



ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

July 2, 2017 - Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

dear Padre

Parish Office:

Phone: 756-2356

Fax: 756-2099

Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00am - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Email: stromuald@bbtel.com

www.stromuald.org

Pastoral Staff:

Pastor, Father Brian Johnson

Email: Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org

Deacon, Tony Anthony

Deacon, Mike Wiedemer

Administrative Asst, Jane Haynes

CRE: Adult, Rosa Hockenberry

CRE: RCIA, Lyvenia Anthony

CRE: 7-12, Gayle Poole

CRE: K-6, Kim Brumfield

Pastoral Council:

Dana Bland, Harry Mattingly,

Janet Bland, David Morton

Christi Brooks, Kevin Oelze

Chris Brumfield, Don Payne,

Jerry Dowell, Gail Pollock

Betty Heavrin, Pam Pollock

St. Romuald

Interparochial School:

Phone: 756-5504

www.stromualdschool.org

Principal, Rob Cox

School Board

Representatives:

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

If my fiancé and I abstain from sex, why can't we live together before we get married?

It seems to me there are two reasons living with your future spouse before marriage is not a good idea.

One is that you are setting each other up for some serious temptations, or an "occasion of sin." It would be similar to putting a bottle of gin on the desk of an alcoholic or a carton of cigarettes in front of someone who has succeeded in giving up smoking. I'm not saying you have some sort of addiction, but the natural pull of sex is going to be particularly strong, especially when you're young, in love, and ready to commit to marriage.

You will be free and even encouraged in marriage to pursue the greatest intimacy. But for the moment, it is asking too much to put you both in the same circumstances now that you will be in after you wed.

The second reason for not living together before marriage is that the living situation could give scandal to others. If you are active in your church and vocal about practicing your Catholic faith but then start living with your future spouse before marriage, it can raise questions (and eyebrows) about what you really believe and how you're living your faith.

There may be some good-sounding reasons for living together. You can cut down on costs, get to know your future spouse better, and so on. But these reasons aren't worth the risk.

My advice is that you help each other live a virtuous life now, by sacrificing the convenience of living together outside of marriage, as the best practice for your life together in the sacrament of matrimony.

Fr. Gary Lauenstein, CSsR

Masses for the Week

June July 3rd - 9th

Tues	8:00 am	Mary Anita Whitworth
	1:00 pm	Caitlyn Christiansen (CC) (Extended Care)
Wed	5:00 pm	Wm. Grause Family (BM)
Thurs	9:30 am	Loretta Duggins (Medco)
Fri	8:00 am	Martha Matthews
Sat	8:00 am	Nathan Bach (ND)
	5:00 pm	Raphael Powers (JP)
	7:00 am	Germie & Isabell Winchell
	10:00 am	Leroy Johnson

Stewardship of Finance

June 24th & 25th Collection

Sunday Collection	\$11,256.00
Building Fund	\$5.00
Children	\$6.00
Loose change for the Poor	\$32.55
St. Vincent de Paul	\$724.00

Parish Financial Summary

July-May, 2017

Total Income	\$487,400
Total Expenses	\$444,200
	\$ 43,200

Thank you for your financial stewardship!

Worship and Sacrament

Anointing of the Sick: Anointing of the Sick is celebrated with the parish community every first Wednesday at 5:00 pm Mass. Yet, anytime, anointing is available for illness, preparation for surgery or for recovery, by calling Fr Brian.

Baptism: Congratulations on the birth of your child! Your Church Family is excited about your family growing and our family growing! We look forward to celebrating your child's baptism! Preparation for new parents or those new to the parish is held by appointment. Call Fr Brian.

Marriage: Congratulations on your engagement! Your Church Family wishes to help you fully prepare spiritually and walk with you into this lifetime commitment to each other. In order to allow sufficient time, couples must contact the parish office at least 6 months before the anticipated wedding date.

Confession/Reconciliation: Every Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm; every Saturday 4:00-5:00 pm, every first Saturday after 8:00 am Mass, or anytime by simply asking or calling Fr Brian for appointment.

