



SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2015 SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Don't make a lot of decision-making

In biblical times, the people of God were known at times to cast lots as a decision-making method—a little like flipping a coin today. The belief was that “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord” (Prov. 16:33). After Judas’ death, the Book of Acts tells us the remaining apostles cast lots to determine that his successor would be Matthias. Soon after came the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and references to the casting of lots cease. Now that believers have the Holy Spirit to call on for guidance, there is no need to toss objects to arrive at a decision. Thoughtful prayer and a sincere request for guidance should be enough.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26; 1 John 4:11-16; John 17:11b-19 (60).* “Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven apostles.”

MONDAY, MAY 18

FEAST OF JOHN I, POPE AND MARTYR; EASTER WEEKDAY
Live strong

The holy and apostolic church is also a human institution, subject to the complexities of human nature. Pope Saint John I was caught in a web of sixth-century intrigue. Charged with improving relations between Rome and Constantinople, and even though his mission was successful, he became the object of imperial paranoia that led to his death. What keeps you strong when facing complex questions in our world? If you take a position, is it on the basis of study and prayer or on the basis of “party” loyalty? The hymn says “the church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.” Cling to that Rock.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 19:1-8; John 16:29-33 (297).* “In the world you will have trouble. But take courage, I have conquered the world.”

TUESDAY, MAY 19 EASTER WEEKDAY
Know the God of the unknown

It’s hard to know what each day holds. Sure you have a schedule and to-do lists, but there’s no telling who you will encounter or what will be called forth from you in any given situation. As you face the unknown in your life remember that God is with you in the mystery of it all. Catholic theologian Karl Rahner identifies God as the Absolute Being who is Absolute Mystery. With faith and trust, you can open yourself to what God reveals in these moments of mystery. What you do know is that being rooted in Christ brings both comfort and challenge. God will provide no matter what today holds. Believe and let your life show the world the Way.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 20:17-27; John 17:1-11a (298).* “Father, the hour has come.”

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

FEAST OF BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST, RELIGIOUS, MISSIONARY
Avoid mixed messages

The legacy of renowned 15th-century Italian preacher and reformer Bernardine of Siena cuts both ways. He inspired moral reform that was well overdue in lax times—hosting “bonfires of the vanities” into which townsfolk would toss their mirrors, fancy clothing, playing cards, dice, anything that smacked of the slightest diversion. But he also preached a message of hostile intolerance toward Jews, homosexuals, moneylenders, and many others who did not fit into the “moral majority” of the day. Can we find a way to distinguish moral essentials—honesty, kindness, and generosity for example—from moral neutrals such as ethnicity, occupation, orientation? The reform we need starts right here at home, in our own hearts.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 20:28-38; John 17:11b-19 (299).* “Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one.”

THURSDAY, MAY 21 FEAST OF CHRISTOPHER MAGALLANES, PRIEST, MARTYR, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

The trials of martyrdom

One common feature in the stories of many martyrs is that they are accused and condemned without a fair trial. From the time of the earliest martyrs to 20th-century ones such as Christopher Magallanes, who was put to death without trial in Mexico during the 1920s church-state conflict, martyrs usually find themselves accused and condemned in the same breath. People of faith are most often killed not because of their great faith, but because of the great fear of those of little faith. Honor those who have the courage of their convictions.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; John 17:20-26 (300).* “The commander . . . ordered the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin to convene. Then he brought Paul down and made him stand before them.”

FRIDAY, MAY 22 FEAST OF RITA OF CASCIA, RELIGIOUS
Faith makes the impossible possible

By the time Rita of Cascia was 36 years old, she had faced enormous challenges in her life, including great violence. Her husband was killed amid strife between families in Italy at the turn of the 15th century. Her two sons desired to avenge his death, a move their mother entirely opposed. Before they could carry out vengeance, however, they became ill and died. In the face of violence, loss and grief, Rita remained a woman of great faith. She believed, in the words of scripture, that with God all things are possible. Canonized in 1900, she is recognized as a patron saint of impossible causes.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 25:13b-21; John 21:15-19 (301).* “Lord, you know everything.”

SATURDAY, MAY 23 EASTER WEEKDAY
Faith is not a competitive sport

In communities of faith, it can be hard not to compare yourself to others. Who’s holier? Who gives more time? Who has a deeper prayer life? Who cares more? The problem with these questions is that they aren’t productive; they only lead to judgment and division. Communities grow when you care for one another. A defining value of what it means to be Catholic, according to St. Mary’s Press, is a profound sense of discovering, experiencing, and responding to God in union with other believers—that is, within community. Why not ask how you can help another grow *and* how they can help you?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; John 21:20-25 (302).* “There are also many other things that Jesus did. . . .”



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 16:15-20

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

Word Bank

Believe, Condemned, Confirmed, Creature, Disciples, Go, Gospel, Hand, Heaven, Jesus, Languages, Mark, Preached, Proclaim, Recover, Right, Saved, Serpents, Signs, World

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