

Sunday, Oct 31, 2021

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Now and at the hour of our death

All Hallows' Evening (contracted to Hallowe'en) begins the liturgical period of All Hallows' Eve, when saints, martyrs, and the departed in general are kept in special memory. Hallowed means consecrated, as the souls of the dead are in God's hands. All of the holy and troubled souls who have gone before us—represented by trick-or-treaters dressed as superheroes or vampires among others—are worthy of our mindful recollection and prayers.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 6:2-6; Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 12:28b-34 (152). *"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone!"*

Monday, Nov 01, 2021

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

Keep on marching

There are more than 10,000 saints venerated by the Catholic Church. (The exact number is a little unclear since some early saints may be more legendary than historical.) A lot of them are fairly new—Pope John Paul II (himself a saint) canonized more saints than all the popes in the previous 500 years combined. What does it mean to be a saint? A saint is anyone in heaven, whether canonized or not, and could include your own late family and friends. It doesn't mean they were perfect in life, but that they kept trying to live a holy life. Saints form the "great cloud of witnesses" and they're all cheering for you as you strive to be a saint, too.

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12a (667). *"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."*

Tuesday, Nov 02, 2021

COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED (ALL SOULS' DAY)

Knock, knock, knockin' on heaven's door

From the earliest days of Christianity—as believers shared Eucharist in the catacombs, alongside the dead—we Catholics have woven prayers for our dearly departed into many observances: every celebration of the Mass, praying the Rosary, annual parish-wide remembrances of the dead throughout November—even incorporating elements of Día de los Muertos from Latino tradition. We pray so that all souls who've been detoured through purgatory might, with our prayerful help, enjoy triumphant entry into heaven. As you remember your own dearly departed today, celebrate in Día de los Muertos style: Pray with their photos, visit their graves, enjoy their favorite foods.

TODAY'S READINGS: Wisdom 3:1-9; Romans 5:5-11 or Romans 6:3-9; John 6:37-40 (668). *"Everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life."*

Wednesday, Nov 03, 2021

MEMORIAL OF MARTIN DE PORRES, RELIGIOUS

United in our diversity

Born in colonial Peru in 1579 to a mix of Spanish, African, and indigenous ancestors, Martin de Porres was barred from full membership in a religious order in his racially stratified society. Martin was not deterred, however, and his gifts as a healer and spiritual leader elevated him to a position of great renown and respect within the Dominican order and Peruvian society. Today,

there is a 61 percent chance that two people selected at random in the United States will be of different racial or ethnic backgrounds, according to the 2020 Census. As patron saint of race relations and those of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, Martin offers inspiration to all of us to work for social justice in our increasingly diverse nation.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 13:8-10; Luke 14:25-33 (487).

"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

Thursday, Nov 04, 2021

MEMORIAL OF CHARLES BORROMEIO, BISHOP

Times that try our souls

It's a tricky business to take stock of the "signs of the times," as Vatican II urged us to do. One person who was good at assessing the strengths and flaws of his culture was Saint Charles Borromeo (1538-84), a reformer who used his education and power as bishop to heal and repair the church. Pray that the Holy Spirit give us wisdom to perceive how God is present today, and to help bring about that presence where it seems to be lacking.

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 14:7-12; Luke 15:1-10 (488). *"There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people."*

Friday, Nov 05, 2021

What would Jesus not do?

It's easy to understand why evangelism is so compelling. We can't wait to share the awesome news of finding our heart's treasure in Jesus the Christ and the Catholic faith. But we must also take great care in evangelism so that we do not end up "colonizing" others, that is, assuming there is nothing good or godly in another person or group and imposing our own "enlightened" ways upon them. Jesus certainly does not do this. Instead, he shows by his own life the love of God and he looks where God already is in the world and in people's lives. In what ways can we safeguard respect for others and God in our own call to be evangelists?

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 15:14-21; Luke 16:1-8 (489). *"I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me."*

Saturday, Nov 06, 2021

Inspiration knows no bounds

Jesus' life and ministry broke open the "old wineskins" of religious and social customs. Inspired by his example, the early church was remarkably diverse and creative, and women played key roles every step of the way. Priscilla (or Prisca, her formal name), along with her husband, Aquila, were companions of Saint Paul and prominent leaders in the early church—and Priscilla's name usually appears first when they are mentioned in the New Testament, a hint of her esteemed position. She instructed the learned Apollos, and some commentators think she may have had a hand in authoring the epistle to the Hebrews. Raise a glass to new wineskins—may they continue to pour out the Spirit!

TODAY'S READINGS: Romans 16:3-9, 16, 22-27; Luke 16:9-15 (490).

"Greet Prisca and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life."

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



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