Visitation of the Sick: Please notify Father or the office upon admission of a family member into nursing homes or hospital. Often we rely upon word from the family about illnesses of a member. Please call.

RCIA: Interested in the Catholic Faith? The RCIA process is a "spiritual journey" that fully initiates those who are not baptized or who have baptism from another tradition and wish to join fully the Catholic Church. Classes are offered through the year culminating at Easter! Please call the office for details!

Membership in the Parish: Welcome to all new families or persons moving into our parish. We are glad that you are joining the parish community. We want to visit with you and help you settle into the church. Please register in the parish office as soon as possible.

Ministers of the Liturgy - July 8th & 9th

	Eucharistic Ministers	Lectors	Ushers	Servers	Rosary Leaders	Music Ministers
5:00 pm	Jerry Jarboe Shelly Jefferies	Jennifer O'Reilly Melissa Oelze	C-Arnold O'Reilly* C-Danny O'Reilly S-Mark Rhodes S-Matthew Rhodes	Emily Claycomb Preston Flood Emma Foran	Dayle Riley	Shannon
7:00 am	Janet Bland Shirley Bland	Buddy Payne	C-Michael Kennedy* C-Michael Whitfill S-Mike Whitfill S-Tom Winchell	Gabe Carwile Luke Carwile	Raymond Wethington	
10:00 am	Ort Critchelow Sharon Hale Mona Hinton Sally Hinton	Mariah Critchelow Alvin Mattingly	C-Raymond Critchelow* C-Ethan O'Donoghue S-Ron O'Donoghue S-Jim Sills	Mary Grace Mattingly Sydney Mattingly	Sandy Horsley	Volunteer
Radio Minister: Randy Howard			Children's Liturgy:			



"Whoever finds his life will lose it and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it!"

At first, this saying of Jesus seems like a real headscratcher! UNTIL, we begin to think about experiences we have had where we did gain something, by releasing our hold or letting up the tension (as in loosening a knot by relaxing tension in the line). Or on the other side, we might have lost something by

tightening up or choking something too firmly held! For example, I heard about an experiment testing the selfishness of monkeys. The result every time was that a monkey would sit and starve with his hand gripped on a cookie in a jar, keeping his hand stuck in the jar (the widened diameter of his clenched fist wouldn't let his hand out of the slimmer neck of the jar). He would never release the cookie to let his hand out to then just turn the jar upside down to pour out the cookie! His selfishness defeats him, so those who 'seek their life will lose it, while losing it actually brings more to you!' Losing a little, one gains a lot! Or a more personal example is a friend of mine who told me of a great tradition she had about her grandmother's cookies! Her grandmother had a special oatmeal cookie recipe, and she had made a big batch and gave them to her granddaughter. A little afterward, my friend's grandmother suddenly died. My friend remembered those cookies and wanted to **preserve them as a remembrance** so she froze them. She began a tradition of getting one out of the freezer and eating it on her grandmother's birthday and death anniversary. What a neat remembrance, enjoying something hand-baked by her grandmother's own hands. **Yet**, a problem rose after a year of them being in the freezer. Even wrapped in saran wrap, tucked in a Ziploc bag and then frozen in a Tupperware bowl, **still** the cookies took on a freezer burn taste & smell that changed the whole experience. They just weren't grandma's cookies anymore! My friend's desire to lock up **the memory experience**/taste of her grandmother, **actually led to the loss of it!** The memorial joy of a grandma-made cookie was taken away in trying to capture it!

We run across this same idea when we try to catch a beautiful scene as a 'Kodak moment'. Consider a gorgeous sunset that we try to take, in a picture. **Yet**, notice, while we are taking pictures (copies) of the scene, we are not truly watching it with our own eyes unimpeded and taking it in fully! Trying to copy/capture the beautiful scene, we are cutting off the edges & boxing down our view to the size of the screen. We are missing out on the fullest experience of just watching/being part of it! Or think of when we snap a picture of some darling chipmunk hiding a nut or taking a drink, and the snapping noise of the camera or our steps getting closer make him scatter wild and free (We lose the picture shot and the experience)! What we try to gain, we actually lose, and we would gain more of it, if we simply let go and just experienced it!

