

Sunday, May 02, 2021

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Search for the truth

We've entered an age when discovering the truth feels more complicated than ever. Some of us are leery of "facts," knowing how easily they can be manufactured, massaged, or politicized. Traditional sources of truth—government, news media, even organized religion—have proven to be subject to the same failures to which we ourselves are prone. How do we sort out truth from all the political noise that distorts what we hear? John says the Spirit's been given to us for precisely this task. Pray for the gift of holy discernment.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 9:26-31; 1 John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8 (53).
"Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth."

Monday, May 03, 2021

FEAST OF PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

Don't think less of others

Poor James the Lesser. The other apostle named James—the Greater—got the better nickname. We don't even know anything about James the Lesser, other than his name and that Jesus picked him to be one of the 12—but that alone speaks volumes about this James. We've all experienced what it feels like to have labels attached to us that make us feel less in the eyes of others, if we even feel seen or known at all. But God looks past those labels to the truth of our identity. That's where you'll find your value and dignity, even if others don't seem to. Remember that, like James, you are God's chosen.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14 (561). *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?"*

Tuesday, May 04, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

May their force be with us

Today is Teacher Appreciation Day, recognizing teachers as a force for good—especially in this pandemic year. Through John Baptist de La Salle, patron saint of all teachers, we might say the best educators naturally follow a "Lasallian" philosophy of education. "The Lasallian tradition emphasizes the fact that all people, especially the young, have an inherent dignity which comes from their being created in the image of God," explains St. Mary's College of Winona. "Education is a means of developing this dignity for the well-being of each student as well as for the well-being of our society." Thank a teacher today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a (286). *"Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid."*

Wednesday, May 05, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Celebrate the dignity of diversity

Though today's "Cinco de Mayo" celebrations commemorate but a single Mexican victory over France at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, in the United States it has become an opportunity to honor the heritage and culture of Mexican people. As folks revel in parades and festivals, enjoying Mexican cuisine and music, we recall these words from the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "Human interdependence is increasing and spreading through the world . . . embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity."

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with a prayer of gratitude for the richness of human diversity.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8 (287). *"I am the vine and you are the branches."*

Thursday, May 06, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Focus on the essentials

One of the earliest conflicts in the church had to do with whether Gentiles should have to follow the laws and customs of Judaism. Because Christianity grew out of Judaism, early church leaders had a hard time sorting out what was essential to the emerging Christian faith and what was simply the "way we've always done it." This question continues to vex church leaders to this day and has gone through many iterations—from questions about ritual practices, to prayers and social norms. What is essential to the faith? That we love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Everything else may well be a matter of custom. When it comes to faith, take time today to get back to the basics.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:7-21; John 15:9-11 (288). *"It is my judgment, therefore, that we ought to stop troubling the Gentiles who turn to God."*

Friday, May 07, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Connect with creation and Creator

If you have a garden, you might be checking the forecast these days to see if conditions are right for planting. Gardens play an outside role in the Christian imagination. From the Garden of Eden to the Garden of Gethsemane, key events happen in gardens. For centuries communities of sisters, brothers, and priests have cultivated gardens for food, edification, and connection to a major metaphor for spiritual development. Seek out a patch of green, and whether you plant a seed or enjoy a bloom, connecting with creation will connect you with the Creator.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17 (289). *"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain."*

Saturday, May 08, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Elevate your spiritual gaze

Blessed Teresa Demjanovich (1901-27) has been called America's "Little Flower." Like Thérèse from Lisieux, France, Teresa from Bayonne, New Jersey was a spiritual writer of great insight who also died young. Because of her virtue, her writings, and a miracle healing attributed to her intercession, she was beatified in the Newark cathedral in 2014, the first-ever such ceremony held in the United States. Her elevation to sainthood awaits confirmation of a second miracle. Teresa's mother died in the 1918 pandemic, which killed well over 500,000 Americans. Sound sadly familiar? Ask Blessed Teresa's intercession for all who have suffered because of COVID-19.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21 (290). *"You do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world."*

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



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