

Sunday, Apr 11, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER; DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Hold onto the holy memories

It's unlikely that those who survive the pandemic will look back on these days with much nostalgia. Sickness and loss, fear and division, stress and isolation: The consequences will be with us for a generation. Yet emerging from the tragedy were also instances of humanity, decency, and heroism that echoed the time of the first apostles. We've shared food, masks, information, errands, toilet paper, songs. We've gathered on balconies and in virtual rooms. We've found ways to pray and to encourage. This Divine Mercy Sunday, give thanks for those who have helped you through this and every crisis.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 4:32-35; 1 John 5:1-6; John 20:19-31 (44).

"No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common."

Monday, Apr 12, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Stand with those who stood for you

Though you may not remember it, your Baptism was an extremely important day in your life—the beginning of your life in Christ. Your godparents represented you that day, speaking on your behalf if you were a baby. Perhaps later you became a godparent to others. Whether you're still close or have drifted apart over time, reach out to your godparents or godchildren and reminisce about that day. Talk about the role you have played in each other's spiritual life and pray together for deepening conversion. Promise to keep on praying for each other in our ever-growing identity as children of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 4:23-31; John 3:1-8 (267). *"Amen, amen, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."*

Tuesday, Apr 13, 2021

MEMORIAL OF MARTIN I, POPE, MARTYR

The dilemma of indifference

The Eastern Church began exploring monotheletism, the notion that Jesus had only a divine will, despite being both human and divine, in the 600s. Pope Martin I issued a reprimand, opposing this heresy. This angered the Eastern emperor, who had the sickly Martin dragged to Constantinople for trial. The pontiff was beaten, starved, and exiled, leading to his death. But Martin also blamed a Western Church that never came to his rescue. "I am surprised at the indifference," he wrote, of "those who belong to the church of Saint Peter." Ask for Martin's intercession today, for all who suffer indifference.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 4:32-37; John 3:7b-15 (268). *"The community of believers was of one heart and mind."*

Wednesday, Apr 14, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Let your life be your witness

How do you live your faith? Some days may be harder than others, but rarely, if ever nowadays, will the effort to be a faithful follower of Jesus land someone in jail or cost them their life. Yet that was the fate of the early disciples who insisted on proclaiming the stories of Jesus' life, death, and rising. There are 20th-century martyrs as well (Blessed Stanley Rother, Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, the martyrs of El Salvador among others), but faith calls

all of us to kindness to all people, fairness in the face of injustice, trust in God's promised Spirit, and a constant willingness to see the face of God in our neighbors. Do people recognize you as a follower of Jesus by the way you live?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21 (269). *"The men whom you put in prison are in the temple area and are teaching the people."*

Thursday, Apr 15, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Be up to the tax at hand

Taxes are due today, an obligation that few people savor and yet all of us rely on. Catholics can feel proud to promote the common good by paying taxes for schools, roads, parks, healthcare, and other social benefits. In their pastoral letter, *Economic Justice for All*, the U.S. bishops go even further, saying: "The tax system should be continually evaluated in terms of its impact on the poor." If you feel disheartened by the paperwork or the cost of taxes, take heart that despite any flaws in the system, taxes help build the commonwealth.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36 (270). *"The Father loves the Son and has given everything over to him."*

Friday, Apr 16, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

A God of his word

Poor communication is the main reason relationships fail. If it isn't clear what is being promised, then it is easy to become disillusioned when expectations aren't met. People who lose faith in God often point to God's untrustworthiness: They asked for something and didn't receive it. Hence, they conclude that God is not to be trusted. But remember the promise of God is love. Look around; wherever you see love—even a love lost—you see God's promise fulfilled. As Saint Augustine put it: "What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of others." Help embody God's love today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 5:34-42; John 6:1-15 (271). *"This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world."*

Saturday, Apr 17, 2021

EASTER WEEKDAY

Call a deacon

The word "deacon" is derived from the Greek word *diákonos*, meaning "one who serves at table," found in today's first reading. The office of deacon endured for several centuries after its origin in Acts. But eventually the diaconate was reduced to a temporary stage of ordination to the priesthood. After Vatican II the permanent diaconate was revived. Today many men, most married although some single, enter the diaconate through the sacrament of Holy Orders. They serve their parishes and assist their pastors in many ways both social and liturgical. Perhaps you know someone who would make a good deacon. Give him a call.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 6:1-7; John 6:16-21 (272). *"It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table."*

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



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