

Sunday, Mar 03, 2019

EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Make peace with making mistakes

The single biggest obstacle to reforming our lives is the difficulty of admitting we're wrong. About anything. Finding ourselves on the wrong side of truth is so intimidating, we grow angry, defensive, and increasingly absurd rather than capitulate our position. Studies indicate the best eyewitnesses get 25 percent of the facts wrong. The worst eyewitnesses are 80 percent wrong! These statistics indicate what the gospel plainly says: that humility and repentance are key to finding our way to the right side of truth. The goal is not to be always right, but to be ever ready to turn around.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 27:4-7; 1 Corinthians 15:54-58; Luke 6:39-45 (84). *"Remove the beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye."*

Monday, Mar 04, 2019

Turn to page one

Today is Read Across America Day, sponsored by the National Education Association to coincide with the birthday of the beloved children's author Dr. Seuss. Its goal is to encourage reading excitement in children of all ages. Many of us fell in love with reading as kids because of Dr. Seuss, and that early reading opened up our minds to discover and appreciate God's marvelous world. Help a child start down the path of lifelong learning: Open a book and read to them.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 17:20-24; Mark 10:17-27 (347). *"Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven."*

Tuesday, Mar 05, 2019

Open your hands

Jesus taught that we have a fundamental choice to make: to hold tight to whatever we find of value or to let go of all for the sake of Christ and the gospel. Most of us find ourselves somewhere in the middle—probably more on the side of grasping than letting go, if we're honest about it. Perhaps the story of the closed fist vs. the open palm can help loosen our grip. Both can hold a precious jewel, but a closed fist can receive nothing more than what it already holds, while an upward-facing open palm can hold the jewel and also be filled with much more. Keep your hands open and leave room for the gifts of the Spirit.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 35:1-12; Mark 10:28-31 (348). *"There is no one who has given up [anything] for my sake . . . who will not receive a hundred times more."*

Wednesday, Mar 06, 2019

ASH WEDNESDAY; DAY OF FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Now is the proper time

Remember you are dust and to dust you will return. You're going to die someday. That's the stark message when ashes are placed on our foreheads today. Recently this longstanding Catholic practice of giving out ashes has become popular in Protestant churches, some of them even passing out ashes in shopping areas and downtowns to eager recipients. For centuries Catholics have received ashes—and begun the season of Lent—in the context of Mass. But the message is the same for all: This Lent turn to God and live your days righteously.

TODAY'S READINGS: Joel 2:12-18; 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 (219). *"Even now says the Lord return to me with your whole heart."*

Thursday, Mar 07, 2019

THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY; MEMORIAL OF PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS

Women of great faith

One of the four Eucharistic prayers that can be used for Sunday Mass includes a long list of names of saints and martyrs of the church. It is easy to get distracted by the length of that prayer, but those who are named in the prayer are important ancestors in our faith. Today, we remember two of those saints, Perpetua and Felicity, a noble woman and a slave, who gave birth to babies shortly before being put to death for their Christian faith. It is hard to believe that two new mothers were willing to give up all that they had and to suffer death for their faith. But their stories are documented in a diary that Perpetua kept while in prison. On this second day of Lent, let us ask for the grace to accept with joy any suffering or challenge of the day.

TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Luke 9:22-25 (220). *"Whoever loses [their] life for my sake will save it."*

Friday, Mar 08, 2019

FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

Pass the meat? Not today

You are what you eat. Or in this case, what you don't eat. Religious identity is often determined by the nature of your nurture. Observant Jews eat only kosher. Muslims eat nothing until after sunset during Ramadan. Catholics fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and abstain from eating meat on Fridays during Lent. It's a sign of who we are, people who are hungry for the presence of Christ, the Bread of Life. We practice self-denial for the sake of the Kingdom. So today go meatless. It's what Catholics do.

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 58:1-9a; Matthew 9:14-15 (221). *"The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."*

Saturday, Mar 09, 2019

MEMORIAL OF FRANCES OF ROME, RELIGIOUS

Listen to your calling

Like many women saints, Frances of Rome wanted to be a nun, but her family forced her to marry. She wanted to serve the poor, but this noblewoman was expected to go to parties. She wanted to give away her wealth, but instead she had to wear finery. Frances did her duty, but in the end, got her way. Over her in-laws' objections, she turned her house into a hospital and founded the Oblates of St. Mary, which she joined upon her husband's death. Whatever your circumstances, don't give up—trust that God will help you find a way to live your calling.

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 58:9b-14; Luke 5:27-32 (222). *"I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."*

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



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