pope Francis invites us to consider how future-apostle Nathaniel once dismissed Jesus because of his origins: "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" To really love people, we have to begin by not categorizing them: by gender or race, nationality or religion, native language or political party. Even Nazareth holds surprises!

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26; 1 John 4:11-16; John 17:11b-19 (60). *"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another."*

Monday, May 17, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Solitude and solidarity

Many have experienced more solitude than they care for during the pandemic, but it'd be a shame to lose the lessons of the experience once it's over. Catholics have a strong tradition of finding the sacred in solitude. The monastic life, for example, is all about withdrawing from society to draw closer to God and ultimately to each other. Turning inward is an opportunity for growth. Ritualizing the routines of life—in the midst of grief and stress and fear—helps to maintain inner stability and clarity. At the same time, far too many haven't had the luxury of solitude to remove themselves from danger—let this fact light a fire in all of us to fight for justice for those who have risked all to serve society this past year.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 19:1-8; John 16:29-33 (297). *"I am not alone, because the Father is with me."*

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JOHN I, POPE, MARTYR

Define your terms

In 2011, the Nicene Creed in English changed from the poetic-but-imprecise "one in being"—recited at Mass for more than 40 years—back to a seemingly unusual, clunky Latin word: *consubstantial*. We learned that *consubstantial* was a critical distinction hammered out at various church councils to clarify that Jesus was divinely co-eternal with God. It was a pronouncement specifically designed to refute the Arian heresy that denied Christ's divinity. The struggle against Arianism cost Pope John I his life in 526. Words matter. Take time to choose the right ones.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 20:17-27; John 17:1-11a (298). *"Now glorify me, Father, with you, with the glory that I had with you before the world began."*

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Going home

Final farewells are difficult. While there can be grace in the chance to express love and gratitude, there also can be great pain at the thought of never again seeing a face, touching a hand, hearing a voice. There is true heartache in accepting that there will be no more shared meals, meaningful discussions, shared futures planned together as we surrender the companionship of a loved one. It is a bittersweet time because the grief of anticipated loss is

proof of an equally deep love. Yet it is not the end—faith promises us more. On this Easter Wednesday, with trust in the promise of new life, give thanks to God for someone whose love and faithfulness has enriched your life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 20:28-38; John 17:11b-19 (299). *"They were all weeping loudly . . . for they were deeply distressed that (Paul) had said that they would never see his face again."*

Thursday, May 20, 2021

MEMORIAL OF BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST, RELIGIOUS, MISSIONARY

History will be our judge

Church history is filled with admirable figures who stand out for their tender love and compassion. Bernardine of Siena was not that kind of saint. A fire-and-brimstone preacher with a moralizing temperament, he encouraged "bonfires of the vanities" where townsfolk pitched household items suggestive of luxury or leisure—mirrors, perfumes, games—into the fire. Seen from our vantage point, many of his sermons had antisemitic, misogynistic, and homophobic overtones. Though a commanding preacher who lived a life of devotion, Bernardine—like all of us—was a product of his times, limited by the pastoral and theological perspectives handed down to him. His innovations in vernacular preaching continue to inspire, yet his limitations in compassion and inclusion serve as a cautionary tale. None of us has a monopoly on moral purity. Kindness and compassion, however, never go out of style.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; John 17:20-26 (300). *"And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one."*

Friday, May 21, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CHRISTOPHER MAGALLANES, PRIEST, MARTYR, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Live fully

Each of us is called to give our lives fully on behalf of our love for and commitment to God. Most of us will not die a martyr's death, but some of us will. Christopher Magallanes was one such person. Christopher's call to be a martyr was lived every day through his prayer and ministry as a priest: founding schools, providing work opportunities, and even constructing a dam to help the people. He was killed because of his love for the people, a love emanating from his deep faith. How does our faith inspire us to give of ourselves fully?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 25:13b-21; John 21:15-19 (301). *"Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Simon Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep."*

Saturday, May 22, 2021

MEMORIAL OF RITA OF CASCIA, RELIGIOUS

Hope is a perennial

We all could use a friend like Saint Rita of Cascia. Wed against her will at the tender age of 12, she somehow survived abuse and family feuds to become a reconciling force in a violent region of 15th-century Italy. She has acquired a following, along with Saint Jude, as the patron of hopeless causes. On her deathbed, it is said she asked for a rose from her garden. Though it was winter, we are told a single blooming rose was found and brought to her. Never lose hope—no cause is hopeless!

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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Sunday, May 23, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST

Sing a new church into being

Pentecost celebrates crowded places, multiple languages, and diverse people uniting in one Spirit. It's a hard feast to celebrate during a pandemic in an era clouded by social conflict. All the more reason to challenge ourselves by celebrating not only what makes us the same, but also what makes us different. God showers on the world "gifts that differ," as Benedictine hymnist Delores Dufner declares. So "Bring the hopes of every nation;/ bring the art of every race. /Weave a song of peace and justice;/ let it sound through time and space." And let the church say: Amen!

