

Sunday, May 06, 2018

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

The age of idols

Celebrity rules. Or so it seems. Every headline, photo shoot, and news crawl seeks to remind us that no matter what we're doing at the moment, someone's living a reality that is *so much cooler*.

We may secretly desire to be one of the beautiful people, to taste the sweetness of that success. Consider that folks who do command a high public profile like Pope Francis, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and the Dalai Lama have all repeated that they are mere mortals, doing nothing more than we all should be doing. Want fame? Pursue sainthood.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; 1 John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17 (56). "Peter, however, raise him up, saying, 'Get up. I myself am also a human being.'"

Monday, May 07, 2018

EASTER WEEKDAY

Come stay at my house

God has bestowed so many gifts on creation. In fact, the world is here in the first place because God's love overflowed—God wanted to share the divine love. God even sent Jesus and became human so as to invite people more deeply into life in God. So shouldn't the response to all this generosity be a generous one in which we welcome God into our lives, are open and inviting with God in prayer, and honor and care for our world and its creatures? Start opening doors today.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26-16:4a (291). "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home."

Tuesday, May 08, 2018

EASTER WEEKDAY

Make way for the Spirit

Much has been written about the importance of a "ministry of presence"—of being with people in times of need. Important as presence is, there is also a "ministry of absence," said noted spirituality author Henri Nouwen. We should never forget that it is the Holy Spirit ultimately who brings healing and comfort to people and that we need to trust God to do the work that only God can do in human hearts. There came a time when the risen Christ had to depart, but with assurances the Holy Spirit would be with us always. Sometimes your absence serves in a way your presence can't.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 16:22-34; John 16:5-11 (292). "But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go."

Wednesday, May 09, 2018

EASTER WEEKDAY

When Christians are in the margins

Often in stories of the church, both ancient and modern, you hear in the headlines about the scoffers. The anonymous faithful are relegated to the margins and the footnotes. "Is God dead?" the cover of *Time* magazine inquired funereally in bold red letters on a stark black background in 1966. It would hardly make the back page to reply: Not in the hearts and lives of believers. The pages of the New Testament are sprinkled liberally with folks who

encountered Jesus or the apostles and came to faith. Good news travels quietly. Make a little noise with yours.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 17:15, 22-18:1; John 16:12-15 (293). "Some began to scoff [at Paul] . . . But some did join him, and became believers."

Thursday, May 10, 2018

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD; HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION (IN SOME AREAS)

Reading the signs

Signs are not destinations. They may assist us in getting where we're going, tell how far we've come or what to do next, but they're not intended to be goals in themselves. Early Christians viewed certain signs as indicators of spiritual authority: the ability to heal, inspired speech, command of dark forces, or facing dangers without harm. Saint Paul warned us not to become enchanted with power for its own sake. Instead, we should consider the needs of the community and how best to serve. Name some modern signs that someone is demonstrating with genuine spiritual authority.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23 or 4:1-13; Mark 16:15-20 (58). "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?"

Friday, May 11, 2018

EASTER WEEKDAY

Then, now, and later

Faith can seem like a time-travel video game. We look to the past, but the past is also present, and the present always looks to the future (for an example, think of the Mass). We learn the kingdom of God is within and among us—but not yet fulfilled. We worship and follow a Lord who appeared in human flesh, left in body but remained in Spirit, and will come again to usher us into the eternal. No wonder we get a little lost sometimes! Here's your compass: The world is broken but God still thinks it's good. Through Jesus, God calls us to help restore that goodness in ways large and small. And, finally, one day that work will be done.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:9-18; John 16:20-23 (295). "I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you."

Saturday, May 12, 2018

MEMORIALS OF NEREUS AND ACHILLEUS, MARTYRS

Strike a blow for peace

In the early years of the church it was a matter of debate whether Christians should belong to the Roman army, although many did. Two of the martyrs remembered today, Nereus and Achilleus, were members of the elite Praetorian Guard, but after they became Christians they refused to serve and were eventually exiled and executed. At the end of the fourth century Pope Damasus had an inscription made in their honor, which read in part: "O miracle of faith! . . . they become converted . . . they throw away their shields, their armor, and their blood-stained javelins. Confessing the faith of Christ, they rejoice to bear testimony to its triumph." What bold and perhaps risky paths can you take to live out what you believe?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 18:23-28; John 16:23b-28 (296). "Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."

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



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