

Sunday, Oct 10, 2021

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord

More than three-quarters of those suffering from mental illness worldwide have no access to the care that could restore them to healthy relationships and productive lives. The World Federation for Mental Health therefore dedicates this Mental Health Day to the theme "Mental Health in an Unequal World." Factors like race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and economic status complicate the path to adequate support. Pray the Rosary's Mysteries of Light today that clarity be given to those who struggle with mental health issues, and the societies that devalue them.

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 7:1-11; Hebrews 4:12-13; Mark 10:17-30 (143). *"I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded, and the spirit of wisdom came to me."*

Monday, Oct 11, 2021

MEMORIAL OF JOHN XXIII, POPE

He saw thee more clearly

The humble Pope John XXIII disliked the pomp and attention that came with his role, and he insisted on being called simply "the pope." Nearly 60 years since his pontificate, he is remembered in Italy as *il papa buono*, "the good pope." In the short time he was pope—less than five years before he died of cancer in 1963—he changed the Catholic Church like few others by convening the Second Vatican Council. On his deathbed, he said: "It is not that the gospel has changed; it is that we have begun to understand it better." We can always use the intercession of "the good pope" as we keep seeking to understand better what the gospel means in our changing times.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 1:1-7; Luke 11:29-32 (467). *"Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation."*

Tuesday, Oct 12, 2021

Our pillar of strength

Today is the feast day of Virgin Maria del Pilar, a Spanish devotion commemorating the first official Marian apparition of the Catholic Church. According to tradition, Mary first appeared—while still alive—to the apostle James in the year 40, as he preached the gospel to the people of Spain. Saint James, despondent over his progress, prayed for reassurance, and Our Lady appeared to him in a supernatural manner, standing upon a pillar held aloft by angels. Because October is the month of the Rosary, honor Maria with the beautiful Hail Holy Queen prayer that's part of that devotion.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 1:16-25; Luke 11:37-41 (468). *"I am not ashamed of the Gospel."*

Wednesday, Oct 13, 2021

God to humanity: Can't buy my love

From at least the time of the Pharisees, important people in the eyes of the world often assumed they had the inside track on a pleasant afterlife. Pope Francis begged to differ in an Advent season homily several years back. At the Last Judgment, Francis said, Jesus will not say, "You, come with me because you have given so much money to the church. You are a benefactor of the church. Come, come to Heaven." No. You can't buy your way into Heaven. And He won't say: 'You are very important, you have studied so much and earned so many honors, come into Heaven.'

No. Awards do not open the gate of Heaven," Francis said. "What will Jesus tell us to open up the gates of Heaven? 'I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat. I was homeless, and you gave Me shelter. I was sick, and you came to see Me. I was in prison, and you came to visit Me.' Jesus is humility," Francis said. Close your purse or wallet, and open your heart!

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 2:1-11; Luke 11:42-46 (469). *"You pay tithes of mint and of rue and of every garden herb, but you pay no attention to judgment and to love for God."*

Thursday, Oct 14, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CALLISTUS I, POPE, MARTYR

Patron saint of second (or more) chances

Saint Callistus I is inspiration to anyone who has made major errors in life. Callistus seriously messed up, not once but twice. Born into slavery, his master put him in charge of a bank that Callistus criminally mismanaged. After a while in prison, he was freed to earn back the money he owed. Instead, he was arrested for brawling in a synagogue. Strike two. Nonetheless, Callistus reformed himself, served the early church as a cemetery manager, and was eventually elected pope! Consider saying a prayer of thanks for a church that offers redemption (even the papacy) to people who have fallen hard.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 3:21-30; Luke 11:47-54 (470). *"Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge."*

Friday, Oct 15, 2021

MEMORIAL OF TERESA OF JESUS, VIRGIN, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Don't be afraid of the dark

The dark night of the soul, a term coined by Spanish mystic Saint John of the Cross, describes a period on the spiritual journey when one feels distant from God and suffers physical and emotional pain. Saint Teresa of Ávila, a close friend of John's, actually felt like she was going mad as she pursued the contemplative life. But then, in 1567, while gazing at a statue of Jesus, she felt an ecstasy beyond description as she reached "union with God." Teresa wrote much about her interior life, and she encouraged others to experience the "great gifts that come through abandoning everything to God and dying to oneself." Pray for the patience and humility to stay the spiritual course.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 4:1-8; Luke 12:1-7 (471). *"Therefore, whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light."*

Saturday, Oct 16, 2021

I was hungry

World Food Day was established in 1979 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and is celebrated annually on this date in 150 countries. The theme for this year's celebration is, "Safe food now for a healthy tomorrow." The World Food Program (WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the organization. As of 2019, the WFP has served 97 million people in 88 countries, and it was awarded the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to combat hunger and contribute to peace in conflict areas. Take a moment today to thank God for the food you eat and the people who produce it, and to support your local World Food Day celebration.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 4:13, 16-18; Luke 12:8-12 (472). *"I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God."*

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



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