



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2015

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Wisdom for all ages

In parts, the Book of Wisdom is written as if King Solomon is the speaker, although his name appears nowhere in the text, and in fact, the book was written only about 50 years before the birth of Jesus. Wisdom belongs to the Apocrypha, which are seven Old Testament books that are accepted by Catholics but not Protestants. While it may seem ironic that there's some fuzziness about Wisdom, the writing itself provides poetic clarity by personifying wisdom with characteristics of God, reminding us who is the final arbiter. Dip into this wise book for a few moments today.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Wisdom 7:7-11; 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, OCTOBER 12

Heeding the signs

Think about the last time you drove somewhere. When you reached a stop sign, you applied the brake and stopped the car. Now imagine that the sign itself made the car stop! Imagine it made present the thing it signified: stopping. Of course many signs in everyday life—"walk," "yield," "wait," to name a few—don't have that power. But in our life of faith, signs do! The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes the sacraments as "efficacious signs of grace" that "bear fruit in those who receive them . . ." (1131). Consider today the ways that the sacraments are bearing fruit in your life!

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, OCTOBER 13

A letter of introduction

Saint Paul's letters were most often sent to the Christian communities he helped establish and addressed problems he'd encountered firsthand. But not so with the Romans. Paul's letter to them was a form of introduction. They didn't know each other but they were created by the same God. By Christ we are united to each other; that type of connection doesn't require having met before. It's rooted in the heart of God, drawing us together no matter what might stand between us. Remember that during your daily encounters with others.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Romans 1:16-25; Luke 11:37-41 (468)*. "I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes."



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

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

FEAST OF CALLISTUS I, POPE, MARTYR

Take a second chance on God

If ever there were a patron saint of second chances . . . and third chances, it would have to be third-century Callistus. He was imprisoned several times for money-related problems and only then changed his ways and became a servant of the church. Perhaps it was his genuine repentance that marked him as a distinguished leader, which led to his ascendancy to the papacy. It is never too late to turn things around, no matter how dire the situation you might find yourself in. Think of Callistus, our patron saint of second chances!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Romans 2:1-11; Luke 11:42-46 (469)*. "You impose on people burdens hard to carry."

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

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

Put some prayer in your action and vice versa

Saint Teresa of Ávila, also called Saint Teresa of Jesus, was a dynamo who lived in dynamic times. She was a charismatic Spanish Carmelite during the Counter Reformation—not an easy era to be a woman, much less one leading a reform movement. But as outgoing as she was, she knew the importance of time spent in thought and prayer. After all, she was a contemplative, as well as a theologian and a mystic. Restoring your spirit makes you a stronger force for good. But don't think you need to be cloistered to pray properly. As Teresa herself said: "It would be extremely difficult if you could only pray in secluded places." Pray any which way you can.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Romans 3:21-30; Luke 11:47-54 (470)*. "We consider that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the law."

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

The bread of life

World Food Day challenges us to take action to eradicate hunger within our lifetime. It's a daunting challenge. According to the United Nations, 805 million people live with hunger as an ongoing reality. There are many ways on World Food Day and throughout the year to help overcome hunger, such as food drives, advocacy efforts, and meal preparation at local outreach centers. As a church, we're called to bring Christ—the bread of life—to those hungering for spiritual nourishment. What action might you take today to help bring bread to those who suffer physical hunger as well?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Romans 4:1-8; Luke 12:1-7 (471)*. "There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

The mystery of grief

In disappointment, suffering, and loss, we're obliged to "hope against hope," as Saint Paul says of Abraham, a great Hoper-in-Chief. Paul invented this idiom of a hope so farfetched, it was like betting against luck. When we pray the Sorrowful Mysteries, we acknowledge the pain of life so undeniable that it can't be theologized away. Fear of death, physical torment, public humiliation, bearing heavy burdens, and the anguish of final surrender—all of this belonged to Jesus, as it does to us. Pray these mysteries for those who hope against hope.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Romans 4:13, 16-18; Luke 12:8-12 (472)*. "[Abraham] believed, hoping against hope, that he would become the father of many nations."