

Sunday Readings

23rd September 2018

Collect

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbour, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Wisdom 2:12,17-20

The godless say to themselves:

'Let us lie in wait for the virtuous man, since he annoys us and opposes our way of life, reproaches us for our breaches of the law and accuses us of playing false to our upbringing.

'Let us see if what he says is true, let us observe what kind of end he himself will have. If the virtuous man is God's son, God will take his part and rescue him from the clutches of his enemies. Let us test him with cruelty and with torture, and thus explore this gentleness of his and put his endurance to the proof. Let us condemn him to a shameful death since he will be looked after – we have his word for it.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 53:3-6,8. R/. v.6

R/. The Lord upholds my life.

O God, save me by your name;
by your power, uphold my cause.
O God, hear my prayer;
listen to the words of my mouth. **R/.**

For proud men have risen against me,
ruthless men seek my life.
They have no regard for God. **R/.**

But I have God for my help.
The Lord upholds my life.
I will sacrifice to you with willing heart
and praise your name for it is good. **R/.**



SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St James 3:16-4:3

Wherever you find jealousy and ambition, you find disharmony, and wicked things of every kind being done; whereas the wisdom that comes down from above is essentially something pure; it also makes for peace, and is kindly and considerate; it is full of compassion and shows itself by doing good; nor is there any trace of partiality or hypocrisy in it. Peacemakers, when they work for peace, sow the seeds which will bear fruit in holiness.

Where do these wars and battles between yourselves first start? Isn't it precisely in the desires fighting inside your own selves? You want something and you haven't got it; so you are prepared to kill. You have an ambition that you cannot satisfy; so you fight to get your way by force. Why you don't have what you want is because you don't pray for it; when you do pray and don't get it, it is because you have not prayed properly, you have prayed for something to indulge your own desires.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn 8:12

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the light of the world, says the Lord, anyone who follows me will have the light of life.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mark 9:30-37

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

After leaving the mountain Jesus and his disciples made their way through Galilee; and he did not want anyone to know, because he was instructing his disciples; he was telling them, 'The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men; they will put him to death; and three days after he has been put to death he will rise again.' But they did not understand what he said and were afraid to ask him.

They came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' They said nothing because they had been arguing which of them was the greatest. So he sat down, called the Twelve to him and said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last of all and servant of all.' He then took a little child, set him in front of them, put his arms round him, and said to them, 'Anyone who welcomes one of these little children in my name, welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year B

the word of god

saints of the week

“Peacemakers, when they work for peace, sow the seeds which will bear fruit in holiness.”

Sunday 23rd September
St Pio of Pietrelcina
(1887 to 1968)

We are called to be gentle and are called to endure. We are called to bring peace to conflict. As James tells us the seeds of the peacemaker will bear fruit in holiness. Jesus tells us to be the servant of all. It's in our nature to put ourselves first. Christ tells us not to, he tells us to put others first. He shows us a small child as an example. By putting them first and serving them, we are serving Him.

There is a huge difference between doing our best and being best. Being the best student, the best driver, the best mum, the best doctor, the best anything you can be is good, it's holy and it will bear fruit. Jesus asks us to use our skills for others, welcome their needs, their vulnerabilities and to help them as we would help a child. When we welcome others with open arms, we will be welcoming Christ.

Following our Lord is not easy. He never promised it would be. Selflessness is not in our nature, pride and greed are. If we are to be followers of Christ we need to put our human nature last to enable us to put our spiritual nature first.

The call to be selfless is hard. It's one we will all find difficult, and without prayer and a relationship with a loving God we may find it impossible. But we have a loving God, one who is selfless, who died for us, who forgives us, and is ready to help us if we just ask in prayer for help. Let us pray that we may sow the seeds which will produce a harvest of holiness.

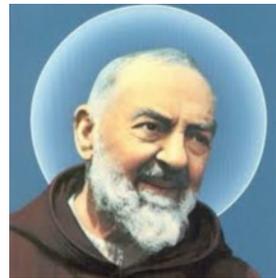
prayer of the week

Prayer For Our Faith to Grow Stronger

Father,
in glorifying Christ and sending us your Spirit,
you open the way to eternal life.
May our sharing in this gift increase our love
and make our faith grow stronger.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.



Francesco, named in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, was born to Giuseppa and Grazio Forgione, peasant farmers, in the small Italian village of Pietrelcina on May 25, 1887. Francesco was very devout even as a child, and at an early age felt drawn to the priesthood. He became a

Capuchin novice at the age of sixteen and received the habit in 1902. Francesco was ordained to the priesthood in 1910 after seven years of study and became known as Padré Pio.

On September 20, 1918, Padré Pio was kneeling in front of a large crucifix when he received the visible marks of the crucifixion, making him the first stigmatized priest in the history of the Church. The doctor who examined Padre Pio could not find any natural cause for the wounds. Upon his death in 1968, the wounds were no longer visible. In fact, there was no scarring and the skin was completely renewed. He had predicted that upon his death the wounds would heal. He died on September 23, 1968 at the age of eighty-one. His funeral was attended by about 100,000 people. On June 16, 2002, over 500,000 Padré Pio devotees gathered in Rome to witness Pope John Paul II proclaim Padré Pio, Saint Pio of Pietrelcina.

Saturday 29th September
Ss Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels

Michael appears in Daniel's vision as "the great prince" who defends Israel against its enemies; in the Book of Revelation, he leads God's armies to final victory over the forces of evil. Devotion to Michael is the oldest angelic devotion, rising in the East in the fourth century. The Church in the West began to observe a feast honouring Michael and the angels in the fifth century. He is a patron of soldiers.

Gabriel appears in the book of Daniel to explain some of the prophet's visions, and was also the bearer of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Raphael's activity is confined to the Old Testament story of Tobit. There he appears to guide Tobit's son Tobiah through a series of fantastic adventures which lead to a threefold happy ending: Tobiah's marriage to Sarah, the healing of Tobit's blindness and the restoration of the family fortune. His name means *God heals*.