

SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2017

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Reveal yourself

The story of Jesus' death and Resurrection is the defining one of our faith. It is the reason we gather to break bread every week. It's the reason we love our neighbor, feed the poor, work for justice, and struggle to forgive our enemies. Each of us has a defining story as well, an encounter or experience that reveals our highest selves, our deepest compassion or originality, our incomparable imagination or sense of humor. It's the story that demonstrates most clearly and profoundly who we really are. Jesus "made himself known" in the breaking of the bread. How do you make yourself known?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 2:14, 22-33; 1 Peter 1:17-21; Luke 24:13-35 (46). "How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke!"



MONDAY, MAY 1, 2017

MEMORIAL OF FIDELIS OF SIGMARINGEN, PRIEST, MARTYR

MEMORIAL OF JOSEPH THE WORKER

Let's get to work!

The Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker may have been instituted on May 1 partly for political reasons (to counteract communist influence), but the feast's recognition of the dignity and sanctity of labor has deep roots in Christian tradition. Unfortunately our high-tech culture doesn't honor manual labor as much as it should. E. F. Schumacher, in his book *Small Is Beautiful*, suggests that a "great part of the modern neurosis may be due to this very fact: for the human being . . . enjoys nothing more than to be creatively, usefully, productively engaged with both his hands and his brains." Today, in honor of Saint Joseph, plant a seed, make dinner from scratch, or fix something that's broken.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 1:26—2:3 or Colossians 3:14-15, 17, 23-24; Matthew 13:54-58 (559) or Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29 (273). "Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures."

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2017

MEMORIAL OF ATHANASIUS, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

One and same

Each Sunday we recite the Nicene Creed, which Saint Athanasius was instrumental in formulating and defending at great risk to his life. When the Nicene Creed was originally drawn up in 325, the chief threat was Arianism, which denied that Jesus was fully God. Arius, a priest of the time, preached that God created the Son, which meant the Son was separate from the Father and not divine. Athanasius offered this argument: Consider the sun and the light streaming from it. Are they not of the same substance and the same essence? The physics might be off, but the theology is sound: Jesus and the Father are one in a way that is as inseparable as light from light.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 7:51—8:1a; John 6:30-35 (274). "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger."

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2017

FEAST OF PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

Still don't get it?

How would you like it if someone published an account of your on-the-job training? That's what happened to the apostles, whose gospel appearances usually signal someone about to get Jesus' message wrong. Philip is shown as a hopeless literalist who keeps misunderstanding Jesus. He and his fellow apostles provide great inspiration for those of us who feel we're slow to "get it" and not in the same league as the "greats" like Mother Teresa or even the local leading lights in our parish. Jesus showed great patience with the apostles, and he's pleased to offer the same to you and me.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14 (561). "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do."

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2017

EASTER WEEKDAY

Say what?

Catechesis is one of the essential ministries of the church. We do it formally, for example, in religious education classes and the Rite of Christian Initiation, and informally through daily interactions with others—our children, neighbors, and coworkers. It can, however, be discouraging work. Fortunately Saint Augustine offers some advice, especially for those times when we are feeling ineffective. First, we are not as terrible as we think we are; second, we should persist; and third, we do the best we can and *let God speak through us*—because in truth God is doing the teaching. We are merely God's instrument. What would your day be like if you thought God was trying to speak through you all the time? What would you say? What *wouldn't* you say?

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 8:26-40; John 6:44-51 (276). "They shall all be taught by God."

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2017

EASTER WEEKDAY

Speak up for good

Speech is not to be underestimated. It can bring life, and it can bring death. When God speaks, the words result in life: water, animals, human beings, mercy, and compassion! Mary followed in God's footsteps with a single word—*Yes!*—that resulted in her bearing the Christ child in the world. On the other hand, some of our words can be death-dealing. Saul, a persecutor of Jesus' followers before his conversion, "breathed murderous threats" that resulted in much fear, injury, and death. How will you use the power of speech to nurture life?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59 (277)*. "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2017

EASTER WEEKDAY

Lend a hand

In many households, parishes, and workplaces, there is one person without whom things simply couldn't function. Whoever that might be in your environment (maybe it's you!), being the essential person is an exhausting proposition. In the early church, poor Tabitha was deemed so necessary to her community that the widows of her town couldn't let her go even after she died—Saint Peter was obliged to bring her back to life! The "indispensables" are useful to have around but they could use our help. Let's offer our assistance with prayers, resources, and kind words of gratitude.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Acts 9:31-42; John 6:60-69 (278)*. "She was completely occupied with good deeds and almsgiving."

**CATHOLICS
RETURNING
HOME**

NO MATTER HOW LONG YOU'VE BEEN AWAY, OR FOR WHATEVER REASON, YOU CAN ALWAYS COME HOME.

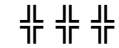
Continues Monday, May 8th – 7:00 PM

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**TAKE FIVE FOR
FAITH**

DAILY RENEWAL FOR BUSY CATHOLICS



**THE THIRD
WEEK OF
EASTER**

For April 30 – May 6, 2017

Join others for Rosary, Wednesday
evenings – 6:30 PM
Followed by
Evening Prayer

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

NOTE: THESE REFLECTIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE EVERY WEEK. YOU MAY PICK UP A PRINTED COPY FROM THESE PLASTIC FOLDERS, READ THEM ON-LINE ON THE OLV WEB PAGE (WWW.PARISHESONLINE.COM/FIND/OUR-LADY-OF-VICTORY-CHURCH-44278), OR HAVE THEM E-MAILED TO YOU EACH WEEK BY SENDING AN A MESSAGE TO MMATUSZ@OURLADYOFVICTORY.NET AND SAYING "ADD ME TO THE TAKE FIVE LIST". LET US KNOW IF YOU'VE REGULARLY USED & ENJOYED THESE REFLECTIONS.