THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

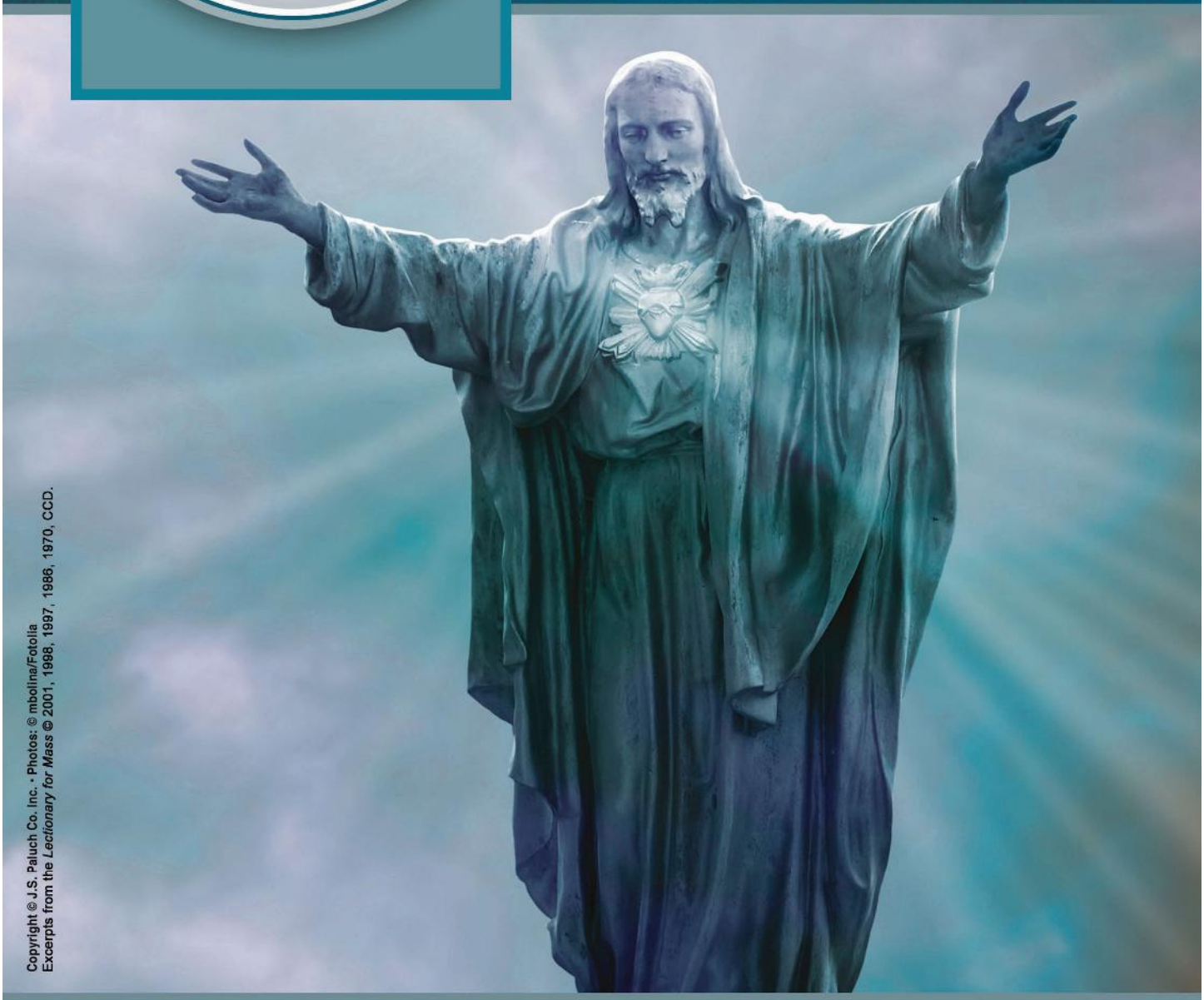
JUNE

28

2020

We know that Christ,
raised from the dead,
dies no more;
death no longer
has power over him.

