



SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2015

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME; WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY Common ground

“Be together. Not the same” is the slogan for Google’s latest Android ad campaign, but it could also possibly be the slogan for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which starts today. The documents of Vatican II have prophetic things to say about Christian unity. Regarding our “separated brethren,” the *Decree on Ecumenism* states: “Today, in many parts of the world, under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit, many efforts are being made in prayer, word, and action to attain that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires.”

TODAY’S READINGS: *1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19; 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20; John 1:35-42 (65)*. “*But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one Spirit with him.*”

MONDAY, JANUARY 19 FEAST OF FABIAN, POPE, MARTYR Be open to surprises

The Holy Spirit was definitely at work in the selection of Fabian to be pope back in the second century. A farmer from outside of Rome, Fabian happened to come into town in the middle of a papal conclave. A dove settling on his head was all it took to persuade the conclave to elect him. He served with distinction and died a martyr. You too have a calling, and this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a good time to express it by reaching out to someone outside your usual circle. God works in surprising ways—and God may surprise you when you reach out to others.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 2:18-22 (311)*. “*No one pours new wine into old wineskins.*”

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20 FEAST OF SEBASTIAN, MARTYR Art imitates life

There are many works of art based on the second-century martyrdom of Sebastian. Most depict him tied to a tree and shot through with arrows, though apparently this was not the way his life ended. Tradition says he was nursed back to health by a widow named Irene. Faithful to the end, he continued to criticize the emperor Diocletian for persecuting Christians until it cost him his life. Perhaps the lesson here is that though death may finish with our bodies, if we are faithful to the end, we continue to live in Christ. Stay the course!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Hebrews 6:10-20; Mark 2:23-28 (312)*. “*The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath.*”

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21 FEAST OF AGNES, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Not alone in your trials

Ever have those days when you feel like the world is against you? Some days are like that, but the good news is we have companions who walk with us. Saint Agnes, a martyr from the third century, is a great example of how to persevere in the midst of trials. She held fast to the knowledge that God would never leave her. So the next time you have a day of challenges, remember God is just a prayer away.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17; Mark 3:1-6 (313)*.

“*Not by a law expressed ... but by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed.*”

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

Bless this child

In 2012, the Vatican approved a blessing prepared by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops “to support parents awaiting the birth of their child, to encourage parish prayers for and recognition of the precious gift of the child in the womb, and to foster respect for human life within society.” This prayer of blessing begins: “God, author of all life, bless, we pray, this unborn child; give constant protection and grant a healthy birth that is the sign of our rebirth one day into the eternal rejoicing of heaven” Pray for an unborn child today.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Hebrews 7:25-8:6; Mark 3:7-12 (314)*. “*Jesus is always able to save those who approach God through him, since he lives forever to make intercession for them.*”

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

A life given to others

Many of us have heard of Father Damien, famous for his work with those with leprosy, but Sister Marianne Cope, at the age of 45 likewise volunteered for the Hawaiian mission at Molokai. She served girls and women with leprosy, emphasizing “pride and fun” and dignity in the colony. Soon after her death, a local woman wrote in the *Honolulu Advertiser* that she was “a woman [who devoted] every hour of 30 years to the mothering of people isolated by law from the rest of the world. She risked her own life in all that time, faced everything with unflinching courage, and smiled sweetly through it all.” Who can you help today, right at home, to see beyond the harshness of life?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Hebrews 8:6-13; Mark 3:13-19 (315)*. “*Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted.*”

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24 FEAST OF FRANCIS DE SALES, BISHOP, RELIGIOUS FOUNDER, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Charity begins at home

Some of us grow in the spiritual life through adversity, others by way of the inspiring example of another. Sometimes the love of another helps us grow, sometimes it is rejection that teaches us what we must learn. Success and failure can both be paths to growth; it all depends on our attitude. Francis de Sales, a great spiritual guide, counseled the path of charitable giving rather than the dominant model of his 16th-century day and age, which was penance and more penance. Choose charity along with a healthy self discipline that avoids extremes. Grow by helping others rather than diminishing yourself.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Hebrews 9:2-3, 11-14; Mark 3:20-21 (316)*. “*Open our hearts, O Lord.*”

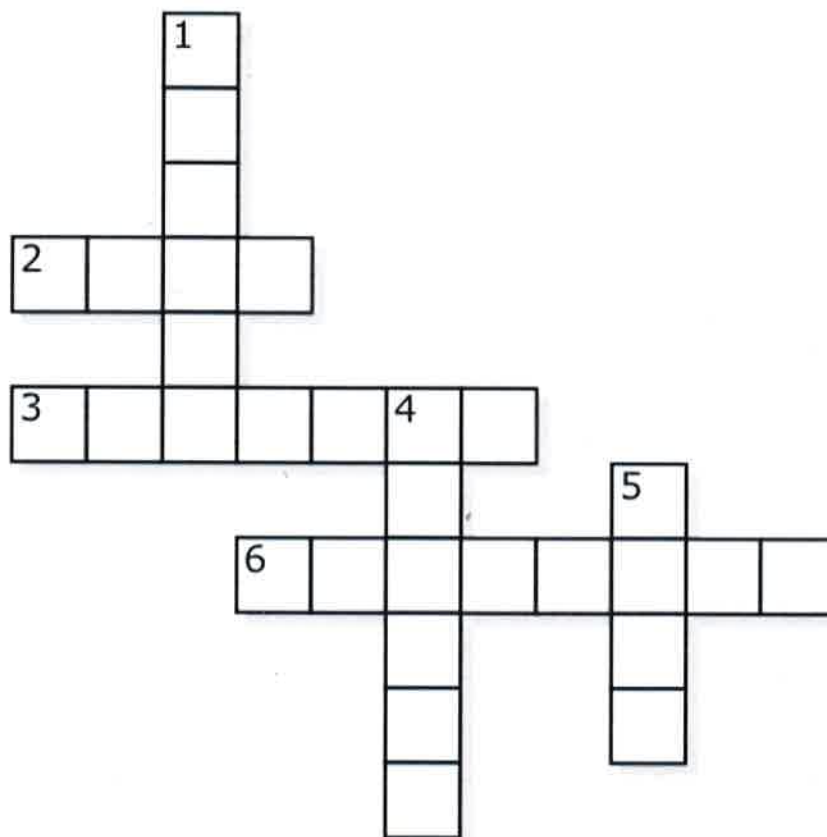


Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

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CatholicMom.com Gospel Activities

John 1:35-42



Across

- 2) Today's gospel reading is from the Gospel of _____.
- 3) Andrew found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the _____."
- 6) Today is the Second Sunday in _____ Time.

Down

- 1) Jesus told Simon, son of John, "You will be called _____."
- 4) The brother of Simon Peter, and one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus.
- 5) As he watched Jesus walk by, John said, "Behold, the _____ of God."