



SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 2016 NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Appreciate your freedoms

The Founding Fathers of the United States thought freedom of religion and the press were so important they put them at the top of the Bill of Rights—they are included, together, in the First Amendment. Many countries haven't had these same freedoms, including Cuba. When, in 1960, the Cuban Catholic Church condemned the rise of communism, Fidel Castro banned all religious media. Thankfully today the church in Cuba has greater freedom, but there is still no religious media there. You are able to enjoy vibrant religious media that informs and enriches your life and faith. Take advantage of the print, digital, and broadcast offerings available to you.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Wisdom 18:6-9; Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Luke 12:32-48 (117)*. "For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be."

MONDAY, AUGUST 8 MEMORIAL OF DOMINIC, PRIEST
Decade-to-decade Rosary devotion

There are many different types of rosaries: the Franciscan Rosary, the Servite Rosary, the chaplet, the wedding rosary—there are even rosaries that can be worn as bracelets and rings. They have different bead configurations and different accompanying prayers. But the traditional rosary you are most likely familiar with, and the prayers that go with it, is the Dominican Rosary. Saint Dominic was instrumental in spreading devotion to the Rosary, which is a hallmark of Catholic devotion. Let's join in this Dominican legacy by praying the Rosary today.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 1:2-5, 24-28c; Matthew 17:22-27 (413)*. "The Son of Man is to be handed over to men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day."

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9
 MEMORIAL OF TERESA BENEDICTA OF THE CROSS, VIRGIN AND MARTYR
Pray for peace

Edith Stein, whose feast is today, said, "One cannot desire freedom from the Cross . . . when one is especially chosen for the Cross." Born a Jew, Stein converted to Catholicism as a young adult. Later as a Carmelite nun, she was captured by the Nazis and killed at Auschwitz. As a martyr of the Holocaust, Stein accepted the cross onto death—her sacrifice a witness to Christ's. Keep alive the memory of Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, as she became known, and pray for an end to the horrible atrocities in today's world.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 2:8—3:4; Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 (414)*. "Obey me when I speak to you: be not rebellious . . . but open your mouth and eat what I shall give you."

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10

FEAST OF LAWRENCE, DEACON, MARTYR

True measure of worth

The story goes that when a Roman leader ordered the early Christian Church to surrender its riches, Saint Lawrence brought a gathering of the poor to the prefect, saying they were the church's real treasure. For this bold act, Lawrence was put to death. Parts of his legend may be myth or fact, but Lawrence was indeed martyred, and his devotion to the poor remains a constant comment about his third-century life. You might not have his audacious courage, but you can embrace his care for the poor—and find in serving them how precious they are.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Corinthians 9:6-10; John 12:24-26 (618)*. "But if it (grain of wheat) dies, it produces much fruit."

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11 MEMORIAL OF CLARE, VIRGIN

Undeniably God's

The process of canonization, of being officially declared a saint, can take decades or even centuries. Not so for Saint Clare of Assisi, founder of the religious order that bears her name (the Poor Clares) and companion of Saint Francis of Assisi. Clare was canonized within two years of her death in 1253. She led her community in devotion to prayer and austerity. "May God be with you always," she wrote, "and may you always be found in God." How can you follow Clare's saintly example and make God undeniably evident in your life?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 12:1-12; Matthew 18:21—19:1 (416)*. "I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them."

FRIDAY, AUGUST 12

MEMORIAL OF JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, RELIGIOUS

Change of plan

Jane Frances de Chantal probably had planned to pass her life as a wife and mother. She was married at 21 and had six children, and she was astute at managing a household. But she was widowed young and met Saint Francis de Sales, who became her spiritual director. At 45, she helped found the Sisters of the Visitation. Remain open to changing your plans if God has something else in mind for you—you never know what kind of second act you might have.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 16:1-15, 60, 63 or 16:59-63; Matthew 19:3-12 (417)*. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife."

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13 MEMORIAL OF PONTIAN, POPE

For the greater good

When Pope Benedict XVI resigned his papacy on February 28, 2013, he was criticized by some for not following the modern custom of holding his office until death. But he stepped down for the good of the church, and there was indeed precedent for what he did, going all the way back to the year 235 and Pope Pontian. During a persecution of the early church, Pontian was deported to labor mines, essentially a death sentence. He resigned for the good of the church so that the early community would not be without a pastor after his deportation. Sometimes the best thing we can do is make room for another. Pray for the wisdom to know when to step aside.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Ezekiel 18:1-10, 13b, 30-32; Matthew 19:13-15 (418)*. "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."



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

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