

Sunday, Aug 16, 2026

Keep expanding the circle

From its beginning, Christianity has grown and thrived by reaching out to wider and wider circles beyond its core. In scripture today the foreigner comes to the temple, the sinner is shown mercy, and the Canaanite woman reaches out to Jesus, who responds. Pope Francis encouraged us to live our faith in this same open spirit: "May the church be the place of God's mercy and love, where everyone can feel themselves welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel." Know your faith, be proud of it, and make it one that is welcoming and hospitable.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; Romans 11:13-15, 29-32; Matthew 15:21-28 (118). *"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."*

Monday, Aug 17, 2026

The truth about eternal life

A wealthy young man came to Jesus and asked what he needed to do to gain eternal life. Christ told him to keep the Commandments. The young man replied that he had done so. Jesus then said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." But instead the man "went away sad for he had many possessions." For this acquisitive young man, eternal life was yet another thing to acquire. In Jesus' simple response, however, eternal life is revealed as a way of being that begins with dying to oneself and putting others first. Let us "emulate the things worthy of emulation," says Saint John Chrysostom, "those who are poor for Christ's sake." That is the key for how we can participate in life everlasting.

Ezekiel 24:15-23; Matthew 19:16-22 (419). *"Thus you shall know that I am the LORD. You shall do as I have done."*

Tuesday, Aug 18, 2026

Get rich by giving

Most of us wouldn't think of ourselves as wealthy. But by world standards, you may consider yourself rich if you own a house, car, phone, or computer; eat out occasionally; have surplus food that you end up throwing away; spend money to exercise or lose weight; drink clean water; have access to medical care; or enjoy indoor plumbing. Now the question is: What should you do with all your wealth? Don't fall in love with it, Jesus warns. Be modest and wise in what you spend on yourself, and, above all, be generous. The more you give away, the richer you'll feel. As Saint Leo the Great says, "A generous spirit is itself great wealth."

Ezekiel 28:1-10; Matthew 19:23-30 (420). *"Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of heaven."*

Wednesday, Aug 19, 2026

Just fruits

Two thousand years after Jesus' parable about day laborers, many laborers still face each day uncertain as to whether they will find work. When Cesar Chavez and others began organizing the migrant farm workers of California in the 1960s and 1970s, they met great resistance from growers who had greatly profited from the low wages paid to their workers. Conditions have improved since the United Farm Workers union was organized, but much remains to be done. Try to buy your fruits and vegetables from

suppliers who honor and respect the rights of workers for a just wage and safe working conditions.

Ezekiel 34:1-11; Matthew 20:1-16 (421). *"Are you envious because I am generous?"*

Thursday, Aug 20, 2026

Rest in God

Bernard of Clairvaux, a French abbot of the 12th century, had a tremendous influence on the course of Catholicism at a time of great strife and intrigue in the church. He reformed monastic life, brought Mary to the forefront of popular piety, and mediated between princes and popes. He was also instrumental in the founding of the Knights Templar, who became models of the medieval ideal of a Christian knight and were heavily involved in the Crusades. Through all the tumult of his times, Bernard managed to maintain his contemplative spirit. Our own era seems equally tumultuous. What can you do to cultivate a contemplative spirit in the midst of all the chaos? Bernard offers this advice: "Rest is in Him alone. Man knows no peace in the world; but he has no disturbance when he is with God."

MEMORIAL OF BERNARD, ABBOT, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Ezekiel 36:23-28; Matthew 22:1-14 (422). *"The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come."*

Friday, Aug 21, 2026

Beyond politics

Pius X (1836-1914) was considered a saint during his lifetime, just like John Paul II was by many during his lifetime. Both were controversial because their teachings were highly political. Pius X was criticized for trying to intervene in pre-World War I European politics, while John Paul II was instrumental in the post-Soviet political reforms of Eastern Europe. Often church teaching will resonate with one or the other side of any political debate. But truth always comes from the same place. Ponder this truth articulated by Pius: "Without any doubt there is a desire in all hearts for peace. But how foolish is he who seeks this peace apart from God; for if God be driven out, justice is banished, and once justice fails, all hope of peace is lost."

MEMORIAL OF PIUS X, POPE

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Matthew 22:34-40 (423). *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."*

Saturday, Aug 22, 2026

Humbly we adore thee

Trying to be humble getting you down? Consider the natural relationship between humility and praise. Humility isn't about putting ourselves down: It's about giving praise where praise is due—that is, to God. If we exalt God in praise and thanksgiving, we are exhibiting the perfect posture of humility, knowing who we are and who God is. Mary of Nazareth did the same thing when God invited her to become the mother of the divine son. Her response was to "magnify the Lord," not to say, "O, Lord, I am not worthy." The humble heart is regularly full of praise.

MEMORIAL OF THE QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Ezekiel 43:1-7ab; Matthew 23:1-12 (424). *"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*

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



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