I believe Jesus is telling us that when we try to secure and lock up the grace of God, forcing it into under our control, we end up losing what we tried to gain (like holding something alive, so tightly, that we choke the life out of it!) Jesus calls us to trust, relax and go with God! Letting go in such a way, we receive/gain so much more than we could have earlier imagined! In order to receive something in our hand, we must unclench it, opening it to be able to receive! Luke 6:38 says, "Give and it will be given to you;for the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."

Just a quick word about the line (verse 37) in the

gospel that troubles some people about Jesus condemning those 'who love father or mother more than Him'. Those words strike some people as mean or oppositional, yet Jesus is not provoking a division, he is emphasizing that God is above all! God who made all is also God who loves all and same God who sustains and preserves all. For example, maybe somebody protests, "But charity starts at home right, God wants us to take care of what he gave so we must be responsible for family?" But notice, God made them, too. So yes, God cares for them, too. Do you think God would harm whom He created? Or ask yourself, "Do you think you love that person more than God who made them does?" To properly honor them, we honor God who made them. So keeping in good relationship to God, keeps us in good relationship to each other! Jesus says, **"Everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life"** (Matthew 19:29).

What a Great Picnic! As a pastor, one of the most powerful experiences of God's blessings is witnessing the many dedicated volunteers around the church serving and working together in a common mission! Our picnic is one of those special blessings, as I couldn't begin to count the number the hands, people and families that are involved working to plan, set-up, execute picnic day and then settle up/clean up afterward! I am filled with amazement at the great number of different crews and teams that pull off each part of the picnic, from the ordering and planning stage through the set-up and managing of booths, the cooking, preparing and serving of food, and the final reporting and recording to start planning the next year's! Awesome! And we see a lot of the actual workers, but there are so many that work and their contribution is behind the scenes, like the meat cooks at the pit, or over the fryers, or the supplies orderers, the phone callers, **the families cooking/baking at home** (maybe not able to come out and work picnic day-but they contribute their part, too) or out selling tickets way even way before picnic day! So many ways of serving and we are blessed to have so many servants working together! I am so grateful and thank God and every person involved! A true blessing!

Here are some daily questions to consider in our prayer time!

Sunday: What remained with me after Mass today? Did any word strike my heart or stay in my mind? And have I prayed over the word or message?

Monday: 'Let go and let God'. As we begin this week, let us practice each day surrendering our will and worries to Jesus and trust His Providence to work with us through any trials!

Tuesday: Have I given enough time to prayer today? Try to take an extra minute to read some scripture or pray a rosary or sit quietly with God.

Wednesday: Is God calling me to any new volunteer service or work for His glory? Have any new needs surfaced around me as I have talked with other people? Am I one to help meet the need?

Thursday: Is there anything in my life I cling to, and may value more than God? What might I need to release, that may be interfering with my most faithful service to God?

Friday: Meditate upon a crucifix, and pray for guidance to offer penance for someone's good.

Saturday: For what am I especially thankful for? What offering to God can I return as a show of thanks for His care of me?

Peace and Prayers, Fr Brian Johnson

PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

Parish Council Member Nominations:

We want to recognize and thank our outgoing council members completing their three year terms on Parish Council: **David Morton, Jerry Dowell, Christi Brooks, Betty Heavrin.** *I am so grateful for their service and sacrifice of time to lead and work in the parish. Thank-You!* This opens the call for new members, so please pray about and talk with others serving on the council. Are you willing to be on the council? Or who can you nominate to serve. Nominations will begin next weekend and run two weeks, with elections following the next weekend.

Save the Date: Our Parish Mission:

Nationally recognized and dynamic Evangelist Mike Cumbee of the Micah Project, will be our Mission Speaker each night October 15-17th. Plan to attend and be rejuvenated in your faith! Mark your calendars!

Picnic Meeting, July 6th at 5:00 pm:

A recap of the 2017 St. Romuald Picnic will be held on Thursday, July 6th at 5:00 pm. We will be discussing the out-come of our latest picnic. All parishioners are encouraged to attend and voice your likes and dislikes about the picnic. Hope to see you there!

