



# Bringing Home the Word

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

October 11, 2020

## We're the Supporting Cast

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Life can make us think we are in control of our lives. We plan, think, execute, and succeed (or fail). Then along comes an illness, an accident, a job loss, or one of countless other things, and we realize we really aren't in control of much. This famous phrase sums it up: Man proposes, God disposes.

We can transfer this same false assumption into our relationship with God and expect Mass, prayer, and liturgy to work for us, fill us, and entertain us. But liturgy and prayer are about giving God his glory above all else.

When we pray, and especially when we enter into communal liturgy, we are reminded once again that it is all about what God is doing. Isaiah says the Lord will provide for all people. God will provide! We might prepare, serve, or participate, but the director, producer, and main actor is God. We are the supporting cast. That is why liturgy is not so much about our planning, participation, or entertainment but about entering into harmony with God's action and praising him as he asks.

The same point can be found in the Gospel. The king sends out invitations for his son's wedding and prepares the feast. He adjusts to the unexpected lack of interest and invites others. The ones who arrive are the ones the master has invited.

It would be foolish for one of the invited guests to vaunt their importance. Their role is to humbly enjoy and gracefully help the king and the newlyweds to shine on their night! +

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### A Word from Pope Francis

Do good works, don't just say words that are gone with the wind...Through the good works that we carry out with love and joy toward others, our faith emerges and bears fruit... Is our faith fruitful? Does our faith produce good works? Or is it sterile...and therefore more dead than alive?

—Angelus, July 10, 2016



## Sunday Readings

### Isaiah 25:6-10a

The LORD of hosts / will provide for all peoples / A feast of rich food and choice wines.

### Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me.... My God will fully supply whatever you need, in accord with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

### Matthew 22:1-14 or 22:1-10

[Jesus said,] "Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find."

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Is Mass about my pleasure or God's glory?
- How often do I serve and expect nothing in return?

# Shaped by the Cross

By Johan van Parys

Every night before going to bed, my parents would make the sign of the cross on each child's forehead and whisper, "May God bless you and keep you." Then we would go to our bedrooms, dip our fingers in the small holy water font, and sign ourselves. I remember asking my parents for their blessing before going on a trip or asking the abbot for his blessing before leaving the abbey. These simple signs have left a lasting impression on me.

The cross was everywhere when I was growing up; even today, we find the cross hanging in churches, schools, homes, offices, and cars and around our necks. The priest blesses people with the sign of the cross. Children are marked at their baptism and adults during the Order of Catechumens with the sign of the cross. Christians are shaped by the cross.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Christiane Brusselmans, the first woman to earn a doctorate in theology from the Catholic University of Louvain, experimented with an ancient process used to bring adults and families into the Church. Following the Second Vatican Council, her work and that of many others resulted in reinstitution of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)—rites lost during the early Middle Ages due to the shift from adult to infant baptism.

One remarkable rite that marks this process is the Rite of Welcome, in which we admit those seeking baptism



in the Catholic Church to the Order of Catechumens. The most moving moment is when the sign of the cross is drawn on the seekers' heart, hands, feet, and shoulders. I remember her instructing us to use big gestures to ensure recipients felt the weight of the cross, especially on their shoulders. The weight of the cross can indeed be heavy.

Our lives as Christians ought to be modeled after the cross. Each year, tens of thousands of people prepare themselves to join the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. They stand in a long tradition rooted in New Testament times. Those who have been baptized in other Christian denominations celebrate the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist. Those not previously

baptized celebrate all three sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.

The sacrament of baptism relates images of baptismal bath, baptismal burial, and baptismal birth. First, we are washed clean from everything that prevents perfect union with God, who claims us as an adopted child. Second, we are buried with Christ so we may rise with him on the last day. Third, we are birthed into the Church—the body of Christ. Because of this rich sacramental symbolism, baptismal fonts are sometimes made in the shape of a cross. Catechumens enter on one side to be baptized and exit on the other side.

We should always remember the importance of the cross in our Christian journey. Without explanation, my parents impressed this on me each time they signed me with the cross. +

## PRAYER

*Lord, I am grateful you guide us along safe paths. Help me to remain close to you and walk with you all the days of my life.*

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

## WEEKDAY READINGS

October 12–17

**Monday, Weekday:**

Gal 4:22–24, 26–27, 31—5:1 /  
Lk 11:29–32

**Tuesday, Weekday:**

Gal 5:1–6 / Lk 11:37–41

**Wednesday, Weekday:**

Gal 5:18–25 / Lk 11:42–46

**Thursday, St. Teresa of Jesus:**

Eph 1:1–10 / Lk 11:47–54

**Friday, Weekday:**

Eph 1:11–14 / Lk 12:1–7

**Saturday, St. Ignatius of Antioch:**

Eph 1:15–23 / Lk 12:8–12

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