

Sunday, Nov 22, 2020

SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

You decide

The church year ends this week. Along with that we're invited to consider another ending: our mortality. What goes on in eternity, anyway? Thomas Aquinas declares that God and eternity are the same. When we go from here, we go to God. How we experience the Divine Presence depends on whether our lives have become fully compatible with Love. Francis de Sales envisions Jesus saying to us: "Be it done as you desire; and because of what you have done, come, enjoy eternity." The desire of my heart will be answered: a life of love, or one all about me.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28; Matthew 25:31-46 (160). *"These will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

Monday, Nov 23, 2020

MEMORIAL OF BLESSED MIGUEL AUGUSTÍN PRO, PRIEST, MARTYR

¡Viva Cristo Rey!

Mexican Jesuit priest Miguel Pro was executed on fabricated charges in 1927 by a fiercely anti-clerical government. Pro had served the persecuted church by secretly celebrating the sacraments. He was killed by firing squad while holding a rosary in one hand and a crucifix in the other, his arms stretched out in imitation of the crucified Christ, shouting "Long live Christ the King!" His death energized the resistance. We may not be called to such dramatic sacrifice, but can we give up some comfort and convenience to fight for the greater good?

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 14:1-3, 4b-5; Luke 21:1-4 (503). *"This poor widow put in more than all the rest."*

Tuesday, Nov 24, 2020

MEMORIAL OF ANDREW DŨNG-LẠC, PRIEST, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Holiness in high numbers

Nine times in the liturgical lineup of feast days we memorialize a canonized person or two "and companions." All were martyrs and many had been foreign missionaries. Today's memorial honors Andrew Dũng-Lạc, a Vietnamese priest beheaded in 1839 for promoting Christianity instead of the official state religion; he's joined by another 117 killed in Vietnam, tortured and martyred during the 18th and 19th centuries. Just as we began this month with the feast of All Saints—honoring a multitude of holy unknowns—may every instance of "and companions" encourage us to call to mind the "great cloud of witnesses."

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 14:14-19; Luke 21:5-11 (504). *"Reap the harvest, for the time to reap has come."*

Wednesday, Nov 25, 2020

MEMORIAL OF CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Raise your voice

Christian tradition holds that Catherine of Alexandria (287-305) was an eloquent young Christian convert who challenged the Emperor Maxentius' persecution of Christians. That faithful courage led to her own martyrdom. The United Nations has declared today the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, asking the world to recognize that "violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in our world today." We honor the courage of Saint Catherine by paying attention to the violence that others endure, speaking up in

defense of the voiceless, and adding our prayers for those whose suffering too often goes unnoticed.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 15:1-4; Luke 21:12-19 (505). *"They will seize and persecute you . . . they will have you led before kings and governors, because of my name."*

Thursday, Nov 26, 2020

THANKSGIVING DAY

Give thanks, indeed

This Thanksgiving won't be celebrated the way many of us hoped and imagined back when the pandemic started. And yet, we are alive. Most of us reading these words can breathe freely. The virus has reminded us to never again take these simple matters for granted. One of our wisest teachers about prayer, Dominican priest Meister Eckhardt (1260-1329), said, "If the only prayer you ever said in your entire life is Thank You, that would suffice." Even amid hard times, giving thanks to God is appropriate. Let it be your prayer today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 18:1-2, 21-23; 19:1-3, 9a; Luke 21:20-28 (506). *"But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand."*

Friday, Nov 27, 2020

Turn the page

The "Book of Life" is mentioned several times in the Bible. A bit like the contact list you keep on your phone, the Book of Life is the figurative expression of how God is said to keep track of those heading for heavenly repose united with the Divine. According to Jewish tradition, God opens the Book of Life on Rosh Hashanah and leaves it open for 10 days, until Yom Kippur. During those days, believers spend time repenting of their sins and amending their lives in order to be written into the Book of Life. If there's something you need to repent, today is a good day to turn the page.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 20:1-4, 11—21:2; Luke 21:29-33 (507). *"Then another scroll was opened, the Book of Life. The dead were judged according to their deeds."*

Saturday, Nov 28, 2020

OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Call forth your best self

Perhaps you've heard that Jesus' life was foreshadowed in passages from the Hebrew scripture that predated him. But were you aware that Mary's life and role in salvation history might have been as well? The prophet Isaiah (7:14) speaks of a young woman (sometimes translated as a "virgin") who will give birth to a son she will name Emmanuel, meaning "God with us." Mary has been "going ahead" of us for generations, a role model beckoning us to live our best lives, regardless of how improbable, even miraculous, that might turn out to be.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 22:1-7; Luke 21:34-36 (508). *"These words are trustworthy and true."*

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



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