

SUNDAY, JULY 31, 2016

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Strike it rich

Where does true wealth lie? In his *Spiritual Exercises*, Saint Ignatius writes, “If I have nothing, my only possession is Christ . . . and this is to be really true to myself—the humility of a person whose whole reality and value is grounded in being created and redeemed in Christ.” The call of a Christian is to be spiritually secure, not taking stock in what the world gives, but in the promises of Christ. That is where true wealth lies: in being fully given to Christ, so that nothing can come between you and the love of God.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Ecclesiastes* 1:2; 2:21-23; *Colossians* 3:1-5, 9-11; *Luke* 12:13-21 (114). “Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions.”

MONDAY, AUGUST 1, 2016

FEAST OF ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

What’s your gift to the world?

Vincent Van Gogh said, “The best way to know God is to love many things.” Alphonsus Liguori embodied this wisdom, as a prolific spiritual author as well as an accomplished musician, poet, and painter. With more than 100 works on spirituality to his name, his writings have been translated into dozens of languages and thousands of editions, making him one of the most widely read Catholic authors of all time. When we discover our gifts and use them to serve God, our works multiply. What are your gifts and how will you put them in service to the world?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah* 28:1-17; *Matthew* 14:13-21 (407). “His heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick.”

TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2016

FEAST OF PETER JULIAN EYMARD, PRIEST

Let God mould your life

In the world of sculpture, the name Rodin ranks right up there with Michelangelo. The great French sculptor—creator of [The Thinker](#) and many other masterpieces—was a renowned artist by 1900, but it might never have been that way. In 1862, Rodin’s beloved sister died and he felt he had let her down. Deeply anguished and guilt ridden, he sought refuge by joining a Catholic order, the Congregation of the Blessed Eucharist. Saint Peter Julian Eymard, founder and head of the congregation, sensing that Rodin was running from his pain and wasn’t really suited to religious life, encouraged him to continue with his sculpture. Rodin returned to work and the rest is history. God blesses each of us with gifts. Serve God by developing yours in the service of humanity.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah* 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22; *Matthew* 14:22-36 or *Matthew* 15:1-2, 10-14 (408). “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2016

Everyone is worthy

When you pass a person begging on a street corner, what goes through your mind? Is there a quick calculation going on as to their worthiness? Some variation on: “He looks like he could be working”; “Why is she smoking her money away if she is broke?”; “If I give him something, he’s only going to spend it on booze.” It’s easy to slip into a “worthiness calculation,” but what should give us pause is the awareness of the ways we also fall short of the ideal. There is wisdom in the cliché “There but for the grace of God . . .” Remember it the next time someone asks for assistance.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah* 31:1-7; *Matthew* 15:21-28 (409). “Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.”

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 2016

FEAST OF JOHN VIANNEY, PRIEST

A pastor knows his flock

A good pastor can transform a parish. This was certainly true of the small rural parish led by Saint John Vianney. Known as the “world’s pastor,” Vianney led the people of Ars, France in the early 1800s by the example of his faith and life. Vianney attracted more than 100,000 pilgrims from throughout Europe and was remarkably present to all whom he encountered. He drew others into God’s love through his own love, modeling the true role of a pastor—to be a reflection of Christ. In doing so, he affected not only his parish but the whole church. Remember the patron saint of parish priests in your prayers today.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah* 31:31-34; *Matthew* 16:13-23 (410). “I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2016

FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF THE BASILICA OF MARY MAJOR

At home with Mary

It may seem to you that we are honoring a church building on this feast of the Basilica of Mary Major, but in truth the church honors not a building, but Mary the mother of God on this feast. This basilica has remained a beacon of strength and beauty that has honored Mary since the fourth century. It reminds us that Mary intercedes on our behalf and is a perfect model of courage and faithfulness for each of us to imitate. But you don’t have to travel to Rome to meditate on patron saints. Read about the patron of your parish community and ask for that saint’s assistance.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Nahum* 2:1, 3; 3:1-3, 6-7; *Matthew* 16:24-28 (411). “Jesus said to his disciples . . . begin to follow in my footsteps.”

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016

FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

Let faith take you to the next level

Why do people climb mountains? Is it the view? The rarefied air that refreshes? The challenge? All of that may be true but in biblical times, people also climbed a lot of mountains because they were in the way! Mountains dot the landscape in biblical regions. If you want to appreciate the power of the many transformational events in the Bible that happened to take place on mountains, climb one yourself, or at least visit the Rockies, Appalachia, or some other higher-elevation destination. Perhaps you, too, will be transformed!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; 2 Peter 1:16-19; Luke 9:28b-36 (614)*. "Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up a mountain to pray."

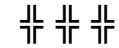


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Contributors: Alice Camille, Peg Ekerdt, Sister Colleen Gibson, S.S.J., Daniel Grippo, Deacon Pedro Guevara-Mann, Father Larry Janowski, O.F.M., Jennifer Tomshack, Patrice J. Tuohy



**TAKE FIVE FOR
FAITH**

DAILY RENEWAL FOR BUSY CATHOLICS



**THE EIGHTEENTH WEEK IN
ORDINARY TIME**

For July 31 – August 6, 2016



*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 ONLINE 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.