

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2015

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Every step of the way

In Luke's gospel, an effect of the Resurrection is that the Risen One opens the eyes of his disciples to see how the scripture they'd always known had all along been pointing to Jesus and his Resurrection. For Jesus and the early believers, what we know as the Hebrew scriptures were the only texts they knew. But now, having come to believe in what God had done in Christ, those scriptures take on new richness and meaning. Having walked closely with Jesus since Ash Wednesday, have you felt yourself drawn deeper into your own life by the ancient stories of Lent and Easter? Have you come to see how God has been with you every step of the way? How does the Resurrection continue to change you?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 3:13-15, 17-19; 1 John 2:1-5a; Luke 24:35-48 (47)*. "Peace be with you."

MONDAY, APRIL 20

What's your sign? Love.

Have you ever asked God for a sign? In the midst of big decisions or distress, a sign of God's presence can bolster your faith. But faith is based on more than signs and wonders, it comes from experiencing a boundless love that fills and fulfills your soul. In that experience, you are fed and called to go feed others, in body and in spirit. Love as you have been loved, and in a world that is hungry and longs to be fed, you can be the sign of God's presence that people need.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29 (273)*. "Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life."

TUESDAY, APRIL 21

FEAST OF ANSELM, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH; EASTER WEEKDAY Growing old with grace

Ask most Catholics who were the big thinkers in church history, and two names come easily to mind: Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Most theologians add a third name without hesitation: Anselm. A great defender of the faith through reason, Anselm had a high estimation of the human mind's capacity to discover God. And the older the mind, the better: "As the flesh fails, the soul advances; out of the body's infirmity springs the soul's health." Got time on your hands in retirement? Seek wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 7:51-8:1a; John 6:30-35 (274)*. "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger."

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22 EASTER WEEKDAY

Sustainable spirit

Pope Francis has made many strong statements about stewardship of the environment, including, "You are called to care for creation not only as responsible citizens, but also as followers of Christ!" His message is clear: Catholics must protect what he calls "a gracious gift" with efforts "set at the service of our brothers and sisters, including future generations." Use today's annual Earth Day to commit to what you can do to help the environment—



through supporting causes and in your daily routine—all year long, and encourage others to do the same.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 8:1b-8; John 6:35-40 (275)*. "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst."

THURSDAY, APRIL 23

FEAST OF ADALBERT, BISHOP, MARTYR

Take a stand

Back in the year 983, a young man of 27 named Adalbert was thrust into the role of bishop of Prague at a time of controversy and strife between the newly baptized and those who did not accept Christianity. Adalbert opposed the slave trade and the polygamy common among the people, making him unpopular. After unsuccessfully attempting to protect a woman convicted of adultery from a mob, he responded by excommunicating the murderers. He was forced into exile for standing up for his beliefs, but he created ethical standards that later generations could point to and take as their own. It takes courage sometimes to stick to your beliefs. But you have role models!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 8:26-40; John 6:44-51 (276)*. "It is written in the prophets: 'They shall all be taught by God.'"

FRIDAY, APRIL 24 FEAST OF FIDELIS OF SIGMARINGEN, PRIEST, MARTYR Imagine, if you can

Before Fidelis of Sigmaringen (b. 1577) became a Capuchin friar in 1612 he studied and practiced law. He was known as "the poor man's lawyer" for his willingness to advocate for those who had no advocate. Pro bono (no charge) legal service has a long history in western nations. Lawyers in the U.S. are urged under American Bar Association ethical rules to contribute at least 50 hours of pro bono service each year, an idea worthy of being adopted by all professions and walks of life. If we each gave some of our time and skills to those who can't afford to pay, we would all be rewarded. Imagine a pro bono world!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59 (277)*. "Whoever eats this bread will live forever."

