



We hope you will use these brief reflections everyday—and find that it helps you to grow closer to Christ. If you would prefer to receive the weekly file by e-mail, just send an e-mail message to ghilke@neo.rr.com and say “add me to the Take Five list”.

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

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2009

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Divorce the thought

Few New Testament texts have had their meaning debated so vigorously as those in which Jesus discusses divorce. Biblical scholar Raymond F. Collins says there are eight versions of Jesus' teaching on divorce and no easy way to identify which one reflects his views in their purest form. From the days of the early church to the present, the question continues to provoke debate. What can be said with confidence, however, is that divorce is always painful for those involved or directly touched by it. Hug a friend hurt by divorce today—and give yourself a hug if you are that person!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 2:18-24; Hebrews 2:9-11; Mark 10:2-16 or 10:2-12*
“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

Up close and personal

Who is my neighbor? A man learned in Israelite law posed this question to Jesus. He asked neither what a neighbor was, nor how to treat a neighbor. The law had taught him that much. Rather he sought to know whom he needed to love. “Love thy neighbor” is a rule easy to understand and accept intellectually. Yet when we are face to face with other people, we are much more prone to excuse ourselves from this obligation. Thus the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote: “It’s possible to love one’s neighbor abstractly, and even occasionally from a distance, but hardly ever close up.” Try to see your neighbors in those faces most difficult to love.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Jonah 1:1-2:2, 11; Luke 10:25-37*
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . and your neighbor as yourself.”

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

FEAST OF BRUNO, PRIEST; MARIE-ROSE DUROCHER, VIRGIN

Education primary

Saints Bruno, born in 1030 in what is now Germany, and Marie-Rose, born in 1811 in Quebec, Canada lived centuries and oceans apart but shared a love of learning and a prayerful spirit. Bruno achieved fame as a professor of theology before leaving it all behind for a life of solitude and prayer that led him to form the first Carthusian monastery. Marie-Rose founded the Sisters of Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, dedicated to Christian education, especially among the poor. What can you learn from their lives?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Jonah 3:1-10; Luke 10:38-42*
“There is need of only one thing.”

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

Weaving our way to God

Handy with a loom? You don't need to be when weaving the spiritual tapestry of prayer. Pope Paul VI appealed to the image of a loom in describing the art of praying the rosary. Each “Hail Mary” prayer hinges on the name of Jesus as its center of gravity. All the “Hail Marys” together form the supporting threads across which the drama of the mysteries is interwoven. The 19th-century English cardinal

John Henry Newman saw the rosary as a way of “holding in our hands all that we believe.” October is the month of the rosary. Why not try your hand at weaving a few mysteries?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Jonah 4:1-11; Luke 11:1-4*
“*Lord, teach us to pray.*”

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

The perfect parents

Most of us who have children, if we are honest, have regrets about how we are doing or how we did as parents. God knows we tried to be good moms and dads, although we sometimes failed in ways great and small. But at least we knew how to do it right even if at times we did it wrong. Jesus makes the point that being “wicked” doesn’t prevent us from knowing how to be good to our kids, but that even the best of us can’t measure up to how good a parent God is to us. When it comes to asking for the things we need, you can’t beat having a Heavenly Father and a Blessed Mother.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Malachi 3:13-20b; Luke 11:5-13*
“*If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*”

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

FEAST OF JOHN LEONARDI, PRIEST

Pass it on

Quick! What do the initials *CCD* stand for? Not many people under 50 remember that they stand for “Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.” Even fewer know that this organization of lay religious educators was founded by John Leonardi (1543-1609), a pharmacist-turned-priest who was one of the first to recognize the importance of teaching children the essentials of faith—and to do something about it. May we give thanks today to Saint John for having both the vision and the will to create a structure for religious education that has lasted for 430 years. And let’s not forget the countless adults who during those years have volunteered their time to pass along our faith to children. Surely the church would not be where it is today without them!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Joel 1:13-15; 2:1-2; Luke 11:15-26*
“*Call a solemn assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land.*”

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

FEAST OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Blessed are you

One day a female follower of Jesus, apparently touched by his words, was moved to shout out a blessing on him: “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed,” perhaps wishing that she herself should have such a son. Yet Jesus demurs and turns the blessing back upon her and all like her. While Jesus’ mother and her womb are indeed blessed as we pray in the “Hail Mary,” Jesus takes even greater delight in those of either gender who allow his words to take root in their hearts, their inmost being—those who keep that word alive by nourishing it and sharing it with others. Jesus blesses us for laboring and bringing the Good News to birth today.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Joel 4:12-21; Luke 11:27-28*
“*Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it!*”

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