



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

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2008

NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Words indeed

To do something well, it helps to believe in what you're doing. To think what you're doing

is meaningful usually contributes to doing it better. The other side of the coin is acting on what you believe—making what is paramount in your life the center of your actions. This way of going about things applies to the most important task of all, living your faith. Believe in what you do, and do what you believe, and you will be on solid ground.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Deuteronomy 11:18, 26-28, 32; Romans 3:21-25, 28; Matthew 7:21-27*

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock."

MONDAY, JUNE 2 FEAST OF MARCELLINUS AND PETER, MARTYRS
Built with living stones

As we sit on padded pews in air-conditioned churches, it's challenging to imagine that faith in Jesus was ever a life-threatening decision. But for the first several centuries, Christianity was both a creed and a death sentence to those who embraced it. So Marcellinus the priest and Peter the exorcist went to their deaths in the year 304 in Rome. Poems were written about them; their relics were preserved; miracles were reported concerning them; and a church was built over their catacombs. The church we belong to today was built with living stones. Share their boldness and their witness!

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Peter 1:2-7; Mark 12:1-12*

"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone."

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

FEAST OF CHARLES LWANGA AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Just say no

People in power have been known to overstep their bounds and ask for more than is their rightful due. Such demands rarely turn out well—at least in the short run—for anyone who refuses the unfair request. Case in point: Charles Lwanga and hundreds of other Ugandan teens who were tortured and executed in the 19th century after their chieftain grew jealous of their devotion to Christianity and ordered them to denounce their faith. As the young men burned in a massive pyre, their torturers were assured of their victims' deaths only when the martyrs stopped praying. Pray for the spiritual gifts of fortitude and piety when you are asked to do something you know would mean giving to others what is rightfully yours—and God's.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Peter 3:12-15a, 17-18; Mark 12:13-17*

"Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

Imposition of hands

As the early church began the transition from its first generation into the next, the apostles took great care that the "sound words" and actions of the faith would remain continuous and unified. We see this concern for unity in the pastoral letters written in the name of Saint Paul. Paul tells Timothy that his obligation to the true teachings of Christ as well as the grace of God to speak them is the result of the "imposition of my hands." This special

gift of authority, which is given sacramentally by God through the earthly imposition of hands, serves as a guarantee of unity through the successive generations. Authority is not, then, a gift one can give to oneself. Consider all the impositions of hands that have come down through the centuries.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Timothy 1:1-3, 6-12; Mark 12:18-27*

"God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline."

THURSDAY, JUNE 5 FEAST OF BONIFACE, BISHOP, MARTYR
Don't miss God's bus

Have you ever just missed catching a bus? You don't have to miss it by much. It gives you an idea of what Jesus meant when he said a scribe was "not far" from the kingdom of God. Imagine yourself ending up "not far" from God's kingdom. It would be like missing a bus by just a few seconds. In this case, a miss is as good as a mile. Making the kingdom is more than knowing the Bible and getting religion right. It's knowing Christ and living in his love. Saint Boniface sacrificed everything for the sake of the kingdom. What will you sacrifice today?

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Timothy 2:8-15; Mark 12:28-34*

"When Jesus saw that (he) answered with understanding, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.'"

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

Like it says in the Bible

While all scripture may be useful for teaching, correction, and training, scripture can also be abused if used as a collection of proof-text arrows to aim at whomever one's antagonist might be. Witness justifying slavery with Exodus 21:20-21, or Leviticus 18:22 to support homophobia. One who merely tosses quotations about has not looked beneath the word surface but uses select (and sometimes mistranslated) texts to justify a prevailing prejudice. Timothy encourages the use of scripture to equip us "for every good work," not for attack. Our culture is accustomed to headlines and sound bites, but a serious faith requires us to constantly deepen our understanding of both God and our world. We did *not* learn everything we need to know about our faith in kindergarten, or in CCD.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Timothy 3:10-17; Mark 12:35-37*

"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful . . . so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work."

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

How to make a fortune with a penny

Alchemy was an ancient practice, part science and part philosophy, which aimed to create gold from lesser metals, discover a universal cure for disease, and, while they were at it, indefinitely prolong life. The fact that it didn't work never prevented anyone from attempting it. But there is a spiritual alchemy that gains an eternal kingdom for the price of a penny. The widow in the gospel story practiced transformation successfully, according to Jesus. Mary of Nazareth gained the same kingdom at the price of her "yes." Want a kingdom? One word is all it takes.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Timothy 4:1-8; Mark 12:38-44*

"A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny."

© 2008 by TrueQuest Communications, L.L.C. PHONE: 800-942-2811;

E-MAIL: mail@takefiveforfaith.com; WEBSITE: www.TakeFiveForFaith.com.

Licensed for noncommercial use. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotes come from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.
Contributors: Father Paul Boudreau, Alice Camille, Daniel Grippo, Father Larry Janowski, Ann O'Connor, Sean Reynolds, Joel Schorn, Patrice J. Tuohy