



Bringing Home the Word

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

August 11, 2019

Faith: Our Way of Knowing God

By Mary Katharine Deeley

Every week at Mass we remind ourselves of the mystery of our faith—that by his death and resurrection Jesus set us free, and he will come again in glory. How do we know this? Could we convince someone this is true? If “true” means factual evidence backed up by science, we won’t be able to prove this to anyone. But God gives us a different way of knowing. It comes from the revelation of God in creation, Scripture, and Christ. Our faith, a gift from God, is the ability to recognize the truth of the mysteries we proclaim.

Sunday Readings

Wisdom 18:6–9

The expectation of your people was the salvation of the righteous and the destruction of their foes.

**Hebrews 11:1–2, 8–19 or
Hebrews 11:1–2, 8–12**

Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.

**Luke 12:32–48 or
Luke 12:35–40**

[Jesus said,] “Sell your belongings and give alms....For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.”

In the reading from Hebrews, the author praises Abraham’s faith, which led him to obey the God he did not know and the tradition he handed on. Abraham wasn’t worried about proving that God spoke to him; he lived it. In the same way, Jesus calls his disciples to be ready and waiting for the Lord’s return.

We can’t convince everyone that the resurrection and baptism affect salvation, that the consecration is real, or that Jesus will come again. We can, however, point to the life and witness of the Church and show the difference our faith makes in our own lives as we encounter others, work for justice, and spread the gospel. Our obedience, virtue, and good works manifest our faith and reveal the truths entrusted to us. Nowhere is this truer than at the eucharistic table, where we celebrate the mysteries in union with and in joyful expectation of the One who was, who is, and who is to come. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

The Assumption of Mary is a great mystery which regards each one of us, it regards our future. Mary, in fact, precedes us on the path walked upon by those who, through their baptism, have bound their life to Jesus, as Mary bound her own life to him.

—Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15, 2016



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What difference has my faith made in my life?
- Instead of just professing my faith, do I live it in my actions every day?

Coping with Chronic Illness: A Daily Walk with God

By Susan Hines-Brigger

When you enter our home, it appears to be a normal family household. But look more closely and you'll see a deeper story. Behind the butter in the refrigerator sits my medicine. On top of a cabinet, by my baking supplies, is the container I put my used needles in after my daily injections.

Welcome to life with a chronic illness. I have multiple sclerosis, an autoimmune disorder affecting the central nervous system. I was diagnosed nine years ago, shortly after the birth of the second of our four children. First, I lost hearing in one ear. Then one side of my face went numb. My vision and balance have been affected, and I temporarily lost all feeling in my right leg. Every day I battle overwhelming fatigue and the fear of this disease's unpredictability.

But life goes on. It has to. Clothes must be laundered, homework has to get done, and there are parties to plan.

Sharing the Burden

When first diagnosed, I felt isolated. No one I knew had MS. I knew little about the disease and didn't feel comfortable calling my doctor's office every time I had a question. Being fiercely independent, I vowed to take this on myself. I didn't



want to burden others, nor did I want to be labeled a complainer.

I scanned the Bible for comforting passages. While many resonated, I wasn't finding the comfort I thought I would. That is, until I stumbled across Romans and began to read: "For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have

the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another" (12:4-5). Suddenly, it hit me: In my search for comfort, I was missing community, a key part of my Catholic faith.

We Are Many Parts

So, as many people do nowadays, I took to Facebook to share my struggle. Before long, an old friend from high school wrote back. She, too, has MS. Within months, another high school friend was diagnosed. A mom at my kids' school doesn't have MS, but she also faces a chronic illness. She wrote to let me know she "gets it."

We pray for one another, supporting each other when we're weak. And though we come from various faith backgrounds, we are a community—formed person by person, story by story. I've come to realize that my friends and family are the living manifestation of St. Teresa of Ávila's words: "Christ has no body now

on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which he is to bless his people."

The faith community provides a wonderful network of support during times of need. I was reminded of this when the mother of one of my daughter's classmates died suddenly. The parish rallied around the family. For some, that meant making meals, others physically wrapped their arms around the family. Still others offered prayers.

I've experienced those blessings as I deal with MS. Those moments when I feel lowest are when I'm reminded of Christ's presence. Sometimes it's a kind word from a friend, an unexpected visit, or just a momentary sense of calm. Faith is my security blanket. It gives me something to hold onto when I'm frustrated or sad. My faith tells me, "Don't give up. Hang in there. There's hope." +

PRAYER

Lord, you offered your life out of love for humankind. Help me let go of my possessions so I can generously serve others.

—From *Faithful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

August 12-17

Monday, Weekday: Dt 10:12-22 / Mt 17:22-27

Tuesday, Weekday: Dt 31:1-8 / Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14

Wednesday, St. Maximilian Kolbe: Dt 34:1-12 / Mt 18:15-20

Thursday, Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary: Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab / 1 Cor 15:20-27 / Lk 1:39-56

Friday, Weekday: Jos 24:1-13 / Mt 19:3-12

Saturday, Weekday: Jos 24:14-29 / Mt 19:13-15

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