Sunday, Oct 18, 2026

One for all and all for one

What exactly do we "owe" our government? Certainly, we have an obligation to our fellow citizens to be law abiding. We can also work to change those laws we may disagree with. More than anything, we owe our nation, and each other, engaged citizenship —participation in the civic and public life of the society. We owe it to our fellow citizens to participate in some way in building a better society, to work for the "commonweal," as it was once known. Our greatest debt is not our taxes but the debt we owe each other. Find a way today to make a contribution, great or small, to the commonweal.

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Isaiah 45:1, 4-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b; Matthew 22:15-21 (145). *"Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."*

Monday, Oct 19, 2026

No one said it would be easy

The Jesuit Saints John de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues came to North America largely to convert as many members of the Huron tribe to the Catholic faith as possible. Working under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions, they managed to bring a few thousand souls into the church. Their encounters with the indigenous people had good and bad consequences on all sides. The accounts of the gruesome torture and deaths of the missionaries read like the script of a horror movie. But their lives and deaths watered the seeds of faith, as the blood of martyrs often does, and helped bring Catholicism to this continent. Remember the courage and perseverance of all martyrs the next time you are called upon to make a sacrifice or open your heart to new ideas.

MEMORIAL OF JOHN DE BRÉBEUF AND ISAAC JOGUES, PRIESTS, AND COMPANIONS, MARTYRS
Ephesians 2:1-10; Luke 12:13-21 (473). *"We are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for good works."*

Tuesday, Oct 20, 2026

Bound through one body

Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, written during his imprisonment in Rome, reads as a testament to the desire and struggle for unity in the Early Church. With the use of the words *one* and *together* Paul implores the Christians of Ephesus, both Jew and Gentile, to see themselves as bound through their being parts in the one body of Christ. Today more than ever, it is astoundingly easy for us to avoid associations with anyone outside our immediate circle of friends. Mass communications and digital technology have paradoxically allowed us to become more isolated from the stranger down the block. How does Paul's message about the body of Christ address the divisions in society today?

Ephesians 2:12-22; Luke 12:35-38 (474). *"In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."*

Wednesday, Oct 21, 2026

Best foot forward

In the year 287 two brothers with similar names, Crispin and Crispinian, were martyred in Rome. They were ordinary guys, cobblers and shoemakers by trade. They have become the patron saints of anyone trying to avoid sore feet. Look into your closets. Take the shoes you don't need and donate them so that others might walk without pain and so honor these two obscure saints and martyrs.

Ephesians 3:2-12; Luke 12:39-48 (475). *"Much will be required of the person entrusted with much."*

Thursday, Oct 22, 2026

Get fired up!

Have you ever tried to share your passion for something and gotten a lukewarm—or worse, an indifferent—response? We can all probably relate to the frustration of Jesus: "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!" (Luke 12:49, 50b). Jesus has a message of love and unity, but they're slow in being realized. That's because we're slow. We don't like to change. We don't like other people to change, either. But remember the words of Doctor of the Church Saint Catherine of Siena: "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire." In other words, as Christians, we must change. We must "be rooted and grounded in love," says Saint Paul. It is time to get the fire started.

Ephesians 3:14-21; Luke 12:49-53 (476). *"There is a baptism with which I must be baptized, and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished!"*

Friday, Oct 23, 2026

Everybody's doing it

"If all your friends jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge, would you jump, too?" a mother asked her son, who just complained that all his friends were doing something that he wasn't allowed to do. But the mom would have none of it. Using the reproach learned from her own mother, she was simply teaching her son to see the error of what everybody else was doing and choose a better way. As Catholic writer G.K. Chesterton put it: "Right is right, even if nobody does it." We Catholics can be lured by popular opinion and political policy to the wrong side of the moral tracks. But Christ teaches us to follow our consciences. Be sure to keep yours well informed.

Ephesians 4:1-6; Luke 12:54-59 (477). *"Why do you not judge for yourselves what is right?"*

Saturday, Oct 24, 2026

Fruitful efforts

In biblical terms, fruitfulness is seen as a sign of God's blessing. Mary was the bearer of good fruit par excellence. In her womb and her witness, she brought God's work to fruition by giving birth to Jesus and offering him a mother's love and care. We are called to participate in Mary's witness by becoming nurturers and bearers of Jesus' Good News. How can we imitate Mary's courageous and generous actions in our own lives today? What good fruit can we bring forth?

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
Ephesians 4:7-16; Luke 13:1-9 (478). *"For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down."*

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

Take Five for Faith
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