



Bringing Home the Word

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 19, 2015

He Never Tires of Us and Always Seeks to Feed Us

By Janel Esker

One of the newest trends in my city is the mobile food truck. What distinguishes these trucks from the old-fashioned food truck is that the new ones aren't always parked in the same place. Locations are announced through social media, and often a line of people is waiting at the designated street corner before the trucks even arrive. The food is fast, fresh, and unique, satisfying the hungry masses who follow these trucks.

The scene in today's Gospel isn't unlike the mobile food-truck phenomenon. It's hard to believe the crowds in Jesus' day

could find him and his apostles without the aid of electronic social media—but find them they did, even in the “deserted place” where Jesus took his closest companions.

But instead of getting angry or frustrated with the crowds pressing in on him, Jesus was moved with compassion, and he fed them with his teachings. Next week, we'll see that he also physically fed them—so in many ways, the comparison with the food truck isn't that much of a stretch.

Do we hunger for Jesus' teaching with the passion of those crowds? Would we follow him with fervor and our technology like we follow celebrity sightings, criminal trials, and food trucks? Or have his words become outdated to us—too familiar or just plain dull?

If so, it might be time to reread the challenging things—and the profoundly comforting words—Jesus has to say to us. He never tires of us and always seeks to feed us with his wisdom and love.

What is our response to him today?†

A Word From Pope Francis



I would like especially to share with you and to stress this third feature: priestly joy is deeply bound up with God's holy and faithful people, for it is an eminently missionary joy. Our anointing is meant for anointing God's holy and faithful people: for baptizing and confirming them, healing and sanctifying them, blessing, comforting and evangelizing them. And since this joy is one which only springs up when the shepherd is in the midst of his flock (for even in the silence of his prayer, the shepherd who worships the Father is with his sheep), it is a “guarded joy,” watched over by the flock itself. Even in those gloomy moments when everything looks dark and a feeling of isolation takes hold of us, in those moments of listlessness and boredom which at times overcome us in our priestly life (and which I too have experienced), even in those moments God's people are able to “guard” that joy; they are able to protect you, to embrace you and to help you open your heart to find renewed joy.

Holy Thursday, April 17, 2014

Sunday Readings

Jeremiah 23:1–6

Woe to the shepherds who mislead and scatter the flock.

Ephesians 2:13–18

For he is our peace.

Mark 6:30–34

His heart was moved with pity for them.

Will You Be One of the Saints in My Life?

By Fr. Rick Potts, CSsR

When we heard that Redemptorist priest Bernard Häring was coming to visit our college seminary, Fr. Terry McCloskey told us it was a rare and precious opportunity. We were going to meet a man who played a historical role in the Church, who is regarded by many to be the most significant moral theologian of the twentieth century and, in Fr. Terry's opinion, who will one day be declared a saint. Fr. Terry pointed out, "How often do you think you'll meet a living 'saint?'"

I was, of course, very impressed by Fr. Häring, but although he was moral theologian, teacher, author, esteemed confessor to popes, and major contributor to the Second Vatican Council, it was his humility and simplicity that stayed with me.

Fr. Häring has been on my mind since I read one of Liguori's books, *Thea Bowman: In My Own Words*. Like Fr. Häring, Thea had a presence that told you she was a very special person.

As I read about Sister Thea, I realized I've met not one, but two probable future saints. That led to thoughts of other famous people I've met. Some were... well, let's just say the odds aren't good that their names will be proclaimed in St. Peter's Square. But some were living proof that you don't have to be a saint to have saintly qualities.

I'm not a big sports fan, but I was amazed to discover that the compassion



and empathy of Magic Johnson surpassed that of many ministers I know. He turned his personal trial into a ministry of reaching out to and supporting others with a heart that ached for them.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide is controversial. He has his flaws, as all saints do, but no one can deny what he did for the people of Haiti through a sacrificial "yes." He was unwilling to remain silent and willing to risk everything.

Martin Sheen, whom I've always admired for his witnessing of his Catholic faith, walked into a church where I was celebrating Mass. I was struck by his approachability and simplicity. Aren't these the qualities we ask of our saints?

Others who have personally graced me by the example of their lives weren't famous, but they were equally inspiring. When Mother Julia Jones was asked to leave a church because she was "shouting

amen," she went, saying she wasn't embarrassed to praise her Lord. Years later that church, St. Alphonsus Liguori "Rock" Church in St. Louis is known around the world for its high-Spirited African-American worship.

Redemptorist Fr. Robert "Jesus Bob" Wirth was a holy man who had a limitless ability to love people in all circumstances and laugh while he did it. Refusing to be caught up in the gossip and pettiness of everyday life, he lived with great zeal and joy.

Fr. Terry said it's a rare treat to meet a living "saint," but now that I think about it, I could go on and on if space permitted. Most of these "saints" of my life will never have their names proclaimed in St. Peter's Square, but that doesn't diminish the power of their example. While the Church may not proclaim them saints, the local church has already acclaimed them "saints." Sure, they have their flaws, their clay feet, the thorn in their side—but we whose lives they've graced know we've been blessed. We know we've glimpsed God.

You and I may never be listed in *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, but that shouldn't prevent us from living saintly lives. Each day we're faced with a myriad of moments when we can choose to do the saintly thing or the sinful thing, the loving or the mean, the sacrificial or the selfish. And as we choose, we must know that at least one person will be influenced by our decision. At least one person will become holier or be led further off the path. If we all choose to be saintly, meeting "saints" won't be such a rare event anymore.

WEEKDAY READINGS July 20–25

Mon.	Weekday: <i>Exodus 14:5-18 / Matthew 12:38-42</i>	Thu.	Weekday: <i>Exodus 19:1-2, 9-11, 16-20b / Matthew 13:10-17</i>
Tue.	Weekday: <i>Exodus 14:21-15:1 / Matthew 12:46-50</i>	Fri.	Weekday: <i>Exodus 20:1-17 / Matthew 13:18-23</i>
Wed.	<i>St. Mary Magdalene: Exodus 16:1-5, 9-15 / John 20:1-2, 11-18</i>	Sat.	<i>St. James, Apostle: 2 Corinthians 4:7-15 / Matthew 20:20-28</i>

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