

Sunday, Nov 20, 2022

Suffer the little children to enter paradise

Jesus promises Paradise to a man dying in disgrace next to him on the cross. Today, on World Children's Day, we can bring Paradise a little closer by contemplating 10 principles the United Nations calls the "Rights of the Child," including: Every child without exception should have a name and nationality; access to physical, mental, moral, spiritual, and social development; food, housing, and medical care; love and understanding; education and moral guidance; protection from exploitation and discrimination. Our Catholic preferential option for the poor and respect for life fully embraces the welfare of children.

SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Samuel 5:1-3; Colossians 1:12-20; Luke 23:35-43 (162). *"Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."*

Monday, Nov 21, 2022

Ready for the ride of your life?

Just as Catholics celebrate the conception, birth, and presentation in the temple of Jesus, we celebrate the same events in the life of Mary. God's plans (for all of us) begin and unfold before anyone's understanding of them. The story of Mary's presentation in the temple comes from a non-biblical text that says Mary's parents consecrated her to God at a very young age. With her Immaculate Conception, God set her on the path to a pivotal role in salvation history, but it required dedication and preparation nonetheless—culminating in her immortal "yes" at the Annunciation. Life hands us circumstances, and sometimes decisions are made that are beyond our control—have you considered how those might shape your purpose? Commit to following where the Spirit might lead you.

MEMORIAL OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 14:1-3, 4b-5; Luke 21:1-4 (503). *"She, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood."*

Tuesday, Nov 22, 2022

Speak up

Once Saint Paul's letters were collected in the third century, he got heat from Christians for "Wives, be submissive to your husbands"—adding that neither should they speak in church. For the third century also saw the martyrdom of Saint Cecilia. Paul's critics pointed out that Cecilia's eloquent words persuaded her husband and led him (and others) to convert. As for not speaking in church? It was Cecilia who allowed an underground church to worship in her home. Cecilia's story is told in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, recounted by a nun who praises her for evangelizing with both words and example. Men and women of faith, glorify God today with your own words and example!

MEMORIAL OF CECILIA, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 14:14-19; Luke 21:5-11 (504). *"Reap the harvest, for the time to reap has come."*

Wednesday, Nov 23, 2022

We owe You

We naturally think of Saint Paul when we think of letters written to the early Christians in Corinth, but Saint Clement I—a disciple of the apostles and later a pope—had occasion to write to the Corinthian church as well. From one of those letters comes advice

that's fitting for Americans celebrating Thanksgiving tomorrow: "If you are wise, then display your wisdom by good deeds; and if you are modest, let others speak of your modesty instead of proclaiming the fact yourself. To God we owe everything, and therefore on every count we are under obligation to thank him."

MEMORIAL OF CLEMENT I, POPE, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 15:1-4; Luke 21:12-19 (505). *"I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking."*

Thursday, Nov 24, 2022

Saved in the cloud

Thanksgiving is a time to recall the blessings in our lives. Most who are reading these words can give thanks to God for the freedom to worship, something absent for the saints and martyrs memorialized on this date. Today's memorial is unusual in that it honors 117 Vietnamese martyrs, the "companions" of Father Andrew Dũng-Lạc. In fact, those 117 actually represent the 100,000 to 300,000 Vietnamese Christians killed or severely persecuted for their faith between the 17th and 19th centuries. May your actions of gratitude today give honor to this "cloud of witnesses."

MEMORIAL OF ANDREW DŨNG-LẠC, PRIEST, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 18:1-2, 21-23; 19:1-3, 9a; Luke 21:20-28 (506). *"Then [Jesus] said to him, 'Stand up and go; your faith has saved you.'"*

Friday, Nov 25, 2022

Called to speak out

The early church was a place of great religious fervor and danger. Prior to 313 Christianity was outlawed, and many adherents were put to death. This was the age of the martyrs, including Catherine of Alexandria. Catherine was well educated and known for her keen intellect. As she grew in the faith, she became an outspoken critic of the dominant religion of the Roman empire. Though given many unconscionable "outs" to avoid death, Catherine held firmly to her beliefs and continued to speak out. What compels you to speak out, even when it costs you?

MEMORIAL OF CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 20:1-4, 11—21:2; Luke 21:29-33 (507). *"I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God."*

Saturday, Nov 26, 2022

The last day

It's the last day of the year—the liturgical year, that is. Tomorrow is the beginning of a new liturgical year, a new cycle of readings, and a new season of joyful hope. Good thing, because the readings for the past few weeks, like today's, have been words of warning and apprehension regarding the "eschaton," which means the end of the world. It all sounds terrifying, but it is good news, for however you prefer to interpret it, literally or figuratively, unless this world passes away in some way, the kingdom Jesus preached isn't fully realized. Pray God's kingdom come!

TODAY'S READINGS: Revelation 22:1-7; Luke 21:34-36 (508). *"Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations."*

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



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