Family Movie Night: All of her life Riley dreamed of being a world class dancer. Victory in a regional competition gained her recognition and a shot at the nationals, but a horrific accident crushes all her dreams. Turning to horseback riding as a form of therapy to regain mobility, Riley begins a special bond with a horse named Grace. But disaster strikes and it seems all her efforts have come to an end. That is, until God's grace appears from a unexpected place. Join us on July 15th at 6:15 for an evening of family entertainment. Popcorn and a drink will be served, so please join us then.

Celebration

BIRTHDAYS: Louise Kennedy, July 6th; Chuck McGary, July 9th and Ruby Wheatley, July 11th

ANNIVERSARIES:

Bill & Sally Hinton, 54 years, July 5th
Donnie & Mary Vessels, 54 years, July 6th
Joe & Minnie Nimmo, 58 years, July 9th
Bernie & Ginny Flood, 52 years, July 10th

OPERATION ARCTIC

"Exploring the Coolest Book on the Planet!"
Monday, July 10th - Wednesday, July 12th
6:00PM - 8:30PM

Age Groups - 4 Yrs. Old by July 10th - students who completed 4th Grade.

On Thursday, July 13th, we will have a fun-filled night in the Church yard w/ VBS music, hot dogs/ hamburgers, cotton candy, snow cones, games and slip-n-slides!

If anyone has any questions, please contact Kim Brumfield at 270-945-2787.

Thank you to everyone who donated the milk jugs for VBS.

Senior Day: Sheroll Carby who is the Community Outreach Coordinator with Alzheimer's Association will be our guest speaker for the day. The topic she will be discussing is "Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body. So bring a friend or two, and come listen and join in on this most important topic. We will provide the fried chicken and ask that you try to bring a dish to pass. We will be meeting Tuesday, July 25th, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, again that is Tuesday. Hope to see you all there, to celebrate our independence!

This Week at St. Romuald

Mon	1:00 pm	Blue Army Rosary
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon Meeting
Tues	8:00 am	Mass
	1:00 pm	Mass (Extended Care)
	4:00 pm	Rosary
Wed	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Mass
Thur	9:30 am	Mass (Medco)
	5:00 pm	Picnic Meeting
Fri	8:00 am	First Friday Mass
	8:30 am	24 Hour Eucharistic Adoration
Sat	8:00 am	Mass
	5:00 pm	Billboards for Life Collection
Sun	7/10	Billboards for Life Collection

UPCOMING:

July 9	8:00 am	First Friday Mass
	8:30 am	24 Hour Eucharistic Adoration

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

A Weekend with Mary, Our Blessed Mother:

Friday, July 14- Sunday, July 16, 2017 at Archabbey Guest House and Retreat Center. Director Fr Noel Mueller OSB will be exploring Mary's important role in presenting the Savior to our world. A highpoint of the weekend will be the Sunday celebration of Our Lady of Einsiedeln - patroness of our Archabbey Church, and visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Monte Cassino to pray the scriptural rosary. Fee: Single \$255 to register or any questions, please call Fr Maurus at 1-800-581-6905.

FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN INQUIRING ABOUT THE CATHOLIC FAITH OR IF YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE 270-756-2356 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

A Word from Pope Francis:

"It is only the Word of God that can help us to discern between the many false and confusing messages that bombard us from society. It is also only the Word of God that can help us to make sense of the deep feelings and desires of our hearts and of the lack of justice for many of our brothers and sisters. Of that full humanization that we claim for every person on this earth, in addition to bread, home, work, family, is also the possession of the Eternal Word (the Gospels) as an instrument of freedom and fraternity. So especially brother priests, learn from the example of Fr Primo Mazzolari, (Italian parish priest lived 1890-1959), who listened closely to both God and the world around him. This listening begins by thirsting for God yourselves. Without this thirst for the Absolute you might be good clerks of the sacred; but you are not being a true priest, able to become servants of Christ in your brothers and sisters. So, listen to the world and all those who live and work in it. Take care of every question of feeling and hope, without fear of passing through deserts and shadow areas." This pastoral charity is a matter of listening and of seeing. As Fr Mazzolari wrote "the person who has little charity sees few poor; he who has much charity sees many poor; those who have no charity see no one".
" (Homily at Fr Mazzolari's tomb 6-20-2017)

