

Sunday, Aug 31, 2025

Gifts that keep on giving

“Love one another.” “Forgive everyone.” “Give to those who cannot repay you.” These sayings of Jesus seem like a lot of hard work with little reward. But nothing could be further from the truth. Have you ever left a large tip for a tired waitress or waiter? Or smiled at a store clerk who was having a difficult day? Such gestures generate feelings of gratitude and well-being that do not come any other way. If we spent only a few minutes every day thinking of a small gift we could give to someone, just imagine how our world would change! Try it today—then do it again tomorrow.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29; Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24a; Luke 14:1, 7-14 (126). *“Blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you.”*

Monday, Sep 01, 2025

Prophetic advice

When Jesus returned to Nazareth and spoke prophetically, his hometown people rejected him. That foreshadowed the reception he would receive from his own people in general. It is a pattern repeated many times in history, from the time of the Jewish prophets who suffered repudiation right through to our own era, when right-to-life and immigrant-rights activists encounter stiff resistance to their prophetic message. It does us well to give folks a second hearing if we find ourselves made uncomfortable by their message. It may be the one we need to hear most. Pope Francis called each of us to be a prophet, who “shows Jesus to others, witnesses him, and helps live today and build tomorrow according to Jesus’ design.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Luke 4:16-30 (431). *“When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury.”*

Tuesday, Sep 02, 2025

Our small efforts make a splash

What does encouragement look like? A smile, a pat on the back, a kind word, an affirmation of effort or accomplishment. Encouragement is not hard physical labor. Yet at times we find it difficult to overcome our anger or disappointment in how little impact we’ve had. But Servant of God Dorothy Day says, “No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There’s too much work to do.” Her words of encouragement can help us encourage others. “What is the sense of our small effort?” Day asks. “A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words, and deeds is like that.”

1 Thessalonians 5:1-6, 9-11; Luke 4:31-37 (432). *“Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up.”*

Wednesday, Sep 03, 2025

The cure for what ails you

“I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.” This hopeful prayer of Thomas Merton is one to draw on in difficult times. Hope is exactly what we need when we are in pain or despair. It is the foundation of all healing. Our bodies, minds, and hearts are made for healing. That healing may come quickly and completely, or it may be long,

painful, and only partially realized. And for each of us, once in a lifetime, healing ends in death. Yet as Christians, we remain hopeful because we have been promised the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in God’s love. So draw on hope—and let the healing begin.

Colossians 1:1-8; Luke 4:38-44 (433). *“He laid his hands on each of them and cured them.”*

Thursday, Sep 04, 2025

Our happiness is God’s

The biblical scholar Father Jerome Neyrey, S.J. wonders of the Early Church: “What it must have been like to be catechized into the gospel of Jesus, told that in Baptism we die with him and rise with him.” It was a radically new message—yet it remains so. What does it mean to find new life in death? Why do we and how can we feel the presence of the risen Christ? These questions continue to astound and fascinate us. Not to worry if we cannot fathom the depths of the mystery. As Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne says, “We may not understand His Will for us in time, but in eternity the veil will be drawn and we shall see that He acted only for our happiness.”

Colossians 1:9-14; Luke 5:1-11 (434). *“They left everything and followed him.”*

Friday, Sep 05, 2025

Celebrate good times

From the moment you hit the reception hall until the happy couple drives away, tin cans rattling and tissue-paper flowers fluttering, it’s party time. Hors d’oeuvres piled high on plates make the rounds, and sparkling beverages are liberally poured. The food never stops coming, from the first salad to the final slice of much-decorated cake. Music fills the hall and dancers demonstrate how each generation once cut the rug. Cameras capture the joy of the hour with each flash. That is what celebration looks like. Jesus says every hour is worth celebrating, for those who believe. It’s time to party!

Colossians 1:15-20; Luke 5:33-39 (435). *“Can you make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?”*

Saturday, Sep 06, 2025

Some rules are meant to be broken

Jesus condemns strict observance of the sabbath when it comes at the expense of life and well-being. Who wouldn’t want to recover an animal that fell down a well on the sabbath or gather grain to feed one’s family? In today’s terms, you’d search for your lost pet on a Sunday or go grocery shopping if you were out of food. Jesus loves the law and understands its value, but he wants to make a larger point about how God’s love comes ahead of strict observances. Simply put, in the words of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, “Without love, deeds, even the most brilliant, count as nothing.” Show some kindness ahead of everything else, and you’ll make a sabbath of your life each day.

Colossians 1:21-23; Luke 6:1-5 (436). *“The Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.”*

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



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