



TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Timothy 3:1-13 (444)*; *John 19:25-27 or Luke 2:33-35 (639)*. "Behold, your mother."

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

FEAST OF CORNELIUS, POPE, AND CYPRIAN, BISHOP, MARTYRS
Be a bridge over troubled waters

The third-century life of Saint Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, might have given rise to the comedy tag line: "It's always something," but his troubles and those of the church were anything but funny. If it wasn't a heresy, it was bitter controversy over whether someone who had renounced the faith might be reconciled with the church; or it was exile, or the plague, or schism. Cyprian's response was always generosity. During a terrible plague, for example, he himself cared for the sick and buried the dead—Christians and non-Christians alike—exemplifying his own words: "Love is the foundation of all the virtues." How can love calm the troubles of your own life today?

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Timothy 3:14-16*; *Luke 7:31-35 (445)*. "Wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

FEAST OF ROBERT BELLARMINI, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH
Let it go to your heart instead of your head

As a respected scholar and church historian, Jesuit Robert Bellarmine was made a cardinal and given apartments in the Vatican in the late 1500s in honor of his great learning. He didn't let it go to his head. Instead, like another Jesuit who currently occupies the chair of Peter, Bellarmine lived a simple life and focused on the needs of the poor. He is said to have used the elaborate hangings that draped his walls to clothe poor people in winter, remarking "the walls won't catch cold." Look around your home today for something you *don't need* that could help someone *in need*.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Timothy 4:12-16*; *Luke 7:36-50 (446)*. "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Watch where you look

We are too often bombarded by digital images, violent and sexual, that we'd rather not, or perhaps shouldn't, see. Because when you look upon something, you can't later "unsee" it. You might forget it, but it affects you, maybe tempts you, maybe desensitizes you. So exercise what's called, in the Catholic tradition, "custody of the eyes"—that is, be careful what you choose to look at, think about your intention when you choose to look at things, and avoid letting your gaze linger where it could do you harm.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Timothy 6:2c-12*; *Luke 8:1-3 (447)*. "Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called."

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 FEAST OF JANUARIUS, BISHOP, MARTYR
Faith with all the toppings

Italians refer to Januarius as San Gennaro, and in his patron city of Naples, as well as in a number of Italian-American communities, today will be celebrated with that quintessential food from Naples—pizza! Though the details about the life and martyrdom of our fourth-century saint are sketchy, we can take the opportunity to honor all who died for their faith by sharing a meal with those who nurtured our faith. Today is Saturday, a great day to gather the folks, order (or make!) a pizza, and share some stories of faith as you break bread together.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Timothy 6:13-16*; *Luke 8:4-15 (448)*. "Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear."

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2015

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Louder than words

What the Letter of James lacks in length, it makes up for in content. At only five chapters long, the Letter, presumed to have been written by James the Just, an early leader of the church in Jerusalem and martyr, is one of the earliest guides to the moral aspects of discipleship. In no uncertain terms, it declares that faith is something to be lived out. Christian witness is embodied in behavior. Just as God is generous, so should we be. No one is perfect, but James reminds us to keep trying. Love your neighbors, give your all, and let your works speak louder than words.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 50:5-9a*; *James 2:14-18*; *Mark 8:27-35 (131)*. "I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works."

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
Lift high the cross

The cross of Christ is represented in every way imaginable. It's wooden, iron, bejeweled, or composed of stained glass. Burdened with the weight of an anguished Lord or abandoned by the Risen One. Mounted by the Great High Priest or enthroning the King of the Universe. Bearing a dying man writhing with the pain of the world's sin. Or soberly displaying a still and silent corpse. In all of its aspects, we raise that precious cross as a sign of God's deep love for our world. Meditate before the cross today.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Numbers 21:4b-9*; *Philippians 2:6-11*; *John 3:13-17 (638)*. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son."

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 FEAST OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS
In our hour of need

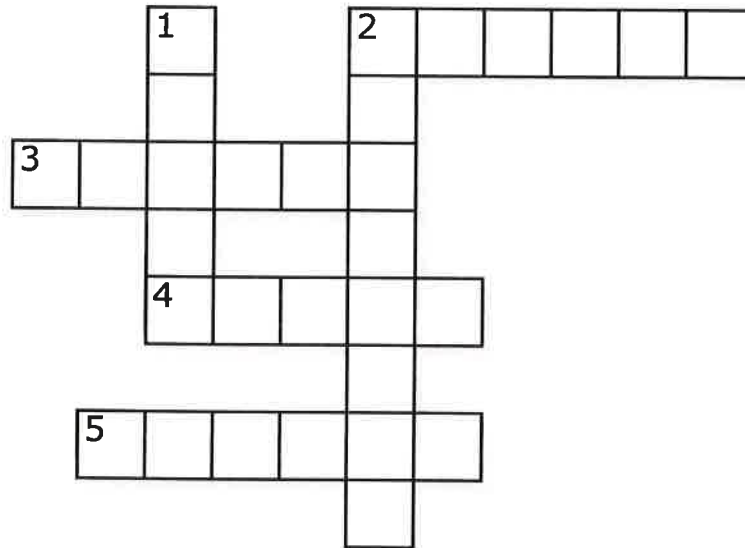
Mary has been held up as a model of courage since the earliest centuries. Saint Ambrose in the fourth century sees Mary as a powerful witness at the foot of the cross, refusing to abandon her son even when most of his disciples fled. Imagine the pain of seeing your own child brutally executed. At so many moments in her life Mary displayed this remarkable courage—only the deepest faith could have sustained her. When you face your most difficult moments, think of Mary, recall her courage in the face of sorrow, and call upon that same faith to see you through.



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 -- Mark 8:27-35



Across

- 2) Peter said to him in reply, "You are the _____."
- 3) "Who do _____ say that I am?"
- 4) Jesus rebuked Peter saying, "Get behind me, _____. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."
- 5) Jesus _____ them not to tell anyone about him.

Down

- 1) "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his _____, and follow me."
- 2) Jesus and his disciples set out for the villages of _____ Philippi.