Eucharistic First Friday 24-hour Adoration:

Following the 8:00 am Mass on July 7th, we begin the 24 hour adoration until Saturday morning mass at 8:00 am. We are blessed with dedicated adorers for each hour, but can use extra people for some hours. Please call Minnie Nimmo 270-617-0297 or Patsy Whitfill 270-617-2557 to volunteer spending an hour if prayer with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

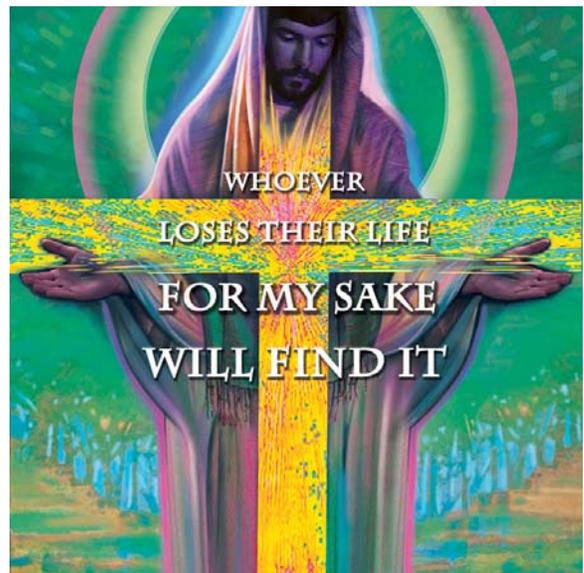


Readings for the Week

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday: Eph 2:19-22; Ps 117:1bc-2; Jn 20:24-29
- Tuesday: Gn 19:15-29; Ps 26:2-3, 9-12; Mt 8:23-27
- Wednesday: Gn 21:5, 8-20a; Ps 34:7-8, 10-13; Mt 8:28-34
- Thursday: Gn 22:1b-19; Ps 115:1-6, 8-9; Mt 9:1-8
- Friday: Gn 23:1-4, 19; 24:1-8, 62-67; Ps 106:1b-5; Mt 9:9-13
- Saturday: Gn 27:1-5, 15-29; Ps 135:1b-6; Mt 9:14-17
- Sunday: Zec 9:9-10; Ps 145:1-2, 8-11, 13-14; Rom 8:9, 11-13; Mt 11:25-30

Fundraiser for Adalee Taul, daughter of Doug & Sherrie Taul, is in Atlanta for six weeks at a boot camp that specializes in brain injury rehabilitation. This intense rehab is not covered by insurance and is very costly. A group of concerned parishioners is hosting a Bunco Tournament for Adalee Taul to help with medical expenses. All proceeds will be placed in the *Adalee Taul Benefit* account that is set up at First State Bank. The bunco tournament will take place on Friday, July 14th, in the parish hall. Cost is \$25 per person. The tournament will begin at 6:15 but come as early as 5:30 to enjoy free food and drink. Prizes and door drawings will occur throughout the night. If anyone in the parish is interested in donating a prize or making a food dish for the bunco benefit, please contact Dolores Mattingly (270-547-1916), Nora Dailey (270-945-9912) or Christi Tivitt (270-750-0202).



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PRAYER REQUESTS

We Pray For:

