



Bringing Home the Word

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

October 6, 2019

Kindling the Faith

By Mary Katharine Deeley

I have a little jar of mustard seeds on the bookcase in my office. They were given to me as a going-away present by a priest I knew, a little reminder to keep the faith. Every time I hear the Gospel about the mustard seed, I am reminded of him. He was a mentor and friend, one of the many people who have inspired my faith from young adulthood until now. He is also the example of what I hope to be for the students I teach. The faith that we explore is a rich inheritance, indeed, and I can only hope to influence my students as much as he influenced me.

Being a faith-filled person isn't for cowards. As Paul tells Timothy, God gave us gifts of power and love to be able to stand against evil and to love those who seem unlovable. God called us to a holy life, which means that we occasionally have to turn away from what the world has to offer and embrace a different way of living. Christ's disciples are called to help make the world holy through word and example, by inviting others to know Christ and acting in such a way that knowing Christ seems the only possible response. Finally, God gave us the Holy Spirit, who makes it possible for us to live lives that are worthy of the calling to which we have been called.

"Stir into flame the gift of God," Paul exhorts (2 Timothy 1:6). Fire is the perfect metaphor. It lights our way and gives us warmth. It also purifies us for the work ahead. Who inspired you in your faith? How will you become a better disciple today because of them? +

Sunday Readings

Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

How long, O LORD, must I cry for help and you do not listen?

2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

Do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord...but bear your share of hardship for the gospel.

Luke 17:5-10

[Jesus said,] "Is [the master] grateful to that servant because he did what was commanded? So should it be with you."

A Word from Pope Francis

Perhaps you will be challenged by [our immigrants'] diversity. But know that they also possess resources meant to be shared. So do not be afraid to welcome them. Offer them the warmth of the love of Christ....I am certain that, as so often in the past, these people will enrich America and its Church.

—Meeting with
United States
bishops,
September
23, 2015



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- Have you thanked those who have mentored you in your faith?
- Are you ever embarrassed to express your Christian beliefs? Why?

Who, Me? Evangelize?

By Kathy Coffey

Nick is paralyzed, and I desperately want to help him get better. But how? I've heard rumors of a healer. He is powerful but surrounded by crowds. I talk with three other friends. How could we even get close?

I start to see that what Nick needs isn't the strongest stretcher-bearer, but one who understands his sickness. We check the house where the healer is staying. I notice an opening in the roof. What if...?

Readers of Mark 2:1–12 or Luke 5:18–26 know how the story ends. The four friends who lower the paralytic through the roof into Jesus' astonished face may have chosen an unconventional route, but they bring their friend to Jesus. He responds generously, "When Jesus saw their faith," he cured their friend and forgave his sins (Mark 2:5).

We're like Nick's friend because we also ask: Who, me? We may also reach the same insight: I don't need all the answers. I simply need to share the struggle. An ordinary act of kindness might bring someone to Jesus. And that's my goal.

The Mission

Saint Paul VI declared: "The task of evangelizing all people constitutes the



essential mission of the Church.... Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize" (On Evangelization in the Modern World [*Evangelii Nuntiandi*], 14).

There's no doubt about the importance of this mission. The Church

doesn't exist for the sake of pastoral councils, schools, choirs, publications, hospitals, or religious orders—wonderful as those may be. We exist to bring the good news to those hungering for a positive message with eternal consequences.

The Model

How does that call affect us personally? Most of us aren't going to ring doorbells, trying to persuade unwilling listeners that we have a corner on the truth. Instead, we follow the model of Jesus, who amazed his listeners by "the gracious words that came from his mouth" (Luke 4:22). Clearly, he wasn't judging or hammering away at a point. The "job description" of Christians isn't to be dour, cantankerous, or punitive, but to be a people who "announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).

We do that primarily by example of

how we live: with confidence, reverence, and compassion. Are we convinced that we have good news to share? Or are we focused on our troubles, fears, and negativity? For the ordinary person, what form might evangelization take?

A Personal Niche

Some are called to foreign missions but most respond to the call at home. Dire conditions in Africa can seem more appealing at times than dealing with a stubborn toddler, patiently helping a needy friend, or caring for an elderly parent. But the Second Vatican Council called laypeople to do their work well in the world—whether as parents, plumbers, attorneys, or farmers.

Opportunities arise naturally; we don't need to look far. It may mean sending a birthday card, eating a meal with a lonely friend, driving the children's carpool yet again, remembering and celebrating others' milestones, attending a funeral, visiting a hospital or retirement center, or volunteering through your parish.

To be effective, we match our talents to others' needs. The days are past when people did work they weren't suited for or a ministry they loathed "for the glory of God." It's far better to honor and use the gifts God gave us! +

PRAYER

Lord, I am grateful for your gentle voice of love. Help me to speak with love and peace everywhere I go.

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

WEEKDAY READINGS

October 7–12

Monday, Our Lady of the Rosary:
Jon 1:1—2:1–2, 11 / Lk 10:25–37

Tuesday, Weekday:
Jon 3:1–10 / Lk 10:38–42

Wednesday, Weekday:
Jon 4:1–11 / Lk 11:1–4

Thursday, Weekday:
Mal 3:13–20b / Lk 11:5–13

Friday, Weekday:
Jl 1:13–15; 2:1–2 / Lk 11:15–26

Saturday, Weekday:
Jl 4:12–21 / Lk 11:27–28

Bringing Home
the **Word** 
October 6, 2019

© 2019 Liguori Publications, a ministry of the Redemptorists. One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057. Scripture quotations in this publication are from the *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC. Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2019 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*. All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.