TODAY'S READINGS: Day: Acts 2:1-11; Galatians 5:16-25 or 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13; Sequence Veni Sancte Spiritus; John 20:19-23 (63). "There are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone."

Monday, May 24, 2021

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

The mother of all feasts

In 2018, Pope Francis created the new Marian memorial that the universal church celebrates today, the Monday after Pentecost. The title "Mother of the Church" was bestowed on Mary in 1964 by Pope Saint Paul VI at the closing of the Second Vatican Council. Her role as mother of the church goes back to when Jesus, on the cross, gave her and the beloved disciple to one another and to when she became the mother of Christ, whose body we are all members of. Not everyone has a mother figure to rely on—know that you can always rely on the mother of us all.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 3:9-15, 20 or Acts 1:12-14; John 19:25-34 (572A). "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son.'"

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

MEMORIAL OF MARY MAGDALENE DE' PAZZI, VIRGIN

A Spirit for the dry season

When Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi became a Carmelite nun in 1583, she couldn't foresee the great physical suffering from an unknown disease that would besiege her. Nor could she foresee having the same type of ecstatic religious visions—followed by years of "spiritual dryness"—as did another Carmelite saint, Teresa of Ávila. Magdalene's bout of spiritual dryness, so severe that she considered suicide, ended on Pentecost in 1590. With Pentecost 2021 so recently behind us, pray as she did: "Come, Holy Spirit . . . Come, as you descended on Mary, that the Word might become flesh and work in us through grace."

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 35:1-12; Mark 10:28-31 (348). "Give to the Most High as he has given to you, generously."

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

MEMORIAL OF PHILIP NERI, PRIEST

Now is the time to do good

In the middle of Rome in the 16th century lived a man whose joyful nature made him something of a people magnet for both the powerful and the poor. Saint Philip Neri was a deeply spiritual man who exuded natural warmth, listened well, and in loving generosity, led others to know God. This spiritual director, priest, and confessor was known to ask, "Well, when shall we begin to do good?" It is no surprise that Neri, known as the "Apostle of Rome,"

inspired followers to join him in caring for the sick and the poor. Where can you do some good today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 36:1, 4-5a, 10-17; Mark 10:32-45 (349). "For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve."

Thursday, May 27, 2021

MEMORIAL OF AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, BISHOP

Can't win them all

Augustine of Canterbury, memorialized today, is remembered as a major figure in evangelizing England. The renowned Canterbury Cathedral was built on the site of a church and monastery he built around the end of the sixth century. In spite of his stature now as "Apostle of the English," he met with bitter disappointment, too. His efforts to bring the English bishops in line with Rome were roundly rebuffed, a disappointment he took to his death. Can you let go of your failures, knowing that, like Augustine, they do not define your life?

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 42:15-25, Mark 10:46-52 (350). "He began to cry out and say, 'Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.'"

Friday, May 28, 2021

Give a fig!

Figs are a popular fruit in the Bible, from Genesis with Eve and Adam wearing fig leaves clear through the Book of Revelation's apocalyptic falling of winter figs. Why so many figs? The fig itself is sweet and has lots of dietary fiber, calcium, and various minerals and vitamins. It is a great source of energy and flavor. Perhaps because it is so plentiful, delicious, and nutritious, the fig is also rich in symbolism for health and abundance. In the gospels, Jesus expects us to be like figs—to be "nutritious" to others and abundant in our presence and giving. Let us go forth to nurture the world!

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 44:1, 9-13; Mark 11:11-26 (351). "As they were leaving Bethany Jesus was hungry. Seeing from a distance a fig tree in leaf, he went over to see if he could find anything on it."

Saturday, May 29, 2021

MEMORIAL OF PAUL VI, POPE

A Pentecostal pope

The ecumenical movement received a much-needed boost during the papacy of Saint Pope Paul VI (1963-78). After the Second Vatican Council in the mid-1960s, Pope Paul went out of his way to promote ecumenical dialogue and partnership. When asked by a cardinal for permission to initiate a joint Catholic-Protestant translation of the Bible, Paul is said to have responded, "I am totally in favor!" He issued formal approval later that year on Pentecost Sunday, our recently celebrated feast commemorating the moment when the Holy Spirit allowed believers of all backgrounds and languages to truly understand each other. Come, Holy Spirit!

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 51:12cd-20; Mark 11:27-33 (352). "By what authority are you doing these things?"

