

Sunday, Aug 08, 2021

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Let living water flow

Jesus said, "Whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink" will be rewarded (Matt. 10:42). How much more so if we champion clean water rights for all. Have you ever tried to run a bath, only to have sludge emerge from the pipes? Have you visited a familiar lake and found its normally clear water unfit for swimming? Have you gotten sick from drinking from a contaminated spring, or developed a rash from washing in your own sink? Folks around the world and in parts of our own country have had this experience often. Take time to learn what you can do locally and globally to ensure access to what Pope Francis calls a "basic and universal human right"—safe drinking water.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Kings 19:4-8; Ephesians 4:30—5:2; John 6:41-51 (116). *"Elijah looked and there at his head was a hearth cake and a jug of water."*

Monday, Aug 09, 2021

MEMORIAL OF TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Pick up a page-turner of faith

Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was born Edith Stein in 1891 and was killed at Auschwitz in 1942. She was a German Jewish philosopher who had been an atheist, although she had admired Christians she knew. She shocked everyone by becoming Catholic and, 11 years later, a Carmelite nun. Her conversion was prompted by an all-night reading of the autobiography of Saint Teresa of Avila, a 16th-century Carmelite also of Jewish origins. Pick up a copy of the autobiographies of both these riveting saints—and see how they contribute to your own ongoing conversion.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 10:12-22; Matthew 17:22-27 (413). *"And they were overwhelmed with grief."*

Tuesday, Aug 10, 2021

FEAST OF LAWRENCE, DEACON, MARTYR

Find your way to serve

Lawrence was one of seven deacons martyred in Rome under Emperor Valerian in 258. The word *deacon*—from the Greek word for *service*—describes the work of these early ministers: beginning with the first seven deacons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, appointed to serve the everyday needs of the flock while the apostles busied themselves with evangelization. Today's Catholic deacons are ordained; permanent deacons can preach at Mass and preside over weddings, Baptisms, and funerals—while transitional deacons later become priests. Learn more at nadd.org.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; John 12:24-26 (618). *"Where I am, there also will my servant be."*

Wednesday, Aug 11, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CLARE, VIRGIN

Hope lights the way

Saint Clare, founder of the Poor Clare order of nuns, is part of a long line of women and men who gave up everything for the sake of following Christ, and, in turn, inspired others to join them on their holy journey. Often meeting significant resistance, these brave souls persevered, driven by a passion to bring God's Good News to the world. "Like a shooting star against the dark sky of injustice and ignorance, founders of religious communities lit up the landscape with a burst of hope," says Precious Blood Father Joe Nassal. Saint Gaspar, the founder of the Missionaries of the

Precious Blood, like Saint Clare hoped to free people from the chains of societal conformity. Clare chose to do it within the confines of a cloister; Gaspar, as an itinerant preacher. Both were being true to themselves and the gospel. Follow your own path toward hope.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Matthew 18:15-20 (415). *"His eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated."*

Thursday, Aug 12, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, RELIGIOUS

Love lifted her higher

Jane Frances de Chantal, a French widow who founded the Visitation Nuns in 1610, was a well-off, educated woman with administrative talent and deep faith who was widowed at age 28. Obligated to live with a cruel father-in-law, she coped by pouring herself into charity work and spiritual development, eventually teaming up with Saint Francis de Sales to found a religious community. Have you ever coped with difficulties by trying to become a better person? What trial in your life could nudge you toward greater goodness?

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 3:7-10a, 11, 13-17; Matthew 18:21—19:1 (416). *"Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan."*

Friday, Aug 13, 2021

MEMORIAL OF PONTIAN, POPE, AND HIPPOLYTUS, PRIEST, MARTYRS

What unites is greater than what divides

Pope Pontian and Hippolytus were both imprisoned in Sardinia during Roman persecutions. Before their deaths in 235, Pontian and Hippolytus reconciled, because for a time the two were archenemies. Indeed, Hippolytus had been elected antipope by his followers who were in stark opposition to Pontian's tolerant stance on reconciling returning Christians to the church. In the end, Pontian and Hippolytus realized that their shared love of Christ far surpassed any differences. Finding one common element with an enemy is the first step toward reconciliation. Perhaps we can start with our shared humanity and work our way from there.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 24:1-13; Matthew 19:3-12 (417). *"I gave you a land that you had not tilled and cities that you had not built, to dwell in."*

Saturday, Aug 14, 2021

MEMORIAL OF MAXIMILIAN KOLBE, PRIEST, MARTYR

Give a piece of your heart

Maximilian Kolbe shook up the rules for saint-making. At Kolbe's 1982 canonization, Pope John Paul II named him a "martyr of charity." No longer could one become a martyr only by being killed because of "hatred for the faith." Now one killed because of charitable work, as Maximilian was, could also be a martyr. This opened the door to sainthood for others who were murdered for their good work, like Notre Dame Sister Dorothy Stang of Brazil, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ sisters of Liberia, or the Maryknoll sisters of El Salvador. We are all called in some way to be martyrs, even if we give away only a part of our lives. Give away a piece of your life today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joshua 24:14-29; Matthew 19:13-15 (418). *"Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*

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



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