ROMANS 6:9



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Saint Junípero Serra (1713-1784)

July 1

No one who has stood before the quiet majesty of Mission San Juan Capistrano, or the altogether different but no less lovely Mission Dolores in San Francisco, or any of the missions from San Diego to Sonoma can fail to bless the Franciscan padre who, while not founder of each, was inspiration for them all, Saint Junípero Serra. Abandoning the comfortable academic life to which his doctorate in theology entitled him, Serra journeyed to the New World where his tireless traveling, dramatic preaching, and penitential austerity converted thousands of native peoples. Saving souls and celebrating the sacraments were Padre Serra's primary mission but not his only one. Education in letters and crafts, trades and agriculture transformed the people, while roads and irrigation systems transfigured the landscape. His more than thirty years of ministry were not free from conflict with authorities or without controversy in the retrospectively critical eye of history. But when John Paul II beatified him in 1988, he praised Padre Serra for assisting his converts to use their new faith to advance their true human development.

—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Freedom

Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves and under a just God cannot long retain it.

—Abraham Lincoln

Christian Hospitality

Day in and day out, we are required to make judgment calls informed by tough, durable, serviceable Christian love. We do what we can do, and God takes notice. God is in charge of rewards, and a glass of water will do when that is what we have to offer with a glad and open heart. Paul gives us a clear theology for the missionary work we do whenever anybody is close at hand. He reminds us that our work, our ministry, is carried on in concert with Christ. We have been baptized into his death and life. In any given moment both life and death are there, a kind of play of shadow and light. Sometimes it's difficult to tell where shadow leaves off and light begins. God will take care of that, too.

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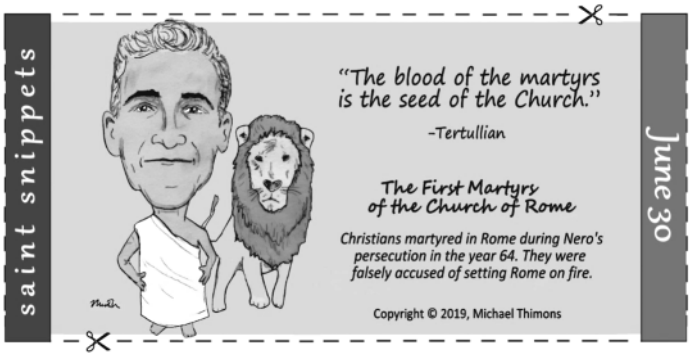
Readings for the Week

Monday:	Acts 12:1-11; Ps 34:2-9; 2 Tm 4:6-8, 17-18; Mt 16:13-19
Tuesday:	Am 3:1-8; 4:11-12; Ps 5:4b-8; Mt 8:23-27
Wednesday:	Am 5:14-15, 21-24; Ps 50:7-13, 16bc-17; Mt 8:28-34
Thursday:	Am 7:10-17; Ps 19:8-11; Mt 9:1-8
Friday:	Eph 2:19-22; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Jn 20:24-29
Saturday:	Am 9:11-15; Ps 85:9ab, 10-14; Mt 9:14-17 or, for Independence Day, any readings from the Mass "For the Country,"nos. 882- 886, or "For Peace and Justice," nos. 887-891
Sunday:	Zec 9:9-10; Ps 145:1-2, 8-11, 13-14; Rom 8:9, 11-13; Mt 11:25-30

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Monday:	Ss. Peter and Paul, Apostles
Tuesday:	The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church
Wednesday:	St. Junípero Serra; Canada Day
Friday:	St. Thomas; First Friday
Saturday:	Independence Day; First Saturday; Blessed Virgin Mary



Today's Readings

First Reading — Elisha promises a baby son to the hospitable woman (2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a).

Psalm — For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord (Psalm 89).

Second Reading — We shall live in newness of life as Christ was raised from the dead (Romans 6:3-4, 8-11).

Gospel — Whoever gives but a cup of cold water to another will surely be rewarded (Matthew 10:37-42).

