



Bringing Home the Word

Pentecost Sunday | June 4, 2017

Were They Still Afraid?

By Mary Katharine Deeley

People respond to fear in two instinctive ways: fight or flight. The disciples chose to flee—hiding in an upper room, waiting for the coast to clear. Of course they were afraid. Their teacher and Lord had been taken from them, and the religious authorities did not like them. Even though Jesus wanted them to go into the world, they didn't have the slightest idea what they would say and where they would go.

Jesus promised to send them an Advocate who would guide them and reveal the truth to them, but they didn't know what that would look like. And

into that locked room the Holy Spirit blew, bringing gifts of grace and strength they couldn't imagine.

Were they still afraid? Probably. Did they suddenly know what to do? Probably not. But they knew they could not be silent.

Something compelled them to go out, confident that they had a gift to share with the world. What they couldn't have realized was that the Spirit fell on the world that day as well—allowing those whose hearts were opened to hear the words of life preached by those who at one time didn't know what to say.

Pentecost is often referred to as the birthday of the Church. The Church remains what it was at the first—imperfect women and men gifted by the Spirit to speak the good news to other imperfect women and men who have been gifted to hear it.

The Spirit blows through the world even now—the presence of God, our Advocate, who invites us to proclaim Christ to all and gives us the grace to do so. †

“As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.”
1 Corinthians 12:12

A Word From Pope Francis

Dear friends, Let us open the doors to the Spirit, let ourselves be guided by him, and allow God's constant help to make us new men and women, inspired by the love of God which the Holy Spirit bestows on us! How beautiful it would be if each of you, every evening, could say: Today at school, at home, at work, guided by God, I showed a sign of love towards one of my friends, my parents, an older person! How beautiful!

—Homily, conferral of the sacrament of confirmation, April 28, 2013



Sunday Readings

Acts 2:1-11

“And they were all filled with the holy Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

“For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, ...and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.”

John 20:19-23

“[Jesus] said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How can I encourage greater unity within my family and parish?
- Is there a way I can be more of a team player?



Transformed by Easter

By Richard Rohr, OFM

Christian history reaches its crescendo point in the resurrection of Jesus.

The risen Jesus is the final revelation of the heart of God—a God who teaches love rather than hate, forgiveness rather than blame, nonviolence rather than violence.

Recall Jesus' encounters with his disciples after his resurrection. He comes to the circle of followers with whom he had spent three years. These people, who

were closest to him, had nevertheless rejected, betrayed, and abandoned him. Following his resurrection, Jesus has the opportunity to chastise them. And yet in all four Gospel accounts of the risen Christ we see that Jesus neither berates nor blames his disciples. Indeed, Peter, who had betrayed him three times, is given three chances to say to his master, "I love you."

There is nothing to be afraid of in the risen Jesus. We have in him the perfect icon of a God who is safe and a universe

that is safe. We have a God who does not blame, does not punish, does not threaten, does not dominate. We have a God who breathes forgiveness. The whole biblical tradition has been moving to this moment where God is identified with universal forgiveness.

Once we have a personal experience in our own life of the risen Christ upholding us, naming us, loving us, freeing us, then we have nothing to fear. That's how secure Christ makes us—because we have a reference point, we have a center point. We have received the gift of the Spirit. †

Source: *Everyday Catholic*,
© April 2001 Liguori Publications

Pentecost People

By Judith Dunlap

We are a Pentecost people. Like the first disciples, we are gifted with the Holy Spirit so that we can share our faith with others. This is not always easy. Many of us were raised to believe that religion is a private matter. It can be difficult for us to talk about God or our faith. And yet, faith-sharing in families is crucial.

We live in a culture that in many ways no longer supports Judeo-Christian values. Thus, young people need to hear and see the people most important to them talking about and living the gospel message. If faith is going to be real in their lives, they need to see that faith is real in the lives of those closest to them.

Celebrate Pentecost this year with your family by reading or retelling the story from Acts 2:1–13. Talk about how you would have felt if you were in the upper room, and invite other family members to do the same. Discuss the Holy Spirit in your own life. How have you experienced the gifts of courage and understanding? When have you felt the Spirit's fruits of joy and peace? Finally, have fun with the symbols of fire and wind. Weather permitting, spend the afternoon flying a kite. Put together a wind chime. Have a special dinner with lots of candles. Talk about why you think fire and wind are symbols of the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost is the day the disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit to leave the safety of the upper room and share their faith with a city of strangers. Why not take the risk this Pentecost and share

your faith with those closest to you? If you were one of the disciples on that first Christian Pentecost, what would you have wanted to share about your faith? Trust in the Spirit. Like those early disciples, you may be astonished at the results. †

Source: *Everyday Catholic*,
© June 2001 Liguori Publications



Risen Lord, your Spirit fills the world with love and peace. Empower me to be an instrument of your peace, love, and forgiveness to all people.


