



Bringing Home the Word

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother Of God (A)

January 1, 2023

Like the Morning Star

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

For the first four centuries following Jesus’ ascension, Christians grappled with understanding how his humanity and divinity commingled in his person. His humanity was evident to all who walked and talked with him. His divinity was also evident to his disciples because of the miracles he worked and his resurrection. In short, they knew he was fully human, and they knew he was fully God, but how could he be fully both at the same time?

The Council of Ephesus settled the issue definitively in 431. The Church declared that in the one person of Christ there are two natures: one divine and one human. This same council also declared, as a natural consequence, that the holy

virgin is the Mother of God (*Theotokos*), since she conceived and gave birth to the Word of God. So today’s feast is one of the oldest, shared by all Christians from the earliest times.

When Mary said yes to the Incarnation and gave birth to the Savior, all of us could bask in his divine light. She is like the morning star that first breaks the horizon and mirrors the light of the sun that she both foretells and follows. In loving Mary, we truly honor her Son. God was the first to praise her through Gabriel—“Hail, favored one!”—and the one who blessed her beyond all other creatures. We are merely following his example. +

A Word from Pope Francis

Looking at Mary with her Son in her arms, I think of young mothers and their children fleeing wars and famine or waiting in refugee camps. They are many!...If we become artisans of fraternity, we will be able to mend the threads of a world torn apart by war and violence.

Angelus, Rome, January 1, 2022



Sunday Readings

Numbers 6:22–27

“The LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace!”

Galatians 4:4–7

God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law....

Luke 2:16–21

Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

In the year 431, the Council of Ephesus ruled that Christ has two natures: He is fully human, and fully divine.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- When my inner peace is threatened, do I quietly call on God?
- Is God asking me to say yes to something or someone today?

The Duty of God's Foot Soldiers

By Emily Blasik

Even if doing this feels small, volunteering in your community or simply loving your neighbors in a new way can make a difference.

Americans have had a few tough years. With mass shootings, violence, deep political divides, and more, our country seemed to be falling apart piece by piece.

On many mornings, I couldn't even bear to turn on the news. Everywhere you looked, tragedy was at the forefront. As a result, we saw a deep-seated fear envelop the hearts of many in an ununited United States: fear of the future, fear of the unknown, and even fear of our neighbors, all made evident by the sheer amount of hate and malice running rampant in our streets as well as our social media spheres. As we know, words can be weapons, too.

It's difficult to know what to do in these situations or how to react. Even harder still is discerning how to help. When tragedies strike—whether a natural disaster, mass shooting, or terrorist attack—we feel a certain amount of helplessness, like a spectator watching from the stands. This is how I felt after white nationalist protests made headlines. I was confused and hurt by the state of our country, but I didn't know how to help mend it.



At Mass one Sunday, God's message rang clear. The homily spoke to my heart: "Do not despair during these times, and most importantly, do not lose your faith in God," said our pastor, Fr. Mike. "We might not be able to change the world overnight, but we can make a difference where it counts: in our homes and in our communities."

As his words started to sink in, a

feeling of peace settled over me. When the ways of the world get us down, we have a choice: We can either spend all of our energy panicking and perhaps inspiring panic in others, or we can focus on causing change in our own circle of influence. Small as it may feel, volunteering in your community or simply loving your neighbors in a new way can make a difference. If you can donate money to those in need, do so. Lead with love, and the rest will follow.

While the holidays probably helped provide distractions from the year's drama, January brings us back to a sobering reality. What's next for our country? No one can be sure. Clearly, the problems remain unsolved, but whatever does happen, it's crucial to remember that God is with us. And we are his foot soldiers, showing the way for a better tomorrow. +

This reflection is from an issue of *Liguorian*, a bimonthly magazine published by the Redemptorists. To subscribe or purchase a gift subscription, go to Liguorian.org or call 866-848-2492.



