

Sunday, Oct 27, 2019

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Judgment is a boomerang

Judge not or you'll be judged, as scripture tells us. We're also put on notice that the measure we use against others is the one we're choosing for ourselves. This is why Saint John Climacus insists that to condemn another person is to ruin our own souls. Francis de Sales observes: "If your heart is gentle, your judgment will be gentle"—no surprise from the patron saint of compassionate counsel. Doctor of the church Catherine of Siena put it plainly: "The habit of judging keeps the soul far from Thee." The jury is in: Judgment is out!

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18:9-14 (150). "O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity."

Monday, Oct 28, 2019

FEAST OF SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES

It helps to have friends in low places

Everyone at one time or another has probably felt like a lost cause and a desperate case. Lucky for us, we have a patron saint: Saint Jude the Apostle. He became patron of the lost because he was neglected for a long time when it came to Catholic veneration: Little is known about him and his name is unsettlingly close to that of Judas Iscariot. Eventually it was thought that Jude would seize any opportunity to help and became the saint to turn to when situations become especially dire. When you're at your lowest, he's there to remind you that Christ is there with you too.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 2:19-22; Luke 6:12-16 (666). "Jesus went up to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God."

Tuesday, Oct 29, 2019

FEAST OF MARCELLUS

Forging a difficult peace

Saint Marcellus, a Roman centurion who cast aside sword and armor to serve Christ and the cause of peace, was killed for his audacity. His last words to his judge, "May God be good to you," indicate he'd also made peace within. Are we at peace with ourselves, abandoning the self-criticism and "shoulds," and with those around us and closest to us, who—let's face it—at times can be so annoying!? Imagine a conversation between Marcellus and the leaders of Pax Christi International (paxchristi.net), a Catholic peace movement with 120 member organizations. What areas in the world might they identify where peace is most at risk?

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 8:18-25; Luke 13:18-21 (480). "Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God."

Wednesday, Oct 30, 2019

Preparing for paradox

A fundamental principle of God's reign as announced by Jesus is a paradox: The lowly will rise, the high and mighty will fall. It carries over into other familiar gospel images: The blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the virgin conceives. Our Blessed Mother echoes the theme in her Magnificat: "He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty." Wisdom, therefore, dictates that we position ourselves

advantageously for the coming of the Kingdom. It's like cleaning out your house before a move. What passing worldly value can you get rid of today to better prepare you for the eternal reign of God?

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 8:26-30; Luke 13:22-30 (481). "For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

Thursday, Oct 31, 2019

God lights the darkness

It's Halloween, the day we spoof evil spirits by dressing up like them. We roam around in the dark to show we are not afraid. Today's gospel, though, reminds us of the fear created by a cruel despot like Herod who stands ready to kill Jesus. Regardless of our Halloween rituals, such fear still lives in the world. Our faith that nothing can separate us from the love of God is what prepares us to cope with it. Today as you don a costume or give a treat to a trickster, recall that core belief of God's abiding presence.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 8:31b-39; Luke 13:31-35 (482). "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Friday, Nov 01, 2019

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

Family reunion—Christian style!

Everybody loves a big reunion with loved ones—the joy of seeing one another, telling stories, and of course the food and fun! The Solemnity of All Saints is exactly like this, Pope Francis said.

"We are united with *all* the saints: not only the most well-known . . . but also those 'next door,' our family members and acquaintances who are now part of that great multitude.

Therefore, today is a family celebration. The saints are close to us, indeed they are our truest brothers and sisters. They understand us, love us, know what is truly good for us, help us and await us." With whom do you celebrate today?

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12a (667). "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

Saturday, Nov 02, 2019

COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED (ALL SOULS' DAY)

Leave the door open

A variety of cultures and traditions approach this time of year with a special reverence for those who have come before us and passed beyond us. In northern nations, perhaps the reflective mood is prompted by the shortening days and lengthening darkness, as brightly colored autumn leaves wither and brown and fall to the ground. Ancients saw it as a time when the veil between this world and the afterworld briefly lifted, the doorway between the worlds cracked open. Take a moment today to reflect on your ancestors going back generations who passed on their faith, hope, and love to you. Pray for their peaceful repose in the loving embrace of the Timeless One.

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 3:1-9; Romans 5:5-11 or 6:3-9; John 6:37-40 (668). "Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts."

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



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