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

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 5–10

Mon. St. Boniface:
Tb 1:3; 2:1b–8 / Mk 12:1–12
Tue. Weekday:
Tb 2:9–14 / Mk 12:13–17
Wed. Weekday:
Tb 3:1–11a, 16–17a / Mk 12:18–27

Thu. Weekday:
Tb 6:10–11; 7:1bcde, 9–17; 8:4–9a / Mk 12:28–34
Fri. Weekday:
Tb 11:5–17 / Mk 12:35–37
Sat. Weekday:
Tb 12:1, 5–15, 20 / Mk 12:38–44

Bringing Home
the **Word** 
June 4, 2017

© 2017 Liguori Publications, One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057.
Scripture quotations in this publication are from *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC.
Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2017 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*.
All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.



Bringing Home the Word

The Most Holy Trinity | June 11, 2017

God Simply Is

By Mary Katharine Deeley

When I was a child, the mystery of a God who is three in one was explained by that commonly used (if somewhat inaccurate) symbol, a three-leaf clover. Since then, many people have attempted to put the reality of Trinity into words that try to explain: Lover, Beloved, Love Outpoured or Source, Wellspring, and Fountain, as well as the more common expression of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Sunday Readings

Exodus 34:4b–6, 8–9

“The LORD, the LORD, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity, continuing his love for a thousand generations....”

2 Corinthians 13:11–13

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with all of you.”

John 3:16–18

“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.”

Still another approach is to stand in front of a mirror and see yourself as someone’s child, someone’s parent, and someone’s spouse all at the same time—and yet see one person standing there.

These examples begin to tell us something of the Trinitarian mystery, but they cannot contain the whole of it. God simply is, and the closest we can come to God’s essence is to talk about God’s relationship in and of God’s self.

But words have their limits. Is there something in our own experience where God reveals a little of this mystery? Why is it that we reach out for others, yearn for love, or seek God in prayer?

Genesis tells us we’re created in God’s image. If God is relational; then we must be as well. We are created to be in relationship, to know ourselves as connected. The New Testament is filled with that language: Jesus is our brother; we are adopted children of God. We are to love one another as God loves us. We are to become one in God.

In the experience of love and connectedness and in the experience of being part of God’s family, we will come to know the mystery of God a little more clearly.

“Finally, brothers, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.”

2 Corinthians 13:11

A Word From Pope Francis

The Father creates...the world; Jesus saves us; and the Holy Spirit? He loves us! And this is Christian life: talking to the Father, talking to the Son, and talking to the Holy Spirit....Let us...ask Our Lady...to teach us to understand properly what God is like: what the Father is like, what the Son is like, and was the Holy Spirit is like.

—Homily, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity
May 26, 2013



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Which person of the Trinity do I most easily relate to—the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit?
- Which person do I want to have a better relationship with?



Called to the Banquet

By Richard Rohr, OFM

God does not love us because we deserve it. God loves us because we need it.

Does that sound startling? It shouldn't. If there is one prime idea in the Bible, it is God's undeserved lot for what God has created.

There is no accounting for God's love. God's love is not earned. There is nothing we can do to attain it or even to lose it. All we can do is surrender to it, trust it and let it flow through us.

The significant difference in this world

is not between those who are worthy of God's love and those who are unworthy. (In truth, we are all various degrees of unworthy.) The significant difference is between those who know and enjoy God's love and those who do not know and do not enjoy it. God does not love us because we are good. We are good because God loves us. That is a major transformation of consciousness! It moves us from life as an obstacle course to be endured to life as a banquet to be eaten and shared.

Throughout the Gospels we see

Jesus constantly invoking this banquet symbolism. He eats with sinners, invites the outcasts to share a meal with him, does not wash his hands or his food, allows a woman at a male symposium meal, apparently gives "communion" to Judas on the night of his betrayal. He is always expanding the meaning of the table, even breaking clear social conventions, to communicate the hospitality and inclusivity of God.

If we are grateful for and deeply confident in God's grace, we will spend our lives trying to give back to others what has been so graciously given to us.

