

Sunday, Jan 24, 2021

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME; SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD

Celebrate, study, share

The timing seemed right. In September 2019, on the 1,600th anniversary of scripture scholar Saint Jerome's death, Pope Francis launched a new observance on the church calendar. Today's "Sunday of the Word of God" is deliberately placed within the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. All who follow Jesus are invited to unite around the happy gift of our sacred story contained in the Bible's pages. On this occasion, we celebrate, study, and spread these good words we never possess merely for ourselves. Enthroned the Bible in your home—and heart.

TODAY'S READINGS: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20 (68). *"The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel."*

Monday, Jan 25, 2021

FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL, APOSTLE

Turn things around

It is arguably the biggest about-face in history: Paul goes from passionately persecuting Christians to converting to Christianity and becoming one of its most important champions. And it's a hard-to-beat conversion story: falling off a horse and encountering the risen Lord. But it's a story that happens in the hearts of Christians all the time: Life knocks you down while going the wrong way, and you're not ready, willing, or able to see the truth—and then somehow Jesus changes everything. By the grace of God, it happens to you again and again. Paul is proof that it's never too late, that you've never made too many mistakes, that you're never too far gone to keep turning yourself around.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 22:3-16 or 9:1-22; Mark 16:15-18 (519). *"Repent, and believe in the gospel."*

Tuesday, Jan 26, 2021

MEMORIAL OF TIMOTHY AND TITUS, BISHOPS

Seek good companions for the journey

We honor Timothy and Titus one day after the conversion of Saint Paul. For Paul, once converted, wasted no time in spreading the gospel and relied on many to help with his missionary work. Few of his companions were as key—or as beloved—as Timothy and Titus. Paul gave them the toughest assignments, and his letters to them are the only ones addressed to fellow missionaries that are included in the Bible. In those epistles, Paul refers to them as "my dear child" and "my true child in our common faith"—reminders that all become brothers and sisters through Christ.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Timothy 1:1-8 OR Titus 1:1-5; Mark 3:31-35 (520; Gospel 318). *"Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."*

Wednesday, Jan 27, 2021

Never forget

On this day in 2005, the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp, the United Nations established International Holocaust Remembrance Day. With firm resolve to educate future generations about the horrors of the Holocaust, this annual event is a clarion call never to forget the Nazi atrocities that claimed the lives of 6 million Jews and millions more others. U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres warns that

it would be a "dangerous error to think of the Holocaust as simply the result of the insanity of a group of criminal Nazis." It happened because of the "millennia of hatred, scapegoating, and discrimination targeting the Jews." Pray today for grace to choose love rather than hate, to choose inclusion rather than discrimination.

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 10:11-18; Psalm 110; Mark 4:1-20 (319). *"Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool."*

Thursday, Jan 28, 2021

MEMORIAL OF THOMAS AQUINAS, PRIEST, RELIGIOUS, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Let your light shine

How apt that the gospel on today's memorial of Saint Thomas Aquinas encourages us to let our light shine. This saint's light was his powerful intellect, and it still shines brightly today. His theological writings, particularly *Summa Theologiae*, continue to have tremendous impact on the church. One of his lasting insights is that faith and reason both come from God, and Christian doctrine is not at odds with rational thought. In honor of this doctor of the church with his relentlessly probing mind, take time to sharpen your own understanding of a faith-related issue.

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 10:19-25; Mark 4:21-25 (320). *"Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket . . . and not to be placed on a lampstand?"*

Friday, Jan 29, 2021

Make an offer

"Offer it up" is a phrase that seems baked into our Catholic tradition. Often it comes out at times when we are at a loss from the complexities and pain of suffering, which can leave us hopeless, scared, and lonely. After months of social distancing, mourning deaths, job and school closures, and holidays spent alone, we are all in a kind of personal and corporate space of suffering. We are invited to truly *offer*, that is, to *give* ourselves into the care of others and into the loving embrace of Jesus the Christ who also has known suffering intimately. What do you need to offer up and how can you lovingly embrace others' offerings of themselves?

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 10:32-39; Mark 4:26-34 (321). *"We are not among those who draw back and perish, but among those who have faith and will possess life."*

Saturday, Jan 30, 2021

All that I have is yours

Inheritance is a big deal in the Bible. Not so much legal inheritance, though that is mentioned, but theological inheritance, the gifts God bestows on the community of faith—the people of Israel—and later, in the New Testament, to the followers of Christ. We all share in that inheritance, that "holy ground" promised so long ago to Abraham and his descendants. How will you put your inheritance to use? Will you pass it on to others, or will it end with you? How you invest your time, talent, and treasure will determine the answer to that question.

TODAY'S READINGS: Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Mark 4:35-41 (322). *"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance."*

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



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