



Bringing Home the Word

Fifth Sunday of Easter (C)

May 15, 2022

God's Reign in Heaven and on Earth

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

The trumpeters in the center of the huge Sistine Chapel wall fresco declare the new reign of God, the coming of the new Jerusalem, which was sent from heaven from God most high. This new heaven and earth is the civilization of love brought about by Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

It's not an abstract ideal or some faraway lost city. Rather, it is a city that now exists in heaven around the throne of the Lamb and also grows by means of the Church as God's kingdom on earth.

Just as Paul and Barnabas appointed elders and the Church took on a stable, hierarchical structure, we are reminded of the historical growth of this city of love—God's Church on earth. From the beginning it was founded on faith. The apostles prayed, fasted, and commended these elders to the Lord. It was their common faith in Christ that was the foundation of this new kingdom of God.

The glory of this kingdom isn't in church buildings or organizations, but it's the glory that Jesus mentions in today's Gospel. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him" (John 13:31). It's the glory that comes from Jesus' faithful love toward the Father and his disciples, leading him to be enthroned on the cross and rule as the Lamb that was slain yet still stands. It is the new commandment of love that is their glory. Thus, the bride that is the Church will be great to the degree that it loves like Jesus, its husband and King. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

The Father is pleased when we love one another and we forgive each other from the heart. Then, he gives us his Spirit. Let us...take the first step, in prayer, in fraternal encounter, in concrete charity. In this way, we will be more like the Father, who loves without counting the cost. And he will pour out upon us the Spirit of unity.

Homily, Geneva, June 21, 2018



REFLECTION
QUESTIONS

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REFLECTION

- Do I look for what I have in common with another person? Or do I dwell on the differences?
- How willing am I to love another person despite our differences?

Sunday Readings

Acts 14:21–27

They...reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Revelation 21:1–5a

The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

John 13:31–33a, 34–35

[Jesus said,] "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."

Tending to the Tension

By Fr. Donald Willard, CSsR

The world appears to be increasingly polarized, a condition that seems to have entered every aspect of life. For example, the rich and the poor still exist, but the gap between them is greater, and the middle class is disappearing. Polarization is found not only in the financial realm but increasingly in politics, business, family relationships, and even in the Church. Polarization is based on conflict and division. It is an overemphasis on the differences between people at the expense of the unity that makes us who we are as a community. The end result is radical individualism.

This, however, is not how the Church is supposed to be. We are not only called to have a personal relationship with God but a unifying relationship with one another. Although tension does exist, it can be beneficial. Diversity devoid of division and unity without blind conformity allow us to grow without sacrificing fidelity. There is only one way to accomplish this healthy tension—the answer is through Jesus Christ.

If I recognize that I am not God, that I don't have all the answers, and that I don't set the standard by which the world is measured, I must begin to seek answers outside myself. I soon realize that other people in the world have different gifts, talents, views, and personalities. In an effort to understand and relate to this diversity, I am pushed to find some standard by which to



measure reality. Some conclude that such a standard doesn't exist and enter into a form of individual or cultural relativism. However, if we look to Jesus Christ and acknowledge him as the true Son of God, then we see we do have a standard who provides a unifying factor in the midst of diversity—Christ.

Therefore, in an ecumenical dialogue (a conversation among Christians), the belief that Jesus Christ is the Messiah is the commonality in the discussion. By acknowledging who Jesus is, we recognize all Christians are brothers and sisters in Christ. This creates the possibility for an environment of mutual respect and dignity. Although we may not agree, we can actively listen, continuously learn, and strive together

to discover the truth within the fullness of the revelation of Jesus. Looking to Jesus for the answers we need in our world lays a foundation on which people of goodwill can exist in a healthy tension that seeks truth, allowing us to build community. The various gifts that each has to offer should make the community, the body of Christ, reflect evermore. And this elevates individuals. The fullest expression of who we are exists in the midst of a community of people seeking the face of Jesus Christ in all we say and do. +

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PRAYER

Risen Jesus, you command us to love as you have loved. Cleanse my heart of pride, selfishness, and prejudice so that I may love unconditionally.

From *Hopeful Meditations for Every Day of Easter Through Pentecost*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 16–21

Monday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 14:5–18 / Jn 14:21–26

Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 14:19–28 / Jn 14:27–31a

Wednesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 15:1–6 / Jn 15:1–8

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 15:7–21 / Jn 15:9–11

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 15:22–31 / Jn 15:12–17

Saturday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 16:1–10 / Jn 15:18–21

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