

Sunday, Feb 08, 2026

Put it into practice

Twentieth-century writer Aldous Huxley said of love: "There isn't any secret formula or method. You learn love by loving." At every crossroad, at every bump in the road in your relationships with others, this is a simple truth to put into practice: Learn to love by loving; learn to forgive by forgiving. It isn't any more complicated than that. The choice is yours.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME; WORLD MARRIAGE DAY

Isaiah 58:7-10; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Matthew 5:13-16 (73).

"Your light must shine before others."

Monday, Feb 09, 2026

Reach out and touch

Who gets healed in the gospels? Mostly it's those who make some small act of faith in Jesus. Today's gospel tells of all the people healed in body and spirit just by touching Jesus' cloak. The gospel points to two elements of spiritual healing: willingness and connection. Before God can do anything for us, we must break out of the paralysis of despair and be willing to reach out. If we make just the slightest move toward God, amazing changes are possible. As Pope Francis explained: "What type of faith is great? Great faith is that which brings its own story, marked even by wounds, and brings it to the Lord's feet asking Him to heal them, to give them meaning." We don't have to do it all, simply reach out and touch Jesus in some way—through prayer, the Eucharist, or service to those in need.

1 Kings 8:1-7, 9:13; Mark 6:53-56 (329). *"They laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak."*

Tuesday, Feb 10, 2026

Sibling solidarity

Saint Scholastica (c. 480-c. 543), together with her brother Benedict, founded the Western monastic tradition. Benedict's rule of life emphasized gentleness and respect, qualities that were evident in the close relationship between Scholastica and Benedict. After adopting monastic life, the two allowed themselves one day a year to visit each other. They would meet at a small cottage halfway between Scholastica's convent and Benedict's abbey. Their great contribution to Catholicism is evidence of the good that can come from a loving relationship between siblings. Consider your own relationship with siblings or other close kin. What can you do today to strengthen those relationships? You never know what great contribution to humanity might result from your efforts!

MEMORIAL OF SCHOLASTICA, RELIGIOUS FOUNDER

1 Kings 8:22-23, 27-30; Mark 7:1-13 (330). *"Your servants . . . are faithful to you with their whole heart."*

Wednesday, Feb 11, 2026

Rules to live by

With the season of Lent and its practice of fasting arriving next week, it's a little puzzling to remember that Jesus was a great *breaker* of fasts and violator of religious food rules—that was one thing that got him into trouble with the authorities. His followers gathered grain on the Sabbath because they were starving. He ate with sinners and outcasts. He simply *did not follow the rules*, but for a purpose: to show how the rules should not control but rather serve to bring a person into a more loving relationship with God and neighbor. "In Jesus," the Catechism of

the Catholic Church says, "the law no longer appears engraved on tables of stone, but upon the heart of the Servant who becomes a covenant to the people, because he will faithfully bring forth justice" (CCC 580). What makes a person holy is not external observance but internal faith and love, which leads to right behavior.

1 Kings 10:1-10; Mark 7:14-23 (331). *"[What] goes into a person from outside cannot defile.... (Thus he declared all foods clean.)"*

Thursday, Feb 12, 2026

How can you say no to a sick child?

Did Jesus think of his own mother as the Gentile woman with the sick daughter argued with him for a healing? Mothers (and fathers) don't want to talk politics and policy when their children are in need. They just want help and they want it now. Such confrontations take place every day in schools, emergency rooms, and social service offices, as parents argue for the well-being of their little ones. "Yes," they say, "I know your mission statement [or charter, or law] doesn't cover this, but my kid is hurting!" Jesus found this a compelling argument. Do you?

1 Kings 11:4-13; Mark 7:24-30 (332). *"She replied and said to him, 'Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's scraps.'"*

Friday, Feb 13, 2026

You've got to want it

Jesus performed many miracles but never did so by force. Neither would he coerce anyone to listen to him, much less to speak up on his behalf. If we choose to ignore the Good News in our own lives, we have the free will to do so. "He who created us without our help will not save us without our consent," says Saint Augustine. It's up to us to say yes to faith, to say yes to the truth of God's love. God would never force you to do so. Faith is freely given and freely exercised. Exercise yours today.

1 Kings 11:29-32; 12:19; Mark 7:31-37 (333). *"People brought to him a deaf man . . . and begged him to lay his hand on him."*

Saturday, Feb 14, 2026

Speak the language of love

This is real love: two brothers dedicate their lives to serving a people not their own. Born in ninth-century Greece, Methodius was older and eventually attained the office of archbishop. Cyril, more philosophical, was a linguist and theologian. Both took on the evangelizing of Moravia. There, Cyril devised the Slavic alphabet developed by later disciples and called Cyrillic in his honor. Both brothers fought for Bibles and liturgy in the language of the people. Pope John Paul II declared Cyril and Methodius patron saints of Europe. Follow the example of their love and bring good news to strangers.

MEMORIAL OF CYRIL, MONK, AND METHODIUS, BISHOP

1 Kings 12:26-32; 13:33-34; Mark 8:1-10 (334). *"Where can anyone get enough bread to satisfy them here in this deserted place?"*

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



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