Source: *Everyday Catholic*,
© July 2001, Liguori Publications

St. Anthony, Wonder Worker

By Judy Ball

Who of us hasn't turned to St. Anthony of Padua (1195–1231) in a moment of panic when we've been desperate to find a job, have misplaced a precious memento or feared our credit card has been stolen?

We could just as well turn to this beloved saint for any number of reasons. Anthony is also revered as a devoted friend of the poor. He is known as the Wonder Worker because of the many miracles that have occurred at his tomb. He is the patron of travelers, of lovers, and of marriage. He is called upon as a helper at the time of birth and in instances of infertility.

Born into a prominent family in Lisbon, Anthony heard the call to religious life early. He spent some years with the Augustinians, but over time he developed a desire to become a missionary and preach the gospel in Morocco.

He received permission to join the Franciscans and, soon after, set sail. Ill health forced him to turn back, but the ship was blown off course. It landed in Sicily, where the friars nursed him back to health and he immersed himself in Franciscan life. Saint Francis of Assisi entrusted Anthony, a Scripture scholar, with the task of teaching theology to young friars.

He gained fame as a preacher in Padua and far beyond. Thousands would gather to hear him speak in public plazas and open fields. Anthony was especially drawn to preaching the gospel among

heretics. His eloquence turned heads; his authenticity touched hearts.

Whenever possible, Anthony found refuge in prayer and solitude. Toward the end of his life, a tree hut was fashioned for him near Padua. He died at 36, exhausted from his laborious preaching. His feast day is June 13.

Source: *Everyday Catholic*,
© June 2003, Liguori Publications



Lord, you live in communion with God and the Holy Spirit. Help me to live in communion and peace with all people.

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

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 12–17

Mon. Weekday:
2 Cor 1:1–7 / Mt 5:1–12
Tue. St. Anthony of Padua:
2 Cor 1:18–22 / Mt 5:13–16
Wed. Weekday:
2 Cor 3:4–11 / Mt 5:17–19

Thu. Weekday:
2 Cor 3:15–4:1, 3–6 / Mt 5:20–26
Fri. Weekday:
2 Cor 4:7–15 / Mt 5:27–32
Sat. Weekday:
2 Cor 5:14–21 / Mt 5:33–37



Bringing Home the Word

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)
June 18, 2017

The Life-Giving Power of Blood

Diane M. Houdek

From humanity's earliest days, people have been awed by the connection between blood and life. A serious injury to a blood vessel would have made it clear that when the blood drained from the body, life was extinguished. We know so much more about blood now. We have lost some of the sense of the mystery involved. But no matter how much our knowledge increases, blood still plays as central a role in the life of the body.

For the ancient Jews, blood was considered the source of life and an essential part of temple sacrifices. Even today,

part of the Jewish community's kosher butchering process involves careful and ritual draining of an animal's blood.

But we don't often think of the blood of Christ as being as central to the Eucharist as the body of Christ. For centuries, today's feast was known as *Corpus Christi*, Latin for "body of Christ." However, today we refer to the feast as the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. And all three *Lectionary* readings emphasize the spiritual and religious symbolism of blood.

Still, until relatively recently, the Precious Blood was not routinely offered to the people at Communion. And even now that it is part of nearly every liturgy, many people forego the chalice. While our doctrines teach us that Christ is fully present in the bread and the wine, the intention from the Last Supper is clearly that Jesus has given his body and his blood for us and to us. We might think about it this way: Bread nourishes us, but a blood transfusion can save our life.

At times we take the gift of the Eucharist for granted, much as we take for granted the blood that continually flows through our veins, pumping life to every part of our bodies. Today's feast asks us to take time to reflect on and give thanks for the life-giving power of blood—Christ's and our own—and to share that gift with the community. †

Sunday Readings

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a

"[The LORD, your God,] brought forth water for you from the flinty rock and fed you in the wilderness with manna...."

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?"

John 6:51-58

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day."

A Word From Pope Francis

Let us ask ourselves...in adoring Christ who is really present in the Eucharist: do I let myself be transformed by him? Do I let the Lord who gives himself to me guide me to going out ever more from my little enclosure in order to give, to share, to love him and others? Brothers and sisters, following, communion, sharing. Let us pray that participation in the Eucharist may always be an incentive: to follow the Lord every day, to be instruments of communion, and to share what we are with him and with our neighbor."

