

Sunday, Sep 12, 2021

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

From generation to generation

Loving grandparenting is a special gift to those children who receive it. Some of us were raised by generous elders. Others recognize our grandparents as the folks who cherished us just for showing up—something our parents couldn't always manage to do! Nine-year-old Russell Capper first wrote President Nixon in 1969 with the idea of honoring grandparents with their own day. It would take another decade and another president, Jimmy Carter, to make Grandparents Day official on the Sunday after Labor Day. Reach across the generations today and close the gap of understanding by listening to each other's stories, dreams, and hopes.

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 50:5-9a; James 2:14-18; Mark 8:27-35 (131). *"See, the Lord GOD is my help; who will prove me wrong?"*

Monday, Sep 13, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Preach often—use words when necessary

Glossophobia—fear of public speaking—is one of the most common forms of anxiety, affecting a sizeable portion of the population. Saint John Chrysostom was not a sufferer. His name means "golden-mouthed"—and was he ever. Renowned as a preacher, his sermons could last up to two hours. (Think about that the next time your pastor runs a bit long!) Few of us are that eloquent as speakers, but all of us are called to be witnesses to our faith in words *and* deeds. There's no need to impress—let your actions speak for you. Never fear living your discipleship humbly and sharing what's in your heart. The truth always speaks volumes.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 2:1-8; Luke 7:1-10 (443). *"Say the word and let my servant be healed."*

Tuesday, Sep 14, 2021

FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Lift high the cross

After ending Christian persecutions in 313, Constantine sent his mother, Helena, to the Holy Land where her team is said to have unearthed Christ's tomb. Here, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built. Excavations also reportedly unearthed the three crosses of Mount Calvary, the wood of the "True Cross" being the instrument of Jesus' Crucifixion and associated with miraculous healings. Whether it's the crucifix, the Jerusalem cross, Maltese cross, Celtic cross—or countless others—no other symbol represents Christian faith better. And so we pray: "We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

TODAY'S READINGS: Numbers 21:4b-9; Philippians 2:6-11; John 3:13-17 (638). *"He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross."*

Wednesday, Sep 15, 2021

MEMORIAL OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

She's with him

Being a strong companion or having great compassion is essential for discipleship. Mary had both. Notice the "com-" prefix of those qualities, which means "with." Under the title Our Lady of Sorrows, Mary is the first witness of the church and stood with Jesus through his pain and glory—his life, death, and Resurrection. The

church uses "sorrows" here not so that we would be sad and weighed down but to lift up what it means to really be "with" another person and to share deeply their joy and sorrow. Mary continues to stand alongside us. How do you experience Mary's companionship and compassion in your own life?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 3:14-16 (445); John 19:25-27 or Luke 2:33-35 (639). *"Woman, behold, your son."*

Thursday, Sep 16, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CORNELIUS, POPE, AND CYPRIAN, BISHOP, MARTYRS

The cost of discipleship can be high

Saints Cornelius and Cyprian were friends during the 200s, a period when Christians were persecuted by the Roman Empire. Today a number of countries continue to oppress, harass, and even kill Christians. There is pressure today, as there was in the era of the early martyrs, to deny the faith in order to survive. With Cornelius and Cyprian in mind, stand in solidarity with courageous Christians everywhere. Learn what their needs are and how the worldwide church can help.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 4:12-16; Luke 7:36-50 (446). *"[Jesus] said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'"*

Friday, Sep 17, 2021

MEMORIALS OF ROBERT BELLARMINE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH AND HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, VIRGIN, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Listen to your doctors

Jesus' ministry was simple: He went from town to town telling people that they were loved. The mantle, picked up by the doctors of the church, including those we honor today, was to interpret Jesus' message for subsequent generations. Saint Robert Bellarmine's *Catechism* clarified the Catholic understanding of faith and reason, and Saint Hildegard of Bingen's songs, such as *"O virtus sapientie,"* helped unlock the mysteries of Divine Love and the Trinity. The Good News is meant for you. Find a way to hear it.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 6:2c-12; Luke 8:1-3 (447). *"Jesus journeyed from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God."*

Saturday, Sep 18, 2021

Take the lesson to heart

On the eve of Catechetical Sunday, it's good to reflect on our task of teaching the next generation matters of the Spirit. One comment heard too often when bad things happen is that "God must have a reason for doing this." Or, "It must be God's will." Looking at the biblical testimony, however, leads to the realization that most of the bad things that happen are not God's will at all but the work of sinful people. God says, "Feed the hungry" and children starve. God says, "Do not kill" and people murder. Let's teach our kids what's on God, and what's on us.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Timothy 6:13-16; Luke 8:4-15 (448). *"[T]he Devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts."*

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



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