Gene Aldridge, Paula Anthony, Gene Bennett, Joe Bennett, Juanita Burch, Brian Butler, Billy Carwile, Jerry Carwile, Mallorie Collins, Debbie Critchelov, Jim Curtis, Rick Dale, Amanda Douthitt, Marolyn Dowell, Roger Dowell, Kenneth Dowell, Treyten Drake, **Debbie Dubree**, Davye Duggins, Sammy Duggins, Tijuana Duncan, Lottie Eauer, Tessa Farris, Carroll Ferguson, Ginny Flood, Pat Flood, Cindy Getz, **Jenny Ginn**, Bill Greenwood, Linda Greenwood, Susan Griffin, Clyde Hall, JoAnn Henning, Lisa Henning, Karen Herbert, Kitty Himmelhaver, Bill Hinton, Doug Hinton, Rick Hurley, Merri Hurt, Braddock Inman, Barbara Jarboe, Virginia Jeffries, Mary Ann Johnson, Tracy King, Patricia Lane, Angie Lawrence, Annette Lucas, Margaret Lyons, Red McClellan, Oleta McDaniel, Bevan Michael Miller, Richard Miller, Blaise Mills, Sharon Morgan, Dorothy Morris, Don O'Donoghue, Eddie O'Donoghue, Joe Oelze, Earl O'Reilly, Janet O'Reilly, Libby Osborne, Martha Payne, Brian Phillips, Peggy Phillips, Bobby Potts, Doris Priest, Joe Priest, Robert Priest, Sandy Priest, Stoy Priest, Bob Rankin, Rita Roach, Shirley Robbins, **Lincoln Roberts**, Suzanne Rose, Carri Roth, Eric Severs, Rex Lee Sheets, Steve Smith, **Debbie Snyder**, Jerry Sosh, Virginia Stanford, Lucye Stupak, Pam Sturgeon, Loretta Swink, Adalee Taul, Becky Taul, John N. Taul, Gina Thornsberry, Paul Tucker, Gil Urban, Tessa Wadsworth, Regina Walz, Greg Wethington, Raymond Wethington, Jimmy Whitworth, Mary Rita Whitworth, Carolyn Wilcheck, Kevin Wilcheck, Rita Williams, Rebecca Wilson, Robert D. Wilson, Anne Wolfe, Sandra Zanone. **Serving in the Armed Forces:** Mandie Adams, Kevin Arnold, Fred Barham, Austin Brown, Timothy Cashen, Ryan Critchelov, Cody Garst, Parker Findlay, James Hanor, Jack Hayes, Stevie Higgs, James Howard, Charles Kuhlman, SSgt Bradford O'Reilly, Jordan Pate, Liana Tindle, Chase Upchurch, Garrett Wadsworth



Pray to end abortion: Join other Catholics and those from other faiths that gather each Saturday at 2nd and Market in Louisville from 7:00-8:00 am (EST) to pray for families entering the abortion clinic. Many children have been saved and mothers spared future grief by this prayer action and support. With God, all things are possible! Archbishop Kurtz is known to show up and pray with everyone too!

GOD Bless AMERICA

JULY 4TH
INDEPENDENCE DAY

AROUND AND ABOUT

"More for More" Summer Camp for High School Men:

What are you supposed to do with your life? What does God want you to do with your life? This camp is for young men (high school) who have the courage to begin asking those questions and who want to give their lives to the One who first gave His life for us. Made for More is about giving your life to God. Seek more to life than just getting by, this camp is for you. Scholarships are available for those who need assistance. Contact the Vocations Office: 270-683-1545, www.owensborovocations.com, jason.mcclure@pastoral.org, for more information.

Catholic Faith Information: Please check out and pick up any of the free pamphlets and booklets in the back of church about Catholic teaching and practices. They are excellent resources from the Knights of Columbus about our faith beliefs!

Al-Anon Meeting: Mondays 7:00 pm St Romuald Parish Hall. Come find support and understanding to recover a sense of serenity in your life.

Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus will be selling BBQ chickens on July 9th at St. Romuald's, St. Mary's and St. Anthony's after the Sunday Masses. Knights of Columbus members: If you can help cook chickens please text or email me @ 270-617-0754 or jpat_oreilly@yahoo.com respectively. Cooking starts at 3:30 am at St. Romuald's Pit.

Thank you to our advertisers for making the bulletin possible! Please let them know that you are thankful for support of our parish bulletin.