Lord Jesus, so that we may imitate your mother and say yes to all God asks of us, we pray—Be born in us, be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 2–7

Monday, Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen:
1 Jn 2:22–28 / Jn 1:19–28

Tuesday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 2:29–3:6 / Jn 1:29–34

Wednesday, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton:
1 Jn 3:7–10 / Jn 1:35–42

Thursday, St. John Neumann:
1 Jn 3:11–21 / Jn 1:43–51

Friday, Christmas Weekday: 1 Jn 5:5–13 / Mk 1:7–11 or Lk 3:23–28 or 3:23, 31–34, 36, 38

Saturday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 5:14–21 / Jn 2:1–11

Bringing Home
the Word 

January 1, 2023

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Bringing Home the Word

The Epiphany of the Lord (A)
January 8, 2023

A Christ for Every Nation

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

“Go back where you came from!” What if the Magi heard this when they came to the place where the Child was and heeded that derisive message? The “signs of the times” that they read told them a king had been born. They might not have known exactly where to look, but they knew what they were looking for, and they recognized that king when they found him. These righteous men were not Israelites, yet God revealed this great mystery to them. Furthermore, there is no indication that they eventually became Israelites. Rather, “they departed for their country” (Matthew 2:12). God

really does not play favorites.

Then how are we to understand the claim of being God’s Chosen People, whether ancient Israelites or the Christian community? What’s the point of being chosen if you are not the favorite? While acknowledging God’s special love for his Chosen People, both Isaiah and Paul answer this question. The prophet claims that “nations will walk by your light, kings by the radiance of your dawning” (Isaiah 60:3), and Paul writes, “the stewardship of God’s grace...was given to me for your benefit” (Ephesians 3:2). In other words, some have been chosen by God to bring the light of God’s love to others.

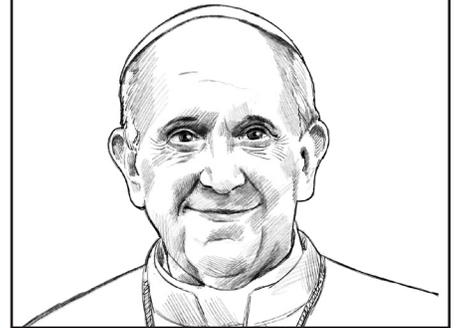
The feast of the Epiphany celebrates two important realities—the revelation of God to all people and the responsibility to reveal that astounding mystery to others. The Magi personify both realities. They were men of another faith tradition to whom God revealed the mystery of the Incarnation, and they returned home and probably proclaimed to others the wonder of that mystery. +

Some have been chosen by God to bring the light of God’s love to others.

A Word from Pope Francis

The Magi humbled themselves before the unheard-of logic of God. They welcomed the Lord not the way they had imagined him to be, but as he was, small and poor. Their prostration is the sign of those who place their own ideas aside and make room for God. It takes humility to do this.

Angelus, Rome, January 6, 2022



Sunday Readings

Isaiah 60:1–6

Arise! Shine, for your light has come, the glory of the LORD has dawned upon you.

Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6

The Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Matthew 2:1–12

They prostrated themselves and did him homage.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How respectful are you of the religious quests of others?
- In what ways might your life shine the light of God’s love on others?

The Stranger Knows Him

By Paige Byrne Shortal

Today's Gospel is very familiar to us. We have mental pictures of the three Wise Men traveling by night, riding camels, wearing rich robes, and each carrying treasure boxes full of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The passage we hear today is the first half of chapter 2 of Matthew's Gospel, ending with the adoration of the child by the Magi and the warning they received in a dream not to return to Herod. The rest of the chapter includes the flight into Egypt by Joseph and Mary with their newborn baby, the massacre of the innocent children of Bethlehem as Herod's men sought to rid the world of the infant king, and the return to Israel of the Holy Family after the death of Herod. It's a short chapter, only twenty-three verses, and it's all St. Matthew writes about Jesus before his baptism in the Jordan.

Saint Matthew was writing for Jewish Christians, and he took for granted that his audience knew Jewish history and the law and the prophets. In this short chapter, Matthew quotes the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament) four times and each quote contains the name of a place—Bethlehem, Egypt, Ramah, and Nazareth. Why is Matthew



doing this? He is pointing out to the Jewish community that this Jesus is the fulfillment of all the prophets and the answer to their prayers; that he is not a stranger.

