



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2015

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Reach out in tolerance

How do we love others who are different from ourselves? *Nostrae Aetate*, the Second Vatican Council declaration on non-Christian religions, offers wisdom for relating with anyone whose beliefs or behaviors differ from our own. The Council exhorts us, for example, to engage in “dialogue and collaboration . . . with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life.” Further, we are called to “recognize, preserve, and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values” that we share in common. A tall order, but necessary if we truly wish to conform ourselves to the gospel.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Isaiah 35:4-7a; James 2:1-5; Mark 7:31-37 (128)*. “My brothers and sisters, show no partiality as you adhere to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.”

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Labor heartily

Labor Day is a celebration of the value and contributions of workers. Remember, Pope John Paul II said, workers “want to share in the responsibility and creativity of the very work process.” Work is a gift to be appreciated, not a burden to escape. You are a steward of the talents God gave you, and you’ve been entrusted to use them to their fullest. Work is an opportunity to give your best to others, so that you may take care of yourself and others as best you can.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Colossians 1:24-2:3; Luke 6:6-11 (437)*. “. . . I am a minister in accordance with God’s stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God.”

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Like Mary, be a bearer of hope

Today, we celebrate the birth of Mary. Although the circumstances of her infancy and early life aren’t directly recorded in the Bible, the “Protoevangelium of James,” a document written very early in Christian tradition, describes Mary as being born in Jerusalem to Joachim and Anne in their old age, when they had given up hope of having children. Mary lived an ordinary life—until an angel appeared! The angel spoke of the child she would bear, a child who’d be a sign of hope, especially for the downtrodden. As we honor Mary’s birth, consider how you might be a source of hope to others on this day.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Micah 5:1-4a or Romans 8:28-30; Psalm 13:6ab, 6c; Matthew 1:1-16, 18-23 (636)*. “Behold, the virgin shall bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means ‘God is with us.’”

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 FEAST OF PETER CLAVER, PRIEST Meet injustice with prophetic witness

Four hundred years ago, the slave trade flourished in the Spanish colonial city of Cartagena. Thousands of slaves were unloaded there every year after inhumane crossings in wretched conditions on slave ships run by European colonial powers. Jesuit Claver couldn’t stop the trade but he could take a radical stance in the face of it. Declaring himself “slave to the slaves forever” he worked tirelessly to alleviate their suffering and bring them healing and hope. How will you respond to the injustice in front of you?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 6:20-26 (439)*. “Rejoice and leap for joy! Your reward will be great in heaven.”

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 Set the bar high

“Virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good,” says the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The seven heavenly virtues are chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility. Each has an opposite counterpart among the seven deadly sins. Handy lists. Stick to one, not the other. Simple, right? Well, it’s a lot easier to be virtuous with your nearest and dearest, who love and care for you, but you have to practice virtues with everyone, even those you believe are in the wrong, to experience the wonderful fullness of what those virtues mean.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 6:27-38 (440)*. “. . . love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 Grave violation

Blasphemy is one of those old-time words you don’t hear much, except in the Bible, which has a lot to say about this very serious sin—maybe the most serious. But what exactly is it? Simply, it’s speaking against God; it’s ridiculing sacred things or persons; it’s holding anything related to God in contempt. There are even specific prayers and devotions, called Acts of Reparation, to repair the sin of those guilty of blasphemy. Don’t make those necessary: Don’t take the Lord’s name in vain.

TODAY’S READINGS: *1 Timothy 1:1-2, 12-14; Luke 6:39-42 (441)*. “I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and an arrogant man, but I have been mercifully treated . . .”

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF MARY How many ways can you say “full of grace”?

Some feasts seem curious until we appreciate their context. The Most Holy Name of Mary was honored in Spain as a counterpoint to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. It was a local observance until 1683, when the king of Poland won a battle under the name of the Virgin and Pope Innocent XI extended the feast to the whole church. The Marian titles prayed today in the various versions of the Litany of Mary provide a wonderful meditation on why this “Summit of Virtue” is the “glory of the human race.”

TODAY’S READINGS: *1 Timothy 1:15-17; Luke 6:43-49 (442)*. “For every tree is known by its fruit.”



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 7:31-37

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

Word Bank

Astonished, Begged, Deaf, Decapolis, District, Ephphatha, Hear, Jesus, Opened, Ordered, Speak, Speech, Spitting, Spoke, Tongue, Tyre