

Sunday, Nov 14, 2021

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The poor have a gift for you

Charity presupposes a giver and a receiver, Pope Francis reminds us this fifth annual World Day of the Poor. This division poses a spiritual danger: tempting the giver to view the poor as a "category" outside our community, to which we may choose to offer our generosity. This perception gratifies the giver and demeans the receiver. Francis observes that "the poor, always and everywhere, evangelize us"—revealing the suffering Christ to us. Charity is occasional and voluntary; mutual sharing, however, is enduring. The real invitation of the poor is this: to share the burden of Christ until we can alleviate it.

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 12:1-3; Hebrews 10:11-14, 18; Mark 13:24-32 (158). *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."*

Monday, Nov 15, 2021

MEMORIAL OF ALBERT THE GREAT, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Head in the clouds but feet on the ground

Albert the Great was a Renaissance man—but he lived in the Middle Ages. He was a German theologian, but he also wrote voluminously about botany, zoology, music, astronomy, and law—to name just a few of his studies of interest. He never let his head full of knowledge go to his head, though, and one of the ways this Dominican friar and bishop stayed humble was by only traveling by foot. Are there lifestyle changes you can make or privileges you can shed to keep yourself down-to-earth?

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63; Luke 18:35-43 (497). *"When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God."*

Tuesday, Nov 16, 2021

MEMORIAL OF GERTRUDE, MYSTIC

God's love conquers all

Orphaned during the Middle Ages, Gertrude the Great grew up in a Benedictine monastery and became a brilliant scholar. Like her teacher, Saint Mechtilde of Helfta, Gertrude also became well-known as a mystic, experiencing—and transcribing—vivid visions of God's boundless love. Let Gertrude's encounters with Divine Love calm any worries today: "Joy and gladness be to thee from that sweetest heart, my one refuge and shelter in my exile, from that heart so full of tender care for me, whose love is so set on me that it cannot rest till it hath received me into itself for evermore."

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Maccabees 6:18-31; Luke 19:1-10 (498). *"But he could not see him because of the crowd."*

Wednesday, Nov 17, 2021

MEMORIAL OF ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY, RELIGIOUS

Keep the faith under pressure

Faithfulness unto death is the great rallying cry of the Christian. Without this in mind, today's saint, Elizabeth of Hungary, might at first seem an odd pairing with the readings about martyrdom and divine retribution. With it, however, we see that Saint Elizabeth's firm resolve to serve the poor, despite being a princess with access to enormous privilege, is precisely the kind of behavior God wishes to see in his children. It is precisely the use of the "talents" to which Jesus referred in the parable from today's

gospel. Remember, then, that whenever we die to ourselves and devote our lives to Christian charity, we become common martyrs and fulfill the law of God.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Maccabees 7:1, 20-31; Luke 19:11-28 (499). *"He, in his mercy, will give you back both breath and life, because you now disregard yourselves for the sake of his law."*

Thursday, Nov 18, 2021

MEMORIAL OF ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

Perseverance please!

Life can sometimes beat a person down, and when that happens, the beautiful tradition of praying for saints to intercede for us can provide communion and solace. Today's saint, Philippine Duchesne, was a nun who survived the upheaval of the French Revolution and combined both a strong devotion to prayer and a passion for missionary life in the American frontier, with its many hardships. Because perseverance was a major theme in her life, she is a patron saint of perseverance in adversity. Saint Philippine, pray for us!

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 2:15-29; Luke 19:41-44 (500). *"If this day you only knew what makes for peace."*

Friday, Nov 19, 2021

Act on memory

Dedications in memory of fields where lives were lost or sacred places defiled have been a mainstay since biblical times. By remembering the horror of death and destruction, we hope to redeem the site and make it holy again. But as Abraham Lincoln stated on this day in 1863 in his *Gettysburg Address*, honoring a Civil War battlefield: "We cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground . . . the living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it." Our role, says Lincoln, is "to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced." It is for us to "highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain." Lincoln's words echo Jesus' call to his disciples to "do this in memory of me." Become the body of Christ.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 4:36-37, 52-59; Luke 19:45-48 (501). *"The days of the dedication of the altar should be observed with joy and gladness."*

Saturday, Nov 20, 2021

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

God of the living

The Bible's Second Book of Maccabees, composed about a hundred years before Christ, introduced the ideas of resurrection from the dead, the intercession of the saints in heaven, and the responsibility of the living to offer prayers and sacrifices for the dead. The Sadducees of today's gospel episode rejected these ideas while Jesus obviously embraced them. Resurrection, praying for the souls in Purgatory, and the intercession of the saints all have become part of what the church believes. Every Saturday we honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, the greatest saint in heaven, and ask her intercession for the souls of our departed relatives and friends.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Maccabees 6:1-13; Luke 20:27-40 (502). *"[God] is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."*

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



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