



Bringing Home the Word

Sixth Sunday of Easter (B)

May 5, 2024

God's Call

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

The story about Cornelius shows that God's call is not restricted by our likes and dislikes. Cornelius was a Roman, a citizen of the nation that was occupying Israel. More than that, he served in a military that exercised harsh control over the inhabitants of the land. A man like this would not have been loved by the Jews of the day. However, Cornelius recognized Peter as a representative of God. All who were listening to Peter's words were baptized and became one with the community of believers.

Faith, baptism, and incorporation into

the community of believers are offered to Jew and Roman alike. They are offered today to those who are members of our own religious, racial, or ethnic groups and those who are not; those who are socially or politically vulnerable, and those with power. The question is not, "Who does God favor?" but, "Who favors God?"

The Gospel story reinforces this point, insisting God's love for us is the foundation of everything: "Love one another as I love you" (John 15:12). God's love is all-inclusive. So should our love be all-inclusive. If God's love is for all, it follows that we are all favored by God—all chosen and cared for by him. This includes even those who might be our political adversaries, or who might exercise exacting authority over us, or who cherish different religious ideas. Imitating God's love requires that we will goodness to others—even those with whom we disagree or who have caused us harm. †

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Sunday Readings

Acts 10:25–26, 34–35, 44–48

They could hear them speaking in tongues and glorifying God.

1 John 4:7–10

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.

John 15:9–17

[Jesus said,] "Love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."

A Word from Pope Francis

To love as the Lord loves us means to appreciate the people beside us, to respect their freedom, to love them as they are, not as we want them to be.... Where does this abiding in the Lord's love lead?... Jesus told us: "That my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 9, 2021



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Can you pray for the grace to accept the goodness of people with whom you disagree?
- Can you listen to them?

Easter Wisdom from Henri Nouwen

Listen to the Church—I know that [listening to the Church] isn't a popular bit of advice at a time and in a country where the Church is often seen more as an obstacle in the way than as the way to Jesus. Nevertheless, I'm deeply convinced that the greatest spiritual danger for our times is the separation of Jesus from the Church. The Church is the body of the Lord. Without Jesus, there can be no Church, and without the Church, we cannot stay united with Jesus. I've yet to meet anyone who has come closer to Jesus by forsaking the Church. To listen to the Church is to listen to the Lord of the Church. Specifically, this entails taking part in the Church's liturgical life. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ascension, and



Pentecost—these seasons and feasts teach you to know Jesus better and better and unite you more and more intimately with the divine life he offers you in the Church.

Listen to Your Heart—It's there [in your heart] that Jesus speaks most intimately to you. Praying is first and foremost listening to Jesus who dwells in the very depths of your heart. He doesn't shout. He doesn't thrust himself upon you. His voice is an unassuming voice, very nearly a whisper, the voice of a gentle love. Whatever you do with your life, go on listening to the voice of Jesus in your heart. This listening must be an active and very attentive listening, for in our restless and noisy world Jesus' loving voice is easily drowned out. †

From Lent and Easter Wisdom by Henri J.M. Nouwen, compiled by Judy Bauer, © 2005, (812866) available at Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

From "Acts of the Apostles" by Ronald D. Witherup, SS

“What is your church like?” I have heard this question posed at gatherings of large groups of Catholics. The responses to this question often begin with comments about church buildings and only later shift to descriptions of the congregation. Yet that experience of the congregation, of the People of God everywhere, is what the Church is really about. The story is told in the Acts of the Apostles...the only New Testament document devoted exclusively to the story of the early Church. It is the companion volume to the Gospel of Luke (compare the Prologues, Luke 1:1–4 and Acts 1:1–5). The Church uses this book at Mass almost exclusively throughout the Easter season, from Easter Sunday to Pentecost. †

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Lord Jesus, grant us the grace of open hearts and minds that we may be receptive to the promptings of your Spirit, we pray. Amen! Alleluia!

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 6–11

Monday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 16:11–15 / Jn 15:26–16:4a

Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 16:22–34 / Jn 16:5–11

Wednesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 17:15, 22–18:1 / Jn 16:12–15

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 18:1–8 / Jn 16:16–20

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 18:9–18 / Jn 16:20–23

Saturday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 18:23–28 / Jn 16:23b–28

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