SATURDAY, APRIL 25 FEAST OF MARK, EVANGELIST Write the gospel of your life

Saint Mark the evangelist was one of the first 70 disciples. He is believed to have written the Gospel of Mark, our earliest gospel. But he didn't stop there. He also founded the Church of Alexandria in Egypt back in the year 42, a scant few years after Jesus' death. Alexandria became one of the great centers of early Christianity. Today three churches claim to be the direct heirs of the original Church of Alexandria: Coptic Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, and Coptic Catholic. Saint Mark looms large behind them all, a giant of our tradition. Take him as your inspiration as you write your own "gospel" by living your faith in the world.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Peter 5:5b-14; Mark 16:15-20 (555)*. "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."



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

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STRENGTHENING THE CHURCH AT HOME



We need your support to continue to strengthen the Church at home and help mission dioceses right here in the United States. The Catholic Home Missions Appeal supports dioceses in the United States and its territories that lack the resources to provide basic pastoral ministry to their populations. Through annual grants, Catholic Home Missions funds catechesis, seminarian education, lay ministry training, Hispanic ministry, and other pastoral programs for dioceses in need. As a result of parishioners' generosity, Catholic Home Missions impacts the lives of nearly nine million Catholics. The dioceses funded by the appeal comprise nearly 45 percent of all US dioceses.

The Diocese of Tucson, Arizona, covers an area of more than 43,000 square miles. Parish communities are separated from each other by vast stretches of desert, so providing basic ministries to each parish presents a challenge. For example, priests living in Tucson must travel to parishes in the nine surrounding counties, which requires a one to five hour drive. The diocese serves a large population of Spanish-speaking Catholics, including many workers travelling from

Mexico. Because of the mobility of the Hispanic community, it is difficult to reach them with catechesis and sacraments. The diocese also serves four extremely poor Native American reservations, one of which has only two priests serving 24,000 people.

With help from a Catholic Home Missions grant, the diocese was able to provide materials for basic catechesis, outreach to the Hispanic community, and a ministry program for deaf children and their families. The grant was also necessary to support the priests who work on the reservations, who would be unable to continue without this assistance.

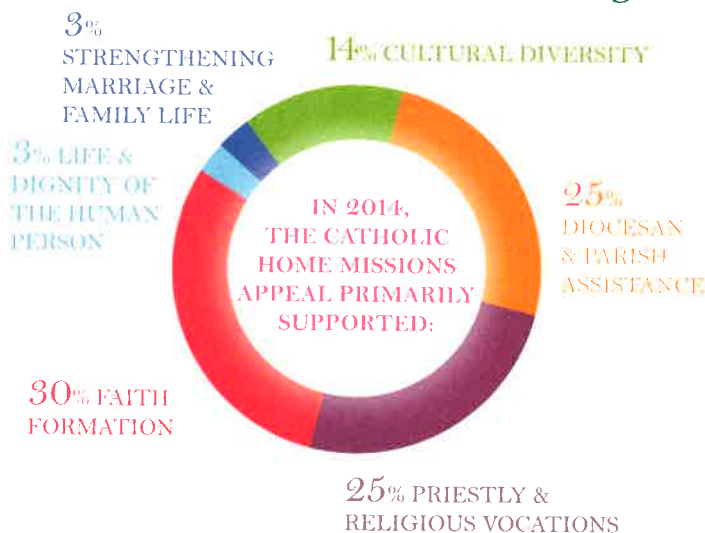
For the Diocese of Crookston, Minnesota, the call to a New Evangelization rings home. While there are approximately 35,000 Catholics living within the borders of the diocese, several thousand have become estranged from the practice of their faith. In order to reach out to these people, the diocese must overcome the challenge of distance, as well as a shortage of priests. The small Catholic population spans 14 counties, with only 36 active and 12 retired priests. This shortage leaves one county in the diocese with only a single Catholic church and one priest.

With a grant from Catholic Home Missions, the diocese is training seven seminarians for the priesthood. These

young men will return to their dioceses to administer the sacraments within the parishes and to evangelize those who have fallen away and are waiting to be called back into the fold.

Through your donations, home mission dioceses like the Diocese of Tucson and the Diocese of Crookston will receive the resources they need to support their parishes and strengthen the Church at home. Your gift today is an act of solidarity with your struggling brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you!

2014 Distribution of Funding



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