



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2015 THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Make a bold move

“Holiness is heroic,” says Father Robert Barron in his 2014 documentary film *Heroic priesthood*. Indeed, Christ’s invitation, says Barron, “is an invitation to an extraordinary life.” On this Priesthood Sunday, give thanks for the ordained men who have said the great yes to God’s invitation to serve. Then take time to discern the noble purpose to which God is calling you.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jeremiah 31:7-9; Hebrews 5:1-6; Mark 10:46-52 (149)*. “*You have nothing . . . to fear . . . Get up! He is calling you!*”

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26 Go on sabbatical each week

In times past, adherence to “blue laws” kept a lot of businesses, beginning with liquor stores, as well as certain forms of entertainment, off limits on Sundays. Remnants remain, but most of these laws are long gone. While we might celebrate our new freedom to shop, work, and play to our heart’s content seven days a week, was there any wisdom behind some of those laws, even if it was expressed rather clumsily? Do you ever slow down—really slow down, really rest? Busy, busy, busy doesn’t leave much room for the God who often speaks in a whisper in the wind. Devise your own Sabbath so *you* can keep holy!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Romans 8:12-17; Luke 13:10-17 (479)*. “*Woman, you are set free of your infirmity.*”

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27 Muster some faith!

With healthy food and miracle grains all the rage, it should not surprise us to learn that the venerable mustard seed has been discovered to be an excellent source of all sorts of nutrients, minerals, and vitamins. But long before we focused on their benefits for our physical health, Jesus focused on their benefit to spiritual health. Is your faith in God at least as strong as your faith in antioxidants? It’s OK to start small—look at all the tiny mustard seed accomplishes!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Romans 8:18-25; Luke 13:18-21 (480)*. “*What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? It is like a mustard seed.*”

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28 FEAST OF SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES An inconvenient truth

Simon and Jude were first-century apostles who are counted among the original twelve. Not to be confused with Simon Peter or Judas,

tradition holds that these two men brought the gospel to Egypt (Simon), Mesopotamia (Jude), and Persia or modern-day Iran (both). Although Jude is the more famous patron saint of hopeless causes, each of these men accepted the risk of preaching the Good News. Their courage and perseverance eventually cost them their lives. Ask yourself today: What have I sacrificed to follow the Lord?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Ephesians 2:19-22; Luke 6:12-16 (666)*. “*He called his disciples and selected twelve.*”

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29 Leave all stones unturned

Though we look upon the practice of stoning someone to death with horror, it was a punishment practiced in ancient Israel for a number of infractions. Thankfully over time it, and all capital punishment, was marginalized in Jewish thought. In the Middle Ages, prominent Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides wrote, “It is better and more satisfactory to acquit a thousand guilty persons than to put a single innocent one to death.” That’s as true today as it was at the time of Christ. As Pope Francis stated in 2015, the death penalty “is an offense against the inviolability of life and the dignity of the human person, which contradicts God’s plan for man and society, and his merciful justice, and impedes the penalty from fulfilling any just objective. It does not render justice to the victims, but rather fosters vengeance.” Always have mercy at the ready.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Romans 8:31b-39; Luke 13:31-35 (482)*. “*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you.*”

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 Relax about Sunday

There’s a lot of debate in the Bible about how the Sabbath should be observed. Jesus was concerned with the spirit, not the letter, of the law. So how are Catholics to spend their Sundays? Sunday—the day Christ rose from the dead—is the day Catholics are obligated to gather to celebrate the Eucharist at Mass. But the church acknowledges that some people have to work on Sundays and that other labors also might be necessary. As you plan your week, remember what’s most important is giving rest, leisure, and worship their due.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Romans 9:1-5; Luke 14:1-6 (483)*. “*Who among you, if your son or ox falls into a cistern, would not immediately pull him out on the sabbath day?*”

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31 Bridge the gap with care

Today concludes Pastoral Care Week. How often—in the face of illness or disaster—do we literally reach out for the hand of someone who cares? In the case of a chaplain, that healing care of Jesus takes the shape of a fellow human being dedicated to bringing comfort and strengthening faith and hope, often by sharing their own. Consider becoming part of your parish’s ministry of care: hospital visits, visits to the house-bound, a minister of the Eucharist. Even a simple visit or phone call to a neighbor or relative offers the healing of knowing one is not alone.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Romans 11:1-2a, 11-12, 25-29; Luke 14:1, 7-11 (484)*. “*Do not recline at table in the place of honor.*”



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

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