

Sunday, Mar 05, 2023

Honor the unnamed

The Bible is full of unnamed actors. Many are women: identified simply as mothers, wives, and daughters. While seven blessings promote the name of Abraham, it's the rare woman like Mary who's called blessed "for generations" in her canticle. Today we recall the unnamed wife of Chief Patricio de Hinachuba, an Apalachee laywoman among 57 martyrs in the Florida territory missions between 1549-1715, all currently up for sanctification. These martyrs included priests and catechists, native peoples, soldiers, and children. For all faithful, nameless women, we give thanks.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 12:1-4a; 2 Timothy 1:8b-10; Matthew 17:1-9 (25). "I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

Monday, Mar 06, 2023

Read up!

Could your Catholic school library need some new picks? How about your book club for the adults? This Women's History Month, learn more about a remarkable Catholic black woman writer, Ellen Tarry (1906-2008). She attended Catholic school as a girl and converted to Catholicism and later became a journalist and author who was part of the Harlem Renaissance. Her writing included producing the first African-American picture book, writing a newspaper column on racial injustice and racial pride, and penning her memoir *The Third Door: The Autobiography of an American Negro Woman*. She also wrote biographies for youth and adult readers of Catholic saints Katherine Drexel and Martin de Porres and the Venerable Pierre Toussaint. You might be reading Tarry beyond March!

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 9:4b-10; Luke 6:36-38 (230). "Give and gifts will be given to you."

Tuesday, Mar 07, 2023

Beyond distinctions

Devotion to Jesus seriously conflicted with Roman rule in the second century, with citizens expected to worship the emperor instead. Thus, the fate of two young mothers, Perpetua and Felicity: forced into a public amphitheater to be killed by wild beasts, just because they wouldn't renounce Jesus. But Christian faith challenged social convention in other ways, too. Normally, Felicity—as Perpetua's slave—wouldn't be seen as her equal. But belief in Jesus, as Saint Paul writes, makes brothers and sisters of all. Take Perpetua's final words to heart: "Stand fast in the faith, and love one another, all of you."

MEMORIAL OF PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 1:10, 16-20; Matthew 23:1-12 (231). "Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant."

Wednesday, Mar 08, 2023

A brother called to heal

On this day, the church commemorates Saint John of God, a Portuguese religious brother who—like Saint Ignatius of Loyola—was a military man who experienced a sudden conversion. In fact, the two men (along with Saint Teresa) shared a spiritual mentor in Saint John of Ávila. A sermon from the priest moved John of God to repent of his former excesses, so much so that it was mistaken for a mental health crisis; he was quickly institutionalized. Later

engaging in work with the poor, he founded the Brothers Hospitallers in 1572, who continue to care for the sick around the world—including as official caretakers of the pope. In an age of increased mental health awareness, may we always remember John's holy life and recognize our call to serve those in need.

MEMORIAL OF JOHN OF GOD, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 18:18-20; Matthew 20:17-28 (232).

"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me."

Thursday, Mar 09, 2023

Priceless service

It's entirely appropriate that the Memorial of Frances of Rome coincides with a gospel that tells us in no uncertain terms to care for the poor. Frances of Rome was a wealthy Italian married woman in the early 1400s, a time of great instability and poverty in Italy. She poured her family treasure into efforts to feed and heal the poor. She was recognized for her piety and compassion and founded a religious order dedicated to serving suffering people, now known as the Oblates of St. Frances of Rome. Upon her husband's death, she became superior of the order. What can you do for the poor or sick in your corner of the world?

MEMORIAL OF FRANCES OF ROME, RELIGIOUS

TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 17:5-10; Luke 16:19-31 (233). "Lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores."

Friday, Mar 10, 2023

Celebrate sisters

During Catholic Sisters Week, we celebrate the good works of Catholic sisters collectively and individually; tell stories of Catholic sisters we love, respect, admire; and share information about becoming a Catholic sister, including directing people to VISION VocationNetwork.org. But, most of all, we focus on the truth that a religious vocation reveals: God is all we need. As Catholic nun and Doctor of the Church Saint Teresa of Ávila observed: "Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone suffices."

LENTEN WEEKDAY; DAY OF ABSTINENCE

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a; Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46 (234). "The Kingdom of God will be . . . given to a people that will produce its fruit."

Saturday, Mar 11, 2023

Confession heals the soul

Catholics are encouraged to partake of the sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) as much as possible, but especially during Lent, because confession is good for the soul. None of us is perfect, and all of us carry burdens that could be lightened through honest reflection and repentance. Other religions include a confessional practice as well, attesting to the universal need: Jews confess "We have sinned" in the Yom Kippur service. Confession is part of the Hindu *Prāyaścitta*. In Islam, the act of seeking forgiveness from God for sins is called *Istighfar*. Buddhist monks confess their sins to other monks. Check the bulletin, and find time for Confession. You'll feel better for it.

LENTEN WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Micah 7:14-15, 18-20; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 (235).

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you."

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



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