

Sunday, Jun 04, 2023

Widen the circle

Trinity Sunday isn't for parsing the Three-in-One. It's an invitation to meditate on the mutual self-giving of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, who "so love the world" that we all share in the divine embrace. Yet to child victims of aggression, their experience has felt outside of any caring circle. That's why the U.N.'s "Convention on the Rights of the Child" was the most rapidly and widely ratified rights treaty in history. It ensures every child has a right to life, a name, family or guardian, health care, education, freedom of religion—even the right to play. Encircle the children in your life with tenderness.

SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

TODAY'S READINGS: Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; John 3:16-18 (164). "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son."

Monday, Jun 05, 2023

Make your life a work of art

Artist and author on interreligious thought, Frederick Franck was born in 1909 in Holland and died on this day in 2006 in Warwick, New York—the place of his life's work, Pacem in Terris ("Peace on Earth"), a garden of more than 70 sculptures, open free to the public and dedicated to Pope John XXIII, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, and the Buddhist teacher D.T. Suzuki. Raised agnostic in a Catholic region of his country and a student of Zen Buddhism, Franck was inspired during the Cuban Missile Crisis to go to Rome in 1963 to draw all the sessions of the Second Vatican Council. "Art is neither a profession nor a hobby, it is a way of being," he said. Take inspiration to creatively express your spirituality in your own way of being.

MEMORIAL OF BONIFACE, BISHOP, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 1:3; 2:1b-8; Mark 12:1-12 (353). "By the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes."

Tuesday, Jun 06, 2023

One bread, one body

A painting by Flemish artist Peter Paul Rubens—called *The Defenders of the Eucharist*—includes a serene Saint Norbert, his white robes wrapped around a *ciborium* (the cup that holds the consecrated Eucharist) as he cradles the Blessed Sacrament. Norbert founded the Norbertine religious order as well as the first Third Order for laypeople embracing the spirit of religious life. And, as a successful peacemaker, he's often depicted with an olive branch. But Norbert's preaching about the Blessed Sacrament, convincing entire villages to reclaim their lost belief in the Real Presence—also having eucharistic miracles happen on his watch—has earned him the title "Apostle of the Blessed Sacrament." May he inspire our devotion as the National Eucharistic Revival enters its second phase this month.

MEMORIAL OF NORBERT, BISHOP

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 2:9-14; Mark 12:13-17 (354). "Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."

Wednesday, Jun 07, 2023

Transcending prejudice in service to God

This day marks the 105th death anniversary of Servant of God Julia Greeley, one of seven African-American Catholics on the path to sainthood. She is one of two such candidates born into slavery in Ralls County, Missouri during the mid-19th century,

alongside Venerable Augustus Tolton. Freed during the Civil War, she emigrated to Colorado with her employer and became a Catholic due to their influence. There she would become known as "Denver's Angel of Charity" despite her own poverty, assisting the destitute at night so as not to offend her white beneficiaries. She died in 1918 and was the first and only Catholic layperson to lay in repose in the city—later becoming the first buried in the cathedral. May her legacy of service live on in all of us.

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 3:1-11a, 16-17a; Mark 12:18-27 (355).

"When they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like the angels in heaven."

Thursday, Jun 08, 2023

Love begets love

It's June, a popular month for weddings in North America. Church teachings about marriage varied for the first millennium. Today they communicate high ideals, resting on this basic framework, paraphrased from the Catechism of the Catholic Church: God loves us with a definitive and irrevocable love; married couples share in this love, which supports and sustains them. Their faithfulness to each other witnesses God's persistent love. Many are called to marriage, but others follow a different path. How has God called you to share the love poured out on you?

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 6:10-11; 7:1bcde, 9-17; 8:4-9a; Mark 12:28-34 (356). "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

Friday, Jun 09, 2023

A troubled land calls for compassion

Saint Ephrem of Syria was a prolific writer of poetry, hymns, poems, sermons, and biblical commentaries. He has been called the most significant of all the fathers of the Syriac-speaking church tradition. He addressed the church in Syria in troubled times ... and Syria's troubles continue, perhaps never more acutely than today. Already suffering badly the devastation of 12 years of ruthless suppression, in February it suffered a devastating earthquake that killed more than 7,000 people and devastated more than 10,000 buildings in northwest Syria. The U.N. reports that more than 4 million Syrians, mostly women and children, depend on humanitarian aid to survive. Mercy USA invites donations for housing for destitute Syrians. Consider a donation in honor of Ephrem.

MEMORIAL OF EPHREM OF SYRIA, DEACON, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 11:5-17; Mark 12:35-37 (357). "I am certain that his eyes will be opened."

Saturday, Jun 10, 2023

The widow's mite revisited

It is ironic that the story of the widow's mite in today's gospel is so often used as an example of generous giving when it's obvious that giving "all she had, her whole livelihood" had left her destitute and penniless. Jesus actually uses the widow's action as an example of what happens when the unscrupulous clergy of his day, with their long robes and the esteem of the people, "devour the houses of widows." The lesson is for religious leaders *not* to push poor people into deeper poverty. Pray for your pastors.

TODAY'S READINGS: Tobit 12:1, 5-15, 20; Mark 12:38-44 (358). "They devour the houses of widows . . . They will receive a very severe condemnation."

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



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