

**Sunday, Jan 22, 2023**

**Coming live to a parish near you!**

Some of us were taught that Mass attendance "counted" if we arrived for the gospel and stayed through Communion. Most churchgoers, thankfully, are weaned from this spartan idea to the liturgical celebration. In 2019, Pope Francis designated the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time as "Word of God Sunday." While every Mass includes a healthy serving of Bible readings, annually we're invited to reflect that this is "an experience which occurs 'live' and not through hearsay," as the pope says. "We gather precisely to listen to what God has done *and still intends to do for us.*" Let's not miss a word of it!

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 8:23—9:3; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17; Matthew 4:12-23 (67). "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.*"

**Monday, Jan 23, 2023**

**Don't let fear keep you from serving**

The disease of leprosy has been curable since the mid-20th century and is actually not highly contagious, as was believed in the past, but the physical effects were devastating enough to cause tremendous fear. Mother Marianne Cope was not afraid, which she stated in 1883 in her letter of acceptance to King Kalākaua of Hawaii, who had already asked for help from—and been turned down by—more than 50 other religious congregations to care for his people who had leprosy. The German-born American sister and six others came to his aid all the way from New York. When you go beyond your fears to answer a call, you may be bridging the greatest distance of all.

DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN; MEMORIAL OF MARIANNE COPE, RELIGIOUS  
TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 9:15, 24-28; Mark 3:22-30 (317). "*If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.*"

**Tuesday, Jan 24, 2023**

**There is strength in gentleness**

Francis de Sales is famous for his gentleness. He used it on his stubborn father, convincing him he was meant to become a priest instead of a lawyer. It was a virtue Francis tapped to win hardened Calvinists back to the Catholic faith following the Protestant Reformation, a time of much bitterness. Explaining that a "spoonful of honey gathers more flies than a barrel full of vinegar," Saint Francis practiced what he preached by greeting everyone with simple kindness, speaking good-naturedly about the goodness, truth, and beauty of the Catholic faith. "Be who you are and be that well," he reminds us in *Introduction to the Devout Life*.

MEMORIAL OF FRANCIS DE SALES, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 10:1-10; Mark 3:31-35 (318). "*Behold, I come to do your will, O God.*"

**Wednesday, Jan 25, 2023**

**I can see clearly now**

We've all had the rather unpleasant experience of "being shown the error of our ways," though none perhaps as dramatically as Saul of Tarsus, zealous persecutor of early followers of Christ. On assignment to round up these dissidents, Saul was knocked from his horse by a blinding light and a voice from heaven. Three days

of blindness ensued before the scales literally "fell from his eyes" and the newly awakened apostle and great evangelist we know as Saint Paul emerged. Don't wait to be knocked to the ground before considering how your own life may have gone astray. Pray that anything that blinds you may fall away from your vision.

FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22; Mark 16:15-18 (519). "*Saul, my brother, regain your sight.*"

**Thursday, Jan 26, 2023**

**Our moment is now**

In the '90s, it seemed everyone wanted in on the "dot.com" internet startup craze. Many were excited to be in on the ground floor of something brand new. It's tempting to think that Timothy and Titus (both of whom have letters in the New Testament addressed to them) were like the dot.com entrepreneurs when it came to the new, exciting religion of Christianity. In contrast, today's Christianity can seem weighed down by centuries of precedent and proscriptions. Titus and Timothy dealt with plenty of church trouble in their time, however, from division to drunkenness to false teaching. Their witness reminds us to pray for the strength to rise to the challenges of the moment we've been given, just as they did.

MEMORIAL OF TIMOTHY AND TITUS, BISHOPS

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Timothy 1:1-8 or Titus 1:1-5 (520); Mark 4:21-25 (320). "*The measure with which you measure will be measured out to you.*"

**Friday, Jan 27, 2023**

**Stay the course**

Sometimes when the going gets tough, if they are honest, the tough want to curl up under the blankets and never come out! Life is not always an easy road, even when we feel called by God. But we're not alone on the journey. We can look to the saints to see how they've weathered the storms. Today, on the feast of Angela Merici, educator and founder of the Ursuline Sisters, let us take heart in her wisdom. "Strive with all your might to keep yourselves as you have been called by God, and seek out and desire all those means and ways that are necessary to persevere and prosper till the end."

MEMORIAL OF ANGELA MERICI, RELIGIOUS FOUNDER

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 10:32-39; Mark 4:26-34 (321). "*We are not among those who draw back and perish, but among those who have faith and will possess life.*"

**Saturday, Jan 28, 2023**

**Be resolute**

Sometimes your commitment to your faith or choice of a vocation or calling can lead to uncomfortable conflicts with loved ones who have a different idea of who you should be or how you should live your life. Even a saint as illustrious as Saint Thomas had to struggle against opposition. His family was so opposed to his decision to enter the Dominican order that they had him abducted and held captive for a year! Thomas stood firm and they finally relented, and as a result the church gained perhaps its greatest theologian. Stand firm when you need to—who knows what God has in store for you!

MEMORIAL OF THOMAS AQUINAS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Mark 4:35-41 (322). "*He asked them, 'Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?'*"

*Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time*



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