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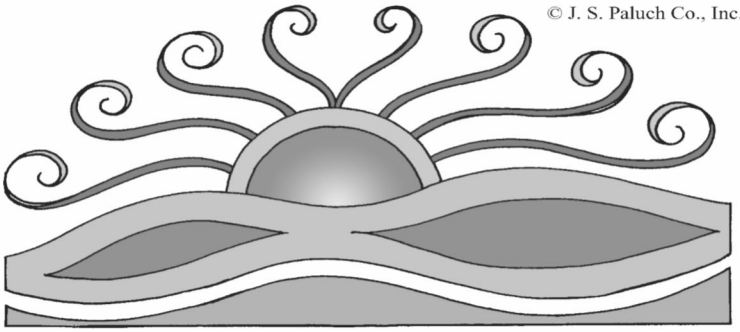

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
June 28, 2020

Think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.

— Romans 6:11

Treasures From Our Tradition

Confirmation is complicated, at least in its history. It arose in response to real problems deeply felt, not the least of which was the desire of the bishop to minister to all who were baptized. But it also has to do with the early crisis of how to deal with persons baptized by congregations that had broken bonds with the greater church: heretics. People reasoned that no matter how wrong-headed the minister might be, Christ would always work in the waters of baptism. No matter what, God would sweep aside all human obstacles to claim the new life in the water. They were not so sure about the ability of someone who had broken with the church to confer the Spirit.

By the fifth century, already-baptized persons coming into the church were anointed with chrism but not rebaptized. This anointing with myron or chrism was seen as an act of reconciliation by the church, and a seal upon the commitments vowed by the newcomer. Today, we preserve this ancient practice by never "rebaptizing" Christians who have been baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We affirm the candidates' baptismal dignity, and we celebrate confirmation at their first reception of the Eucharist.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Our readings today could be seen as a simple recipe for right living. In the Hebrew Bible, hospitality is regarded as one of the highest virtues. Conditions were harsh, and when people received guests or strangers, they washed their feet, provided a meal, and offered shelter if they could. In Second Kings, a woman's generosity is rewarded with the prospect of a child. In Romans we are called to recognize our baptism in Christ. We are called to be "dead to sin, and living in Christ Jesus." In the Gospel passage from Saint Luke, Jesus bids us to take up our cross, and to receive others as if we were receiving Christ. Put them together, and all of them are a call to see the holy, to see God in others, and to live our lives in Christ.

The Message Seems Harsh

On first reading, our Gospel seems very harsh. The idea of taking up our cross can be fearful or have negative connotations, as if it were something only a few can do. It is also confusing. Scripture tells us to honor our father and mother, and yet here are told we must love Jesus more than our parents or children, or we are not worthy. The message that Jesus intends to convey, however, is not to give up these people, but rather to choose Christ first. Sometimes this means being countercultural. For a family, how do we make choices to keep Christ in the picture? It could mean that when you make plans to take the family to that water park for the weekend, you should also locate the local church so you can attend Mass. Or maybe it means not placing your child on the soccer team with 10 a.m. Sunday games, or rescheduling another part of your life to keep Christ foremost. Perhaps it is something as simple as locking yourself in the bathroom for five minutes so that you have time to pray. Maybe it means listening to an audiobook of scriptures on your commute to work. All we do is for naught if we do not include Christ.

There Are Many "Cups Of Water"

Don't get caught up in taking this scripture literally. Yes, you may give someone a glass of water, invite the staff of your parish for a meal, hand an apple or a dollar bill to a homeless person, or take a shift in a shelter. But sometimes, what is being asked for is simply a kind word or a helping hand. Seeing an elderly person having trouble and helping them through the crosswalk, calming someone's toddler in the grocery store while they pay their bill. Offer a smile, a compliment, or a word of encouragement. Say hello to a stranger. We do not know who is parched with loneliness or feeling overwhelmed. Look for the Christ in others and respond with simple kindness and hospitality.

Today's Readings: 2 Kgs 4:8–11, 14–16a; Ps 89:2–3, 16–17, 18–19; Rom 6:3–4, 8–11; Mt 10:37–42

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