

Sunday, Jan 16, 2022

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

You are gifted, any way you slice it

We're all good at something. But not all of us consider our talents and skills as assets given to the Body of Christ. Say you can sew, make people laugh, fix an engine, bake a great pie, or balance a mean checkbook. Of what use are these things to the church, you might ask. Discernment of gifts is something Saint Paul took very seriously in the early community. In our faith sharing, we might ask each other how "mighty deeds" or knowledge or healing might be translated into modern needs the church has. Don't underestimate the healing value of a great pie!

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 62:1-5; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; John 2:1-11 (66). *"To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit."*

Monday, Jan 17, 2022

Help the dream awaken

One of the many things Martin Luther King, Jr. taught Americans was that faith could—and should!—be a driving force for positive social change. He also showed that people of all faiths could put aside differences and do this work together. A Baptist minister, King met with Pope John XXIII and many other faith leaders who later together publicly lamented his death. Keep King's spirit of faith-based social action and interfaith cooperation alive—gather with Catholics and other people of God to discuss, learn, pray, plan, and act on a peaceful journey toward healing all forms of inequality.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 15:16-23; Mark 2:18-22 (311). *"But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day."*

Tuesday, Jan 18, 2022

Shop with a conscience

Today we note Mary Kenney O'Sullivan, who died on this day in 1943. A Catholic mother of three, she poured her considerable talents into organizing working-class women to demand the right to vote and expect justice in their workplaces. She fought for social justice even as the concept of Catholic social teaching was still being refined and formed into what it is today. O'Sullivan understood and lived out social teaching concepts of solidarity, the dignity of the human person, and the dignity of work. Can your shopping choices, voting patterns, and prayers help uplift workers who are currently mistreated?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Mark 2:23-28 (312). *"The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. That is why the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."*

Wednesday, Jan 19, 2022

God loves an underdog

We all tend to cheer for the underdog. We find it inspiring when the person or team least expected to win triumphs. David's victory over Goliath appeals to us for this reason. But there's more to the story. When we have an unsurmountable task before us, it is wise to let God take control. After all, God is all powerful. History is full of saints who did the unexpected because they trusted that God would supplement their weaknesses. As Saint Catherine of Siena advises: "Start being brave about everything . . . Don't look at your weakness, but realize that in Christ crucified you can do

everything." Today pray for God's will to be revealed to you and trust that he will give you the strength you need.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Mark 3:1-6 (313).

"Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?"

Thursday, Jan 20, 2022

MEMORIAL OF SEBASTIAN, MARTYR

Listen to the peoples' laments

The anguish of physical pain can be a fact of life. In medieval times many artists were fascinated by the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian and created gruesome images of it. For practicing Christianity in the third century, Sebastian was ordered to be executed by arrows. He survived this ordeal, only to later be beaten to death for his faith. Father Robin Ryan, C.P., a Passionist priest, says when he encounters people suffering in any form, he avoids explanations as so much about God and suffering is a mystery. He tries to allow those in pain to lament and share their emotion with God, often using the psalms as a starting point as they "help us to recognize that we belong to a tradition and a community of faith; we are not alone in this experience." Draw solace from the lament tradition the next time you find yourself or others in pain.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7; Mark 3:7-12 (314). *"He had cured many and, as a result, those who had diseases were pressing upon him to touch him."*

Friday, Jan 21, 2022

MEMORIAL OF AGNES, MARTYR

I stand with Agnes

The stories of martyrs can make us feel a bit uneasy. They edify us, but they also can—and should!—horrify us. Why? Because in every story, we encounter human violence, perhaps even a reflection of the violence we ourselves have suffered, committed, or ignored. While we laud fourth-century martyr Agnes of Rome for her sacred commitment to chastity, we must not overlook the fact that she was martyred for resisting a forced, unwanted relationship and inhumane treatment as mere property. Agnes' story is particularly relevant today because women continue to face the very real threat of personal as well as systemic violence. Will you stand with Agnes against gender violence in all its forms?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 24:3-21; Mark 3:13-19 (315). *"You have treated me generously, while I have done you harm."*

Saturday, Jan 22, 2022

DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN

Cradle-to-grave Catholics

To embrace a consistent ethic of life is to not only oppose abortion but also to support and defend the dignity and right to life in all conditions and under all circumstances. The term "the Seamless Garment" was coined by the Catholic activist Eileen Egan to characterize this position, later popularized by the late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin. He said: "Those who defend the right to life of the weakest among us must be equally visible in support of the quality of life of the powerless among us: the old and the young, the hungry and the homeless, the undocumented immigrant and the unemployed worker." Learn more about the Seamless Garment ethic and take a stand today for life in all its forms!

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27; Mark 3:20-21 (316). *"Let us see your face, Lord, and we shall be saved."*

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



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