

Sunday, Jul 26, 2020

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Treat the children well

Happy Parents' Day! Children are the treasure in every society. For a viable future, we have to invest deeply in their upbringing. Golden-mouthed saint John Chrysostom offered tips on child-rearing: Let the saints enter your home through the naming of your children. Teach your kids Bible stories. Raise them singing psalms and hymns. Encourage in them a bold, not timid, spirit. Disciplined self-possession will benefit them all their lives. Show them actions have consequences, now and in eternity. Finally, give more care to your children than you do for your job, home, wealth, and possessions.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12; Romans 8:28-30; Matthew 13:44-52 (109). *"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field."*

Monday, Jul 27, 2020

What is the parable of your life?

Jesus used a lot of parables to teach his followers—so many that his disciples asked him why. So that the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you," he answered. Parables offer a relatable way to understand an abstract spiritual lesson. Most of us know what it is like to plant, cook, eat, manage money, run a business, deal with relationship conflict. What Christian truths would you like your own simple life story to reveal to others? How that parable unfolds is up to you.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 13:1-11; Matthew 13:31-35 (401). *"All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables."*

Tuesday, Jul 28, 2020

Sow the seeds of faith

Blessed Stanley Rother, a missionary and the first U.S. priest to be declared a martyr, died this day in 1981. Not only did he love and serve his flock of indigenous Guatemalans, he helped build a medical clinic, school, and radio station. But it was his upbringing as an Oklahoma farm boy that endeared him even more to his modest agricultural community—a priest who preached but also plowed their fields. As a farmer, he understood the parables of Jesus more than most: how seeds must die, how flocks need a shepherd, how the harvest requires extra help—our help. Play your part.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 14:17-22; Matthew 13:36-43 (402). *"The field is the world, the good seed the children of the Kingdom."*

Wednesday, Jul 29, 2020

MEMORIAL OF MARTHA

Let Martha be an inspiration

We remember today a friend of Jesus who with her brother, Lazarus, and her sister, Mary, provided a home of friendship that was a place of respite for the Lord. She could prepare a meal and manage the many details of hosting a gathering of friends. She could speak her mind honestly and trust that she would be heard. She recognized that Jesus was the Messiah. She was human

enough to be crabby yet faithful enough to believe that Jesus was able to bring life out of death. Saint Martha, in these challenging days, pray for us.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 15:10, 16-21 (403); John 11:19-27 or Luke 10:38-42 (607). *"Yes, Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Messiah."*

Thursday, Jul 30, 2020

Deliver us from evil

The United Nations has declared today "World Day Against Trafficking in Persons." Church leaders have been outspoken on this global issue that targets poor and marginalized people, robbing them of their God-given dignity. In today's gospel Jesus envisions the kingdom of heaven as devoid of wickedness. Today is a good moment to oppose the wickedness of trafficking by adding your voice to the many who are committed to raising awareness and rooting out this evil.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 18:1-6; Matthew 13:47-53 (404). *"The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous."*

Friday, Jul 31, 2020

MEMORIAL OF IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, PRIEST

Soldier us through

Saint Ignatius of Loyola died in 1566 of Roman fever, a type of malaria. During a time of pandemic, it seems appropriate to call on the aid of a saint known for his survival instincts and spiritual prowess. After all, most thought Ignatius, a Castilian soldier, would die from injuries sustained in battle at age 30, but instead he lived another 35 years. During his time of convalescence, he experienced a spiritual conversion that led to the development of his popular *Spiritual Exercises* and the founding of the Jesuit order that has as its motto "For the greater glory of God." What can you do today, following Ignatius' example, to give God glory despite times of confinement and uncertainty?

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 26:1-9; Matthew 13:54-58 (405). *"A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house."*

Saturday, Aug 01, 2020

MEMORIAL OF ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Speak plainly

Alphonsus was a bright and gifted youth, earning doctorates in both civil and canon law in Naples at 16. He was so small at the time of his graduation, he later wrote, that his doctoral robes swallowed him up, causing spectators to erupt in laughter. But faith was no laughing matter to the young man, who in short order left the legal profession and dedicated his life to the church to serve those on the margins. This brilliant doctor of the church believed in plain speech. "I have never preached a sermon which the poorest old woman in the congregation could not understand," he said. Let your own witness be simple and direct.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 26:11-16, 24; Matthew 14:1-12 (406). *"For in truth it was the LORD who sent me to you, to speak all these things for you to hear."*

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



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