Advertiser of the week

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SUNDAY, JULY 2, 2017 THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

We are Resurrection people

New life from apparent barrenness. Life out of death. Finding life by losing it. The readings you heard in church this weekend seem to present a contradictory message, but they actually present a truth: The life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus gives meaning to life, including its losses, hardships, and difficulties. A Resurrection faith takes up the cross and carries it to eternal life. Faith does not avoid daily existence; faith transforms it. And the evidence of faith is hope and service to others.

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a; Romans 6:3-4, 8-11; Matthew 10:37-42 (97). "Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."

MONDAY, JULY 3

FEAST OF THOMAS, APOSTLE

Be a faithful doubter

Legends abound about the apostle Thomas, including of his preaching in what is now Iran. Most often he is linked with India and credited with bringing the faith there. When the Portuguese arrived there in 1498, Christian communities attributed to him were still functioning. Not bad for someone stuck with the title "Doubting." But then again, how can you have faith if you are certain about things? Without doubt there can be no faith to have and to share. Today, face your doubts head on and believe enough to share your faith as Thomas did.

TODAY'S READINGS: Ephesians 2:19-22; John 20:24-29 (593). "Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God.'"

TUESDAY, JULY 4

MASS FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

Liberty brings blessings—and responsibilities

If we sat down this morning and started listing the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, dusk could find us still at the task. The legacy of the United States is a tremendous blessing to her citizens, and our example continues to inspire nations around the world. But possessing freedom is not the same as knowing how to use it wisely. Like the woman with the flow of blood who reached out for her liberty with both hands when Jesus came by, we have been made the stewards of a remarkable gift that is also a challenging responsibility. What use do you make of your abundant liberty?

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 19:15-29; Matthew 8:23-27 (378). "He said to them, 'Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?'"

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5

MEMORIAL OF ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL

Bring peace to family feuds

Keeping peace in a family isn't easy. But imagine the difficulty when relatives get into a fight and they command armies. Such was the problem Saint Elizabeth faced 670 years ago when war broke out between her son, the king of Portugal, and her grandson, the king of Castille. But all it took was news of her arrival on the scene for the two combatants to settle their differences. Such was Elizabeth's love of peace and the spiritual power she wielded. The recent fireworks could serve to remind us that the Prince of Peace is with us, calming the winds of war and stilling the sea of conflict.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 21:5, 8-20a; Matthew 8:28-34 (379). "The Lord hears the cry of the poor."

THURSDAY, JULY 6

MEMORIAL OF MARIA GORETTI, VIRGIN, MARTYR

Forgiveness redeems lives

Maria Goretti was not even 12 years old when she rebuked the improper advances of her 18-year-old neighbor. Angered at her refusal, Alessandro Serenelli stabbed the young Maria more than a dozen times. On her deathbed she received the sacraments and offered forgiveness to her attacker. But her forgiving was not yet complete. For years Serenelli sat in prison, angry and unrepentant, until one night he had a dream in which Maria appeared to him offering a new life of forgiveness. From that moment he was a changed man. Goretti may be known for her purity, but her willingness to forgive stands as a testament to her heroic holiness.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 22:1b-19; Matthew 9:1-8 (380). "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home."

FRIDAY, JULY 7

Follow your heart instead of the money

Tax-collector-turned-apostle Matthew may not have had the most popular job when Jesus called him, but the key is not what we do before we hear the call but what we do after. Matthew dropped his lucrative post and followed Jesus without looking back. Would you do the same? If you sense that you often lack the courage of your convictions, look to Matthew for inspiration. He gave up the big bucks for even greater treasure. Let the richness of faith guide you on the right road.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 23:1-4, 19; 24:1-8, 62-67; Matthew 9:9-13 (381). "He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, 'Follow me.'"

SATURDAY, JULY 8

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

In the new

In Jesus something new was happening. He came to people who had particular expectations about who their savior was going to be. When Jesus started teaching and working among them, many did not accept him. He was not only breaking a lot of the rules, he was throwing a few out, too. Some did not realize he was revealing a radically different way of knowing and following God. His mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom the church honors today and many other Saturdays, was open to that newness. She herself had taken an unconventional path. Are you ready to let your faith in Jesus change you?

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 27:1-5, 15-29; Matthew 9:14-17 (382). "People do not put new wine into old wineskins."

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