— Homily, the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, May 30, 2013



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Where do I go to eat? Who or what nourishes me?
- Am I tempted, enslaved, or weakened by less-filling foods?



A Father's Virtues

By Robert P. Lockwood

My Old Man would never think of wasting time on anything as unproductive as sleep on a Sunday morning. When I was a little guy, he would haul me out of bed for the 8 AM Mass. We would get there early, and he would plop me down in one of the back pews while he went to the vestibule to serve as an usher.

After Mass, I watched as he and another man bagged up the money from the collection. I asked him why two guys did it, and he said, "Just in case somebody wants to try something." This made me think that, in addition to everything else, the Old Man was a cop for the Church.

One Sunday when I was about seven, I was in my usual spot as the collection began. I reached into my pocket and realized that I had lost the kids' collection envelope. I had a quarter in my pocket that the Old Man had let me keep from his change for coffee. I had no choice. I put the quarter in the basket, saying goodbye to a comic book I had planned to buy with it.

As we were heading home after Mass, I told the Old Man what happened. He said, "You did a good thing," then

reached into his pocket and handed me a quarter. I truly believed then, and believed for years, that the Old Man had spotted my quarter among the hundreds of quarters in the collection, plucked it out and substituted another. It seemed natural that he could perform a little miracle like that. After all, this was my Old Man.

Teaching by Doing

"The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not covet,' and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this saying, [namely] 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:9-10).

What St. Paul is talking about here is virtue, the habit of performing actions for good. Virtue defines how we are meant to live our lives. Virtue is what we admire in others and hope to see in ourselves.

It was only after I became a father myself that I realized that 99 percent of what my father did, 99 percent of what he tried to teach me, was the virtues lived. The Old Man was never much about the

theory behind the practice, the thesis behind the moral choices. He was all about living the faith on the street corner. He was about what you did and what you didn't do and the difference it made in the neighborhood that day. Classically defined, the virtues we acquire through the repetition of good acts are prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. Every day, the Old Man was working on those with me. †

Source: *Everyday Catholic*,
© June 2011, Liguori Publications



- What important life lessons have you learned through the example of your father or a father figure?
- Why are fathers so important? How do their failures and successes affect their children?



Lord, through your Body and Blood you offer me the gift of eternal life. Help me to make sacrifices and share what I have with the poor.

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

Dad was all about living the faith on the street corner.

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 19-24

Mon. Weekday:
2 Cor 6:1-10 / Mt 5:38-42

Tue. Weekday:
2 Cor 8:1-9 / Mt 5:43-48

Wed. St. Aloysius Gonzaga:
2 Cor 9:6-11 / Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thu. Weekday:
2 Cor 11:1-11 / Mt 6:7-15

Fri. Most Sacred Heart of Jesus:
Dt 7:6-11 / 1 Jn 4:7-16 / Mt 11:25-30

Sat. Nativity of St. John the Baptist:
Is 49:1-6 / Acts 13:22-26
Lk 1:57-66, 80



Bringing Home the Word

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time | June 25, 2017

Fear Not

By Mary Katharine Deeley

In the wake of natural disasters that devastate homes and lives or senseless and often intentional violence that leaves carnage behind, I am so deeply grateful that thousands of people find the grace to run toward the disaster to help, open hearts to pray and wallets to give, or just lend a shoulder to lean on or a hand to rebuild. The world calls it the triumph of the human spirit. I am convinced that it is grace abounding that God might work through each

person who builds, plants, comforts, and even dies so that others might live.

“Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body...” said Jesus, who knew that the path of discipleship would not be easy for those who followed him. He also knew that fear is a door through which evil can tempt believers to put their faith and trust in anything that can give them security, wealth, and power and, thus, turn them away from God. Those who kill others wantonly for the sake of their own gain, who oppress peoples to increase power, and who take advantage of misfortune to increase their wealth have succumbed to evil already.

“Do not be afraid,” Jesus says, because God watches over us and, in the words of the psalmist, “is our champion.” The people who run into burning buildings, spend precious time to help rebuild disaster areas and look for survivors, who stand in defiance of tyranny, oppression, and injustice, and who give what they have to help others know this and live it out already.

