



SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2015 FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Not even a carry-on

Naked and Afraid is a television “reality” program that follows a man and woman who for weeks must fend for themselves in a jungle with nothing, not even clothing. Whether you are a viewer or not, it is a stark demonstration in a literal way of what Jesus charges his first apostles to do as his missionaries, to depend upon God alone. The point of the TV show is to document the participants’ survival skills. A reviewer said the program “takes the outrageousness of other reality genres, but applies it to celebrate human strength and fortitude.” How outrageous would a Christian “reality show” be that celebrates spiritual survival skills? Is one even imaginable? Would you dare to be on it?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Amos 7:12-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:7-13 (104)*. “For the journey take no food, no sack, no money in your belts, no extra tunic.”

MONDAY, JULY 13 FEAST OF HENRY
The best use of power

Good boss, bad boss. Most of us have served under both. A bad boss is like the Pharaoh of Egypt: Threatened by his own subordinates, he oppresses everyone to maintain control. A good boss is exemplified by King Henry II, who in 10th-century Bavaria encouraged the growth of monasteries to spread blessings through the land. Today Muslims celebrate the Night of Power and Destiny in which they believe God blesses everyone, forgives all sin, grants all prayers, and sends angels to earth. The best use of power: bless and forgive!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 1:8-14, 22; Matthew 10:34-11:1 (389)*. “The Egyptians, then, dreaded the children of Israel and reduced them to cruel slavery.”

TUESDAY, JULY 14 FEAST OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA, VIRGIN
Saints are no strangers to being bullied

Saints often endured harsh treatment from others, and some were bullied since early in their lives. Such was the case for Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. She was teased for her appearance and abilities (her face was scarred and her eyesight impaired from smallpox), and when she became Christian, she was ridiculed and threatened with harm. Yet Kateri was able to find people who believed in her and who encouraged her to be herself and to seek safety from abuse. Kateri never gave up on herself and her dream to help others. How are we ensuring our classrooms, parishes, workplaces, and homes are safe havens for those in need?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 2:1-15a; Matthew 11:20-24 (390)*. “Why are you striking your companion?”

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

FEAST OF BONAVENTURE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH
Fortune smiles upon us

When Saint Francis of Assisi spoke, people listened, and in the case of Saint Bonaventure, the result was his very name. At the pleading of a child’s mother, Saint Francis prayed for the ill boy’s recovery and foresaw his future greatness by exclaiming *O buona ventura!*—O good fortune!—upon his recovery. And great indeed was Bonaventure’s future as a Franciscan. Chosen at age 35 to lead the order, he restored peace at a time of internal dissension that could have doomed the fledgling order after Francis’ death. Given the great contribution of Franciscans over the centuries, the good fortune belongs to us all.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 3:1-6, 9-12; Matthew 11:25-27 (391)*. “The Lord secures justice and the rights of all the oppressed.”

THURSDAY, JULY 16 FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
Wear your faith on your sleeve

In the Middle Ages knights wore strips of cloth around their arms representing the colors of the lady they were honoring. In essence they were “wearing their hearts on their sleeve”—hence the origin of the phrase. The idea of outwardly displaying where your affections and commitments lie are behind everything from heart tattoos to wedding rings to cross jewelry. Today, we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, who tradition holds encouraged Saint Simon Stock and his Carmelite order to wear a brown scapular as a sign of her protection and their devotion to Christ. Scapulars, from the Latin *scapula* for “shoulder,” were soon fashioned in all sizes from medals to small neckwear to other styles of religious habits, all meant to be an outward sign of Christian discipleship. Consider the many ways you might put your faith on display.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 3:13-20; Matthew 11:28-30 (392)*. “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart.”

FRIDAY, JULY 17
Take a day off

In the words of Ferris Bueller, one of the world’s most beloved truants, “Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” That’s why we need unscheduled breaks in our routine—something that goes beyond our regularly scheduled sabbath day of rest. Jesus continually encourages his followers not to be slaves to the law, but rather to be inspired by the spirit of the law, that is, the love inherent in all God’s laws. Don’t be afraid to do something spontaneous, out of the ordinary, not on the agenda. Remember the Holy Spirit blows where it will—get swept up in its tailwinds every now and then.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 11:10-12:14; Matthew 12:1-8 (393)*. “For the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath.”

SATURDAY, JULY 18 FEAST OF CAMILLUS DE LELLIS, PRIEST
Lose your shirt but save your soul

Gain the world, lose your soul. These gospel terms are very familiar. The allure of the good life can tear us away from values and relationships that really matter. Saint Camillus, unhappily, was good at losing both world *and* soul. An unusually large man, he was quarrelsome and addicted to gambling. After his shirt was literally stripped from his back in a big loss, he fell to his knees and begged heaven for mercy—and got it. It changed his life. Examine your life: Are your values in the right place?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 12:37-42; Matthew 12:14-21 (394)*. “Many people followed Jesus, and he cured them all.”



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 Activity - Mark 6:7-13

T U N I C L P R E A C H E D L
S P I R I T S Y J U R C J Y I
N F A C T Q P N C E E J O J P
G V N B E T K C J O P H U P G
D M O D S W D S K S E M R S T
J N I U T E E B L A N C N I A
E Z N S I L S W L N T B E L U
S T T T M V W E I D A B Y N T
U S E Y O E A L S A N H J V H
S W D R N B L C T L C O C M O
W V W W Y M K O E S E U B U R
X D L Y F V I M N N X S K S I
K S U M M O N E D M F E Z M T
M O N E Y J G A D E M O N S Y
E Q U N C L E A N B I I T J P

ANOINTED

DUST

JOURNEY

PREACHED

SPIRITS

TUNIC

WALKING

AUTHORITY

HOUSE

LISTEN

REPENTANCE

SUMMONED

TWELVE

WELCOME

DEMONS

JESUS

MONEY

SANDALS

TESTIMONY

UNCLEAN