

SUNDAY, JULY 26, 2015

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Satisfy the hungry heart

The crowd could not leave him. They had witnessed his miracles as he healed the sick, and they seemed to forget whatever else they had to do in order to be near him. This was risky business in a desert culture where food could be scarce to come by. But compassionate beyond measure, Jesus fed them. The meal that day on the grassy plain near the Sea of Galilee was its own kind of eucharistic celebration, an event that foreshadowed those that now are the “source and summit of our faith” as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it. Then and now, Jesus satisfies the hungry. Give thanks for the gift of being fed.

TODAY’S READINGS: *2 Kings 4:42-44; Ephesians 4:1-6; John 6:1-15 (110)*. “Jesus then took the loaves of bread, gave thanks, and passed them around.”

MONDAY, JULY 27

Show, don’t tell

One of the cardinal rules of good storytelling is not to “tell” at all, but to “show.” Jesus had that technique down pat, and he often used parables so his teachings would be more understandable. He related lessons to everyday things like mustard seeds and yeast, good Samaritans and prodigal sons. His stories evoke the senses and emotions, making them come alive and hit home. The “show, don’t tell” rule applies to the way you live your life as well. Heed Saint Francis of Assisi’s good advice: “Preach the gospel always. If necessary, use words.”

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 32:15-24, 30-34; Matthew 13:31-35 (401)*. “I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation of the world.”

TUESDAY, JULY 28

Smoke signals

Fire is a powerful force. It destroys and creates simultaneously, refining what’s good and eliminating what is unnecessary. God’s love has the power to do that in our lives with the same mesmerizing effect. But how do you know that fire’s burning? God makes smoke signals. Where you resist, the holy smoke of change emerges—a sign that God is here and working. Like smoldering incense, the Burning Bush where Moses encountered the divine, or the Pillar of Cloud that guided the Israelites during the Exodus, smoke signals God’s presence in our midst. Remember: Where there’s smoke, there’s fire—the fire of God in you!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 33:7-11; 34:5b-9, 28; Matthew 13:31-35 (402)*. “Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom.”

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29 FEAST OF MARTHA

Strong woman, take heart!

Women and power: never an easy relationship. If women are strong and bold at wielding authority, they’re called demeaning names. If they’re soft and compassionate, it’s used as proof-positive they’re not qualified for leadership roles. Martha, the older of two sisters, was a take-charge woman willing to face down Jesus a time or two. Of course, men must make choices regarding power too: to be aggressive or collaborative with it. Jesus admires Martha’s



spirit and agrees with her assertions enough to restore her brother to life. Shared authority works!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 34:29-35 (403); John 11:19-27 or Luke 10:38-42 (607)*. “Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’”

THURSDAY, JULY 30

FEAST OF PETER CHRYSOLOGUS, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Save this for feel-bad days

Keep an antidote in your wallet or on the bathroom mirror for those hang-dog days when you can’t face the world. We all have those days: *I lost the job, the relationship blew up in my face, I wish I hadn’t said/did that, I really screwed up this time*. Here’s the antidote, courtesy of Saint Peter Chrysologus: “Why then, are you so worthless in your own eyes and yet so precious to God?” The creation *and* the redemption of the world are twin gifts God lays at our feet. Believe it!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Exodus 40:16-21, 34-38; Matthew 13:47-53 (404)*. “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom I delight.”

FRIDAY, JULY 31 FEAST OF IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, PRIEST

Seek and you will find

The life of Ignatius of Loyola, the mid-16th-century Spaniard who founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), is something akin to a soap opera. One can imagine the details, but the point is that Ignatius learned to pay attention to the presence of God in his life—each and every day—and to seek God’s will in all things. Now the church has a Jesuit pope, Francis, who encourages the faithful to recognize the presence of God in the world and who speaks of finding God everywhere, especially in the poor and vulnerable. On this Ignatian feast, be mindful of the presence of God in the events of your day.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Leviticus 23:1, 4-11, 15-16, 27, 34b-37; Matthew 13:54-58 (405)*. “Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds?”

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

FEAST OF ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

What do I do now?

Many Catholics have been subscribers to *The Ligourian*, a popular magazine known for its concrete advice to readers seeking answers about how to live as good Christians. But remember that a question phrased as, “What am I supposed to do?” can imply that there exists a definitive “supposed to” answer, and that often leads to narrow, doctrinaire opinions, whereas Alphonse had “an optimistic view of the human person.” Better to ask, “What kind of compassionate and responsible follower of Christ am I in this situation?” Is there room in you for grace, generosity, and mercy, or do you tend to be rigid and absolute? If the latter, there is plenty of room for you to sit often at the feet of Jesus and ask for his Spirit.

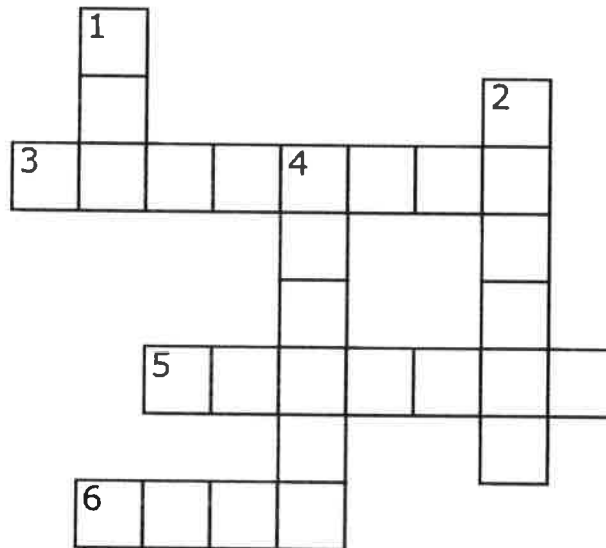
TODAY’S READINGS: *Leviticus 25:1, 8-17; Matthew 14:1-12 (406)*. “Do not deal unfairly, then, but stand in fear of your God.”



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 6:1-15



Across

- 3) Jesus went up on the _____ and sat down with his disciples.
- 5) Jesus went across the Sea of _____.
- 6) How many barley loaves did the boy have?

Down

- 1) How many fish did the boy have?
- 2) Who was the brother of Simon Peter?
- 4) The fragments left over filled _____ wicker baskets.