

Sunday, May 12, 2019

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER; GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Hear my voice

We call this “Good Shepherd Sunday,” but these days you don’t see many shepherds in this part of the world, at least not the kind scripture is talking about. But it can still help to think about good shepherds, even if you don’t see any of them tending sheep in your neighborhood. The key is twofold: knowing who is in your care and having those in your care know and believe in you, and laying down your life for them. Sacrifice for others and mutual trust: It’s how our relationship with God works, and these values are the ones you can cultivate when people look to you to lead.

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 13:14, 43-52; Revelation 7:9, 14b-17; John 10:27-30 (51). *“I have made you a light to the Gentiles . . . to the ends of the earth.”*

Monday, May 13, 2019

MEMORIAL OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA; EASTER WEEKDAY

Are you listening?

It’s hard to distill all the wondrousness of the appearance of Our Lady of Fatima to three shepherd children in Portugal in 1917. Her revelations have been surrounded by mystery, speculation, and interpretation for more than 100 years. But the gist of Mary’s message then was the same as it always is: pray and atone. Say the Rosary, make sacrifices for sinners. Venerate her Immaculate Heart, along with the Sacred Heart of Jesus; in fact, consecrate the whole world to it. Simple requests, under spectacular circumstances. Can you honor them?

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 11:1-18; John 10:11-10 (279). *“The sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice.”*

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

FEAST OF MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

Apostle out of nowhere

Matthias is the pop-up saint of the New Testament. He came out of nowhere in the Acts of the Apostles to be counted among the 12 apostles, filling the vacancy left by Judas. Not having ever been named before the appointment, he’s not mentioned again. Tradition has him afterward preaching in several different places, and also buried in several different places. Safe to say he got around. There is a lost second-century gospel falsely attributed to Matthias. But that’s about it. He’s the patron saint of alcoholics, tailors, and the diocese of Gary, Indiana. Where will they say your sainthood comes from?

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; John 15:9-17 (564). *“I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.”*

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

MEMORIAL OF ISIDORE THE FARMER; EASTER WEEKDAY

The holy work of human hands and hearts

Catholic Rural Life (CRL) was founded in 1923 to focus on the economic, social, and religious issues that face rural Catholics in the United States. Throughout its history, CRL has provided spiritual support to Catholic farmers as well as advocacy on topics ranging from environmental concerns to economic and trade policies. In the 1950s, CRL claimed Saint Isadore as the official patron saint of farmers and of the organization. A day-laborer in 11th-century Spain, Isadore attended Mass each day, worked diligently in the fields, had an affinity for animals, and cared for

the poor despite his own poverty. Historians say he was a simple man. We might do well to imitate his trust and dependence on God.

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 12:24—13:5a; John 12:44-50 (281). *“I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness.”*

Thursday, May 16, 2019

EASTER WEEKDAY

What makes for faith?

Before the stories that would become scripture were written down, one wonders what ordinary daily life was really like for those who had heard, were touched by, believed in, even loved and followed Jesus. Scripture would one day testify to the Resurrection, but in those first years what made believers so adamant that they were able to stand up to rejection and persecution was a trust in God and the witness of others, an act of abandonment to love. Everyone has a story of how they came to believe, of persons and experiences who challenged their faith and of those who deepened and confirmed it. Remember your story and thank those who supported you today.

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 13:13-25; John 13:16-20 (282). *“Whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”*

Friday, May 17, 2019

EASTER WEEKDAY

Surprises ahead

The apostles didn’t know who they were destined to be when they began to follow Jesus. The same could be said of all of us who start down the path of faith with faltering and uncertain steps. Maybe someday we’ll be part of the canon of saints like Thomas, who up to the Last Supper was still asking Jesus where this road was headed. Obviously it had yet to occur to him that he would be one of the 12 founders of our apostolic tradition. Nor can we imagine who we might become if we continue on this way.

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 13:26-33; John 14:1-6 (283). *“Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”*

Saturday, May 18, 2019

MEMORIAL OF JOHN I, POPE, MARTYR

The spirit of sacrifice

You might think that martyrdoms always mean dying violently for faith. Some deaths, however, are slow—but they are martyrdoms nonetheless. Take Pope Saint John I’s death, for example. In the sixth century he got caught up in the rivalry between two emperors. As a result he was put in prison, where he died slowly of starvation. Whatever form it takes, martyrdom involves the willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for what you believe and to remain faithful to what you hold to be important. Let some of that spirit into your life.

TODAY’S READINGS: Acts 13:44-52; John 14:7-14 (284). *“Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these.”*

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



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