***“Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body...”
said Jesus who knew that the path of discipleship would not be easy for those who followed him.***

A Word From Pope Francis

We have prayed under [Mary’s] leadership that she guide us to be ever more united to her Son, Jesus. We have brought her our joys and our suffering, our hopes and our struggles; we have invoked her by the beautiful title of *Salus Populi Romani*, imploring her [to] grant us health. Yes, because Mary gives us health, she is our health. Jesus Christ... has brought us salvation, granting us the grace and the joy of being children of God, to truly call him by the name of Father. Mary is the mother, and a mother worries... about the health of her children... What does this mean?...I think above all of three things: she helps us grow, to confront life, to be free.”

— Recital of the Holy Rosary, May 4, 2013



Sunday Readings

Jeremiah 20:10–13

“Sing to the LORD, praise the LORD, for he has rescued the life of the poor from the power of the evildoers!”

Romans 5:12–15

“If by that one person’s transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God...overflow for the many.”

Matthew 10:26–33

“And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What am I struggling with and need to give over to Christ?
- How can I increase my trust in God this week?



Hang on to Hope When the World Is Falling Apart

By Jim and Susan Vogt

It's easy for us to feel overwhelmed and helpless in the face of the many natural disasters, blatant injustices, and tragedies in our world. Are earthquakes, tsunamis, and droughts worse than in the past, or are we more aware of them due to modern communication? Injustices tear at our hearts the most since they are under human control. Terrorism, corrupt governments, oil spills, and pollution are mammoth problems of human making. Tragedies like death, divorce, or lingering illness can devastate us. We wonder: *How can God allow such suffering when we try so valiantly to do what's right and pray so hard?*

What's a Christian to do? Wallow in grief or guilt? Rail at God? Give up? Grieving is OK—for a time. Even getting angry at God is human. The psalms are good examples of people pouring out their grief and anger to God. (See Psalms 22, 55, 57, 88, 94, and 102 for a start.) Don't worry. God can handle our strong feelings.

There comes a time, however, when we have to pick ourselves up and carry on. The following actions have helped us when we've felt overwhelmed or powerless in the face of problems and evils in our world.

Cultivate gratitude: Let go of your anger through consciously noting one thing each day for which you're grateful.

Pray in solidarity: Of course we pray, both personally and at Mass, for people affected by natural disasters and tragedies of all kinds. Adding our bodies to our prayers through fasting or other sacrifices can build solidarity with the victims and reinforce our prayers.

Take action: Actions put feet on prayer. Can you take one action step in the direction of change? This won't solve the whole problem, but it gets you out of the starting gate.

Take on only what you can handle: When making even one step feels like too much, you might be right. Sometimes we're truly maxed out and have to trust others and God to take care of the current problem.

Think bigger: Those of us with just the ordinary demands on our time, energy, and money have the responsibility to think bigger. Consider that your strong emotion of anger or helplessness may be a call from God to act. You've been touched and moved.

Make a friend: Whatever problem is touching your heart, there are probably others who have organized a group that's already working on it. Besides, having others to work with is motivating and can refine bigger ideas.

What's Faith Got to Do with It? Jesus spent his life showing us how to deal with adversity and how to be neighbors. And what did it get him? Crucified! If we're following Jesus, we shouldn't expect comfort and ease;

rather, we need to spend ourselves for others and learn to love better. Jim McGinnis, a modern-day prophet and cofounder of the Institute for Peace and Justice, wrote: "In the face of escalating violence, let us escalate love."

QUESTIONS ONE?TION? REFLECTION

- What events in our world have angered you, upset you or made you feel powerless?
- How well have you done your part as a citizen of the world?
- What one action step will you take this month to work toward positive change where change is needed?

Source: *Everyday Catholic*,
© December 2011, Liguori Publications

PRAYER

Lord, your gift of unselfish love redeems the world. Remove the selfishness from my heart so I can love and care for others.

From *Faithful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time: Weeks 11–22*,
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 26–July 1

Mon. Weekday:
Gn 12:1–9 / Mt 7:1–5


Tue. Weekday:
Gn 13:2, 5–18 / Mt 7:6, 12–14

Wed. St. Irenaeus:
Gn 15:1–12, 17–18 / Mt 7:15–20

Thur. Sts. Peter and Paul:
Acts 12:1–11 / 2 Tm 4:6–8, 17–18 / Mt 16:13–19

Fri. Weekday:
Gn 17:1, 9–10, 15–22 / Mt 8:1–4

Sat. Weekday:
Gn 8:1–15 / Mt 8:5–17

Bringing Home
the Word 
June 25, 2017

© 2017 Liguori Publications, One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057.
Scripture quotations in this publication are from *New American Bible*, revised edition,
© 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC.
Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2017 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*.
All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.