

## Sunday, Jul 02, 2023

### Say what you see

Upon winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, Elie Wiesel was named a "messenger to mankind." The *Los Angeles Times* called him the "most important Jew in America." A Holocaust survivor, Wiesel didn't speak of his experiences for 10 years after his liberation from the camps. Eventually he understood the world needed his witness: "We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.... Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe." Tell the truth from where you stand.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a; Romans 6:3-4, 8-11; Matthew 10:37-42 (97). "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

## Monday, Jul 03, 2023

### A twin to us all

Three times in the Gospel of John, the apostle Thomas is also called Didymus. Both names mean "twin"—in Aramaic and Greek respectively. He is referred to in some non-biblical historical texts as "Judas Thomas"—a.k.a. "Judas the Twin." It's likely "the twin" was his nickname and he was known by it among Jews and Greeks. But there's no explanation of whose twin he was. Today, Christians mostly know him as "Doubting Thomas" because he didn't believe Jesus had risen until he saw for himself. While we don't know the identity of Thomas' biological twin, do we resemble him in our disbelief from time to time? Ask Jesus for the grace of faith and the same graciousness he showed to Thomas.

FEAST OF THOMAS, APOSTLE

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 2:19-22; John 20:24-29 (593). "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

## Tuesday, Jul 04, 2023

### Born on the Fourth of July

*Born on the Fourth of July* is the best-selling memoir of Ron Kovic, Catholic Vietnam vet turned peace activist. On the fourth of July, in 1336, Saint Elizabeth of Portugal was born into eternal life. Like Kovic, Elizabeth threw herself into peacemaking—twice intervening to avert war. Like Kovic, the queen bucked authority: When her husband forbade her from giving royal wealth away to the poor, Elizabeth smuggled contributions out of the castle in her robes. As Americans celebrate our good fortune this day, may the rights enshrined in the Declaration of Independence—"life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—be tempered by Elizabeth's example: "God made me queen so that I may serve others."

OPTIONAL MASS FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 19:15-29; Matthew 8:23-27 (378). "He said to them, 'Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?'"

## Wednesday, Jul 05, 2023

### Be an island of justice

On this day in 1868, Rafael Cordero was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, one of three children in a free black family. Throughout his life he was a passionate advocate for equitable education on the island, opening a free school for children in his home—the pupils of which would later include some of the most influential figures in Puerto Rican history. A devout Catholic, Cordero was also known

for his charity to the poor. He also fought for the abolition of slavery in Puerto Rico, which was achieved in 1873. Following his death, his schoolhouse became a historic site, and the archbishop of San Juan opened his cause for canonization. He was declared venerable by Pope Francis in 2013. May his legacy of justice live on in our own works of mercy.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 21:5, 8-20a; Matthew 8:28-34 (379). "God was with the boy as he grew up."

## Thursday, Jul 06, 2023

### Girl power

Today's saint, Maria Goretti, died a difficult death at age 12 after being stabbed for resisting a rape. She is one of several patron saints of rape survivors. Traditional hagiography about Goretti focuses on her concern for chastity during her resistance, but women who have survived similar ordeals might see saintliness in Goretti's resistance itself. They might reclaim Goretti's story as one of female empowerment, a refusal to be degraded, and a rising above violence when Goretti—on her deathbed—forgave her tormentor. Her act of mercy lives on as a triumph over evil. Saint Maria Goretti, pray for all who have been hurt by sexual violence.

MEMORIAL OF MARIA GORETTI, YOUTH MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 22:1b-19; Matthew 9:1-8 (380). "He then said to the paralytic, 'Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home.'"

## Friday, Jul 07, 2023

### Make a wish come true

When asked what he wished for his birthday on July 7, 2008, the Beatle's drummer Ringo Starr replied, "Peace and love." That simple wish grew into International Peace and Love Day celebrated around the world and even in outer space when a message of peace and love was sent from the International Space Station in 2020. Of course, wishing doesn't make it so. Start small. A little show of mercy and forgiveness will go a long way toward creating a world of peace and love.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 23:1-4, 19; 24:1-8, 62-67; Matthew 9:9-13 (381). "Go and learn the meaning of the words, I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

## Saturday, Jul 08, 2023

### New wine for modern minds

Do you know anybody who sews patches on an old coat or drinks wine out of a wineskin? And that's exactly the point of the Lord's teaching. It is the work of preachers, teachers, and translators to rearticulate the ancient truths of Christianity in terms that 21st-century learners can understand. Otherwise, much of the language and images of the ancient texts just keeps getting recycled. Pray for the preachers and teachers who have positively influenced you.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 27:1-5, 15-29; Matthew 9:14-17 (382). "People do not put new wine into old wineskins."

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



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