

Sunday, Nov 19, 2017

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Dust off the tradition

Three servants are entrusted with their master's "talents"; the one who fearfully buries his is reprimanded while those who grow theirs earn the "master's happiness" and trust. Today we take the hint. We try to share the gifts God gives us. But earliest versions of the parable repeat the phrase "to hand over," meaning the transmission of religious tradition. And so perhaps it's time to review our portfolio. Is our Catholic heritage a buried treasure, or do we pull it from our pocket regularly? Has our participation in the Eucharist collected dust, like a keepsake of First Communion, or has it grown into a larger way of life?

TODAY'S READINGS: Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; Matthew 25:14-30 (157). "Master, you have handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more."

Monday, Nov 20, 2017

Envision your faith

One of the greatest blessings any of us ever receives is insight into another person's soul—seeing the truth of another's sadness, sensing their loneliness, feeling their pain, understanding what would bring them joy, and then with an open heart offering ourselves in service to that hurting human being. Most of us can call to mind at least one act of compassion on our parts where we knew we had done something genuinely good for another person. At that moment we were true disciples of Christ. Try to regain your Christian vision and see into the souls of others today and every day.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63; Luke 18:35-43 (497). "Immediately the man regained his sight and followed Jesus, glorifying God."

Tuesday, Nov 21, 2017

MEMORIAL OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Be present to the Spirit

How did the Virgin Mary come to be a woman "full of grace"? It was her close association with the holy Temple, as today's feast reminds us. Although not recorded in the Bible, an early document attributed to the apostle James tells us Mary was born to Joachim and Anne in a Jerusalem neighborhood near the Temple. According to legend, she was presented in the Temple at age 12 and lived in seclusion there to learn the Law. The meaning of this story is that Mary lived in God's presence until God chose to reside in her. Live mindfully in the presence of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Maccabees 6:18-31; Luke 19:1-10 (498). "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

Wednesday, Nov 22, 2017

MEMORIAL OF CECILIA, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Let your faith sing

A legend says that during her wedding to a young pagan (who later became a Christian), Cecilia (d. 117) "sang in her heart to Christ." Thus she is the patron saint of music. She was also a martyr, killed in connection with the ministry of giving burial to Christians who had already died for their faith in Roman persecutions. Does your faith feel like something to sing about? Or is it more like uninspiring background music? How can you make your faith more a source of joy?

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Maccabees 7:1, 20-31; Luke 19:11-28 (499). "I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me; hear my word."

Thursday, Nov 23, 2017

THANKSGIVING DAY

Thanks are in order

"Imagine a country whose . . . people realize that all human beings belong together as one family and must act accordingly, a country guided by common sense. To the extent to which we show ourselves not hateful but grateful, this becomes reality." Benedictine monk Brother David Steindl-Rast wrote these words shortly after 9/11 transpired. The Pilgrims and Native Americans laid the foundation for such a country in 1621 when they shared in the feast they had gathered and prepared through cooperation and trust. Be cooperative and trusting as you gather for a Thanksgiving meal today. Most of all, practice the art of gratitude. Simple thank-yous are a start.

TODAY'S READINGS: Mass for Thanksgiving Day (943-947): 1 Maccabees 2:15-29; Luke 19:41-44 (500). "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."

Friday, Nov 24, 2017

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

Give it your all

How much are you willing to give? Some make the ultimate sacrifice and give their very lives. Andrew Dũng-Lạc was a priest and one of 117 saints martyred in Vietnam during persecutions there in the 19th century. Three U.S. archbishops returning from Vietnam in 1989 said, "The church in Vietnam is alive and vigorous, blessed with strong and faithful bishops, dedicated religious, and courageous and committed laypeople . . . The church in Vietnam is living out the gospel in a difficult and complex situation with remarkable persistence and strength."

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 4:36-37, 52-59; Luke 19:45-48 (501). "Jesus entered the temple area and proceeded to drive out those who were selling things."

Saturday, Nov 25, 2017

MEMORIAL OF CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Be a legend in your own time

Catherine of Alexandria was said to be a very learned young woman, a philosopher, and eloquent speaker who persuaded many of the Roman persecutors of Christianity of the errors of their ways. For this, Emperor Maximinus II ordered her tortured to death on a spiked "breaking wheel," but legend says it burst into flames when she touched it. Today, there is a firework named the Catherine Wheel that spins in a circle showering sparks. But underneath all the colorful legendry, there is the witness of someone who "spoke truth to power," even when the personal cost was high.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 6:1-13; Luke 20:27-40 (502). "My friend, I am not cheating you."

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



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