

Sunday, Aug 15, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Some assumptions prove true

Catholicism acknowledges twin sources in scripture and tradition. While our faith is biblically rooted, we embrace an expanding truth discerned by saints and mystics, church doctors, and popes. Mary's Assumption isn't narrated in the gospels and wasn't taught dogmatically until 1950. It evolved from the second-century appreciation of Mary as the New Eve: preserved from sin at conception and therefore not subject to sin's effects in death. Liturgists, saints, and theologians promoted the Assumption for centuries, and devout Catholics championed this understanding. Finally, Pope Pius XII bowed to the "sense of the faithful" and made it official in 1950.

TODAY'S READINGS: Vigil: 1 Chronicles 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:54b-57; Luke 11:27-28 (621); Day: Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; 1 Corinthians 15:20-27; Luke 1:39-56 (622).
"A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet."

Monday, Aug 16, 2021

MEMORIAL OF STEPHEN OF HUNGARY

Concern yourself with the greatest Kingdom

Royal families are typically concerned about succession and making sure they have an heir. They want their lineage to survive them. Many monarchs eventually failed at that, including King Saint Stephen I of Hungary, who founded the country in the year 1000 and made it Christian. Only one of his sons lived to adulthood but died before Stephen did. What Stephen did leave behind is a country that is still majority Catholic. We might not be remembered for sowing faith long into the future here on Earth—but if we remain faithful, we could end up with royal treasure in heaven.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 2:11-19; Matthew 19:16-22 (419).
"Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?"

Tuesday, Aug 17, 2021

Pray for the persecuted

On this day in 1798, Our Lady of La Vang first appeared to Vietnamese victims of persecution. When Vietnam's emperor outlawed Catholicism, inciting brutality and martyrdom, believers fled to the rain forest of La Vang. They sought Mary's consolation, gathering beneath a large tree to pray the Rosary. They began seeing an apparition of Mother and Child, flanked by angels. She comforted them and is said to have pointed out nearby healing plants. Our Lady of La Vang is honored in the United States with a chapel at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Ask her to intercede for victims of racist hate.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 6:11-24a; Matthew 19:23-30 (420). *"We have given up everything and followed you."*

Wednesday, Aug 18, 2021

Let's work on making work better

The U.S. Catholic Bishops have spoken on *The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers*, saying in part: "The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages" Food for thought at a time when workers' reluctance to return to low-paid, unfulfilling

jobs is much in the news. Is the problem with the worker—or the workplace?

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 9:6-15; Matthew 20:1-16 (421). *"Are you envious because I am generous? Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."*

Thursday, Aug 19, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JOHN EUDES, PRIEST

Take this devotion to heart

The Sacred Heart of Jesus image is ubiquitous in the Catholic world, and today we celebrate one of the people who helped create a devotion to it, John Eudes, a French priest (1601-80), who also founded the Eudists, the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. The Sacred Heart image is a heart encircled by a crown of thorns often depicted with radiating rays of light and placed on the chest of Jesus. The image is physical and mystical, a reminder of Christ's bodily sacrifice and mysterious in its supernatural appearance. Seek out this image and allow it to shape your prayer today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 11:29-39a; Matthew 22:1-14 (422).
"Everything is ready; come to the feast."

Friday, Aug 20, 2021

MEMORIAL OF BERNARD, ABBOT, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

All hail Doctor Mellifluous

No, Mellifluous is not the newest superhero villain; it's a title for one of the greatest heroes of the Roman Catholic faith. Bernard of Clairvaux earned the nickname because his writings were eloquent, as suggested by the Latin root of his nickname: "flowing honey." This gift was founded on his deep love of God, scripture, and the church's tradition. His description of the Holy Spirit as the "kiss" between God the Father and Jesus the Son gives us a beautiful example of how to image the relationship of love among the three persons of the Trinity. Following in the good doctor's footsteps, how have you experienced the kiss of the Holy Spirit in your own relationships?

TODAY'S READINGS: Ruth 1:1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22; Matthew 22:34-40 (423). *"For wherever you go, I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge, your people shall be my people, and your God my God."*

Saturday, Aug 21, 2021

MEMORIAL OF PIUS X, POPE

The year of living humbly

Prior to COVID-19, plagues mentioned in history books seemed like remote disasters that only happened in times and places where rats roamed streets filled with sewage. Now that we've been humbled by our continued vulnerability to unseen agents of disease and death, perhaps we can bring a renewed appreciation to Pius X, who endeared himself to the people of northern Italy because of his efforts tending the sick during the cholera plague of the early 1870s. Take a moment this week to thank someone who has tended the sick during our very modern plague.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ruth 2:1-3, 8-11; 4:13-17; Matthew 23:1-12 (424). *"The greatest among you must be your servant."*

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



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