



Bringing Home the Word

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

July 20, 2025

Come On In!

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Hospitality has been defined as entertaining your guests and caring for their needs. It is a gracious custom. However, in some ancient communities, it was necessary for survival. Travelers were vulnerable to the climate and topography of an unfamiliar area, as well as to its inhabitants. Every stranger was a potential enemy. Conversely, the traveler might be a thief, murderer, or a spy sent ahead to reconnoiter his enemies. People had to be on their guard, and travelers never really knew how others would receive them. They could be robbed by

their hosts, captured, enslaved, or even put to death.

To guarantee protection on all sides, a certain protocol of hospitality had to be presumed and observed. The host was expected to treat all travelers as guests, not as potential enemies. Such treatment was thought to neutralize any threat to the household. The traveler was expected to act as a guest rather than a threat, accepting the generosity of the host for necessary food, drink, and shelter. Such hospitality was a temporary arrangement, but it assured everyone of a degree of safety.

We see traces of this custom in the first reading from Genesis. Surprise! The visitors were no ordinary travelers. They were messengers from God. In the gospel reading, Jesus was a guest in the home of Martha and Mary. Their hospitality flowed from love, not social custom. Furthermore, he was no ordinary traveler. Both readings encourage us to practice hospitality. You never know who might appear as a guest. †



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Sunday Readings

Genesis 18:1-10a

One of them said, "I will return to you about this time next year, and Sarah will then have a son."

Colossians 1:24-28

It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom.

Luke 10:38-42

The Lord said to her in reply, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing."

A Word from Pope Francis (1936-2025)

For many people, the rhythm of work is frenetic and wearisome. Summertime can be valuable also for opening the gospel and reading it slowly, without haste, a passage each day.... Let us allow ourselves to be challenged by those pages, asking ourselves how our life, my life, is going— if it is in line with what Jesus says, or not so much.

ANGELUS, ROME, JULY 17, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How can I make people feel welcome in my church, my neighborhood, my home?
- Do I feel welcome?



Sitting There All Peaceful and Quiet

Benignus O'Rourke, OSA

Some time ago, an elderly lady complained to me that she could no longer pray. "Father," she said, "I can't pray like I used to. I come here to church after my shopping and sit here all peaceful

and quiet. But I can't pray like I used to."

I tried to suggest that perhaps sitting there "all peaceful and quiet" was prayer. Maybe it was a gift God was offering her at this stage of her life. But she was not convinced. Prayer for her meant keeping her mind on the words, battling distractions, concentrating. Sitting there all peaceful and quiet would have seemed to her like laziness and failure.

What my parishioner was discovering, in fact, was one of God's loveliest gifts, the purest form of prayer. She rejected it because it was not what she had been taught. We feel we must make an effort to speak to God, to praise him, to give thanks, to ask for help.

But there are times when we cannot find the words, or when the well-known prayers that usually inspire and comfort us strike no chord in our hearts. Or we may be singing God's praises while our hearts are heavy or empty. And our hearts become heavier because our feelings do not match the words.

We are perhaps tired of words anyway. Tired of asking God in words that have no life in them. Tired of thinking about God. Tired of being talked to about God. Tired of saying prayers that may be beautiful in themselves but are not bringing God closer to us.

Then, perhaps, it is best to simplify our prayers and follow the age-old advice to go from many

words to few words, from few words to one word, and from one word into silence. Sometimes when we pray, our words—any words—can be barriers. They come between us and God. The deepest communion with God comes through silence. †

From *Finding Your Hidden Treasure: The Way of Silent Prayer* by Benignus O'Rourke, OSA, Liguori Publications (820007). To order call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

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Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope"—
A Joint Letter from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano

Faith in the presence of Christ in the migrant leads to a conversion of mind and heart... [which] leads to communion expressed through hospitality on the part of receiving communities and a sense of belonging and welcome on the part of those in the communities where migrants are arriving. The New Testament often counsels that hospitality is a virtue necessary for all followers of Jesus. Many migrants, sensing rejection or indifference from Catholic communities, have sought solace outside the Church. They experience the sad fate of Jesus, recorded in St. John's Gospel: "He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him" (John 1:11).

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. Liguori.org • 800-325-9521



God of wisdom, help me to quietly spend time remembering your blessings and considering what I can do today to make my world reflect your love. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

July 21–26

Monday, Weekday:

Ex 14:5–18 / Mt 12:38–42

Tuesday, St. Mary Magdalene: Sg 3:1–4b

or 2 Cor 5:14–17 / Jn 20:1–2, 11–18

Wednesday, Weekday:

Ex 16:1–5, 9–15 / Mt 13:1–9

Thursday, Weekday:

Ex 19:1–2, 9–11, 16–20b / Mt 13:10–17

Friday, St. James:

2 Cor 4:7–15 / Mt 20:20–28

Saturday: Sts. Joachim and Anne:

Ex 24:3–8 / Mt 13:24–30

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