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



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Sunday, May 30, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

For you are my God

There's a difference between prayer and theology. Most of us don't think of ourselves as doing theology when we pray—and yet we are. How we pray involves a preconception of the God with whom we are engaging. Is God a loving parent to us, or a merciless accountant? Is God an ATM we visit to supply our daily needs; a companion on the journey; the source of every good thing; or the one who best loves and understands us? When you pray, take a moment to orient yourself toward the God you really believe in.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40; Romans 8:14-17; Matthew 28:16-20 (165). *"Know, and fix in your heart, that the LORD is God . . . and that there is no other."*

Monday, May 31, 2021

FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Believe the impossible

National holidays frequently take precedence over our daily routines, and this Memorial Day is no exception as the country honors those who gave their lives in service. In the midst of your holiday activities, however, take a moment to ponder today's Feast of the Visitation. It's a wonder-filled account of God's power to transform human life, as two holy women—cousins Mary and Elizabeth—embrace their unusual and graced pregnancies. Their joy trumps any worry as they glorify the Lord who lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Mary's words have echoed through centuries of faith, calling all believers to see the presence of God in the unexpected. Ask for the grace to see the Holy today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Zephaniah 3:14-18a or Romans 12:9-16; Luke 1:39-56 (572). *"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God, my savior."*

Tuesday, Jun 01, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JUSTIN, MARTYR

Wise up!

Justin sought a universal truth in the Greek philosophies of his day—among Stoics, Platonists, and Pythagoreans—but it was an old man he met, walking along the sea one day in 135, who finally enlightened him. The man simply recounted the story of the Hebrew prophets and Christianity. Justin was hooked. He donned philosopher's robes to speak of faith and reason, writing persuasively about Christianity. Justin's writings are most famous for providing a vivid snapshot of the early church—describing in detail how the Eucharist and Baptisms were celebrated, also the practice of reading aloud from the gospels. Seek the truths of the faith in your own way.

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 2:9-14; Mark 12:13-17 (354). *"Do not regard a person's status but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth."*

Wednesday, Jun 02, 2021

On we go

By the time of Jesus, the possibility of life after death had been in the theological discussion for at least a century. In response to the Book of Job, which questioned why bad things happen to good people, the Book of Wisdom, written in the first century before Christ, declared that the "souls of the just are in the hands of God" and that God's justice was at work even after death. The

Sadducees in today's gospel contest the idea, while Jesus supports it. Our faith in God's eternal presence helps us to endure the injustices of life and bear wrongs patiently. Remember today that we believe in life everlasting.

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 3:1-11a, 16-17a; Mark 12:18-27 (355). *"When they rise from the dead . . . they are like the angels in heaven."*

Thursday, Jun 03, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CHARLES LWANGA AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Faith rises from the ashes

Twenty-two men and boys, many of them pages in King Mwanga's court in Uganda, were murdered between 1885 and 1887 for refusing to denounce their Catholic faith. Most were burned to death at Namugondo after a two-day death march from the palace. Within several decades, a church was erected near the site of the gruesome executions to honor the martyrs. Now a basilica stands on this holy ground in thanksgiving for the canonization of the Ugandan martyrs in 1964. "A martyr is a witness," Pope Francis said during a 2015 visit to Uganda. "Past glories were a beginning, but you are called to create future glories. This is what the church asks of you." This is what the church asks of all of us. How will you witness the glory of the gospel today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 6:10-11; 7:1bcde, 9-17; 8:4-9a; Mark 12:28-34 (356). *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart."*

Friday, Jun 04, 2021

What a blessed day this be

As the northern hemisphere revels in the glories of spring, it's a fitting time to say a few "Glory Be's" and "Blessed Be's" in thanksgiving. The "Glory Be," or "Doxology," is a short hymn of praise and affirmation of faith: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." The "Blessed Be's," also known as the "Divine Praises," are a litany honoring the Trinity, the Blessed Mother, and the angels and saints: "Blessed be God. Blessed be His Holy Name. Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man. . . ." It is typically recited during Benediction and Eucharistic Adoration. But anytime, particularly a sunny day, is the right time to acknowledge how blessed we are to be loved by God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 11:5-17; Mark 12:35-37 (357). *"Blessed be God, and praised be his great name."*

Saturday, Jun 05, 2021

MEMORIAL OF BONIFACE, BISHOP, MARTYR

Animate your life story

Saint Boniface (c. 673-754), born in Devonshire, England, entered the Benedictine Monastery at Exeter and was ordained a priest at 30. Despite his happy life as a monk, he decided to travel to Holland and then Germany as a missionary. He's now known as the "Apostle to Germany" and is credited with unifying the church in Europe. Boniface's chief concern throughout his life was purity of faith. He saw his mission as ensuring that men and women—lay, clerics, and religious—live holy lives. He exhorted the faithful: "Let all your actions be animated with charity, and according to the gospel, you will possess your souls in patience." May you experience the peace that comes with a life motivated by love.

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 12:1, 5-15, 20; Mark 12:38-44 (358). *"Do good, and evil will not find its way to you."*

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



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