Luke, who was writing for Gentile Christians, mentions a different group who recognized Jesus. In his Gospel, he doesn't speak of the stranger but of the poor—the shepherds—who were the first to know him.

It seems that the Jewish religious and

political leaders should have recognized the Messiah. Herod consulted the chief priests and scribes, and they knew where he was to be born. Instead, strangers from the east, who had only a rumor to go by, welcomed him and did him homage.

Just so, it is possible for us to know the teachings but not know the teacher; to know the way but remain stuck on the path. The stranger sees what the native misses. The foreigner values what the citizen takes for granted. The poor and the alien recognize God.

Today we celebrate Epiphany—the light shines for all and into all hearts. Do we like what we see? If not, let's agree that rejecting the light of truth isn't the wisest response. Jesus promised that the truth will set us free (John 8:32). Garfield the cartoon cat said, "The truth will set you free...but first it will make you miserable!"

Have a blessed Epiphany! +

It is possible for us to know the teachings but not know the teacher; to know the way but remain stuck on the path.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, so that our homes may be havens of peace, our families a source of joy, our children safe, and our elders respected, we pray—Be born in us, be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 9–14

Monday, Baptism of the Lord: Is 42:1–4, 6–7 or Acts 10:34–38 / Mt 3:13–17

Tuesday, Weekday:
Heb 2:5–12 / Mk 1:21–28 or
Heb 1:1–6; 2:5–12 / Mk 1:14–20; 1:21–28

Wednesday, Weekday:
Heb 2:14–18 / Mk 1:29–39

Thursday, Weekday:
Heb 3:7–14 / Mk 1:40–45

Friday, Weekday:
Heb 4:1–5, 11 / Mk 2:1–12

Saturday, Weekday:
Heb 4:12–16 / Mk 2:13–17

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January 8, 2023

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Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
January 15, 2023

Proud Servants of God

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

“My servant” is an identification a lot of people will shy away from. A servant seeks to accomplish someone else’s goals, and the adjective “my” suggests belonging to another. Yet all of today’s readings describe individuals who are proud to be servants—servants of God. What makes this kind of servant something to which all of us can aspire?

As a servant of God, Isaiah became “a light to the nations that [God’s] salvation may reach to the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6). As a servant of God, Paul became “an apostle of Christ Jesus,” proclaiming the good news of God’s love “to the church of God that is in Corinth.”

As a servant of God, John the Baptist prepared the way so that Jesus “might be made known to Israel” (John 1:31). These servants sought to accomplish God’s goals for the fulfillment of others. It is in such commitment to others that we ourselves are fulfilled. Ask any parent, spouse, or good friend if this is not the case.

We might not want to be the servant of another, but what a privilege it is to be called to be a servant of God, a light to others, to proclaim God’s love and make Jesus known. By our baptism, we have all been so called. We enlighten others by the way we live with integrity. The unselfishness of our lives proclaims the good news of Christ Jesus. Authentic Christian living makes him known to the world. That’s what it means to be a servant of God. +

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 49:3, 5–6

I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

1 Corinthians 1:1–3

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God....

John 1:29–34

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”

***What a privilege it is
to be called
to be a servant of God,
a light to others,
to proclaim God’s love
and make Jesus known.***

A Word from Pope Francis

John saw something shocking: the beloved Son of God in solidarity with sinners; and the Holy Spirit made him understand the unprecedented novelty... While in all religions it is man who offers and sacrifices something to God...[it] is God who offers his own Son for the salvation of humanity.

Angelus, Rome, January 19, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How do you personally benefit by serving others?
- Are you careful to take care of your own needs even as you serve others?

Care for the Caregiver

By Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR

A counselor told his gloomy new patient, “Lighten up! You need a good laugh. Go to the circus and enjoy a performance by Giggles the Clown.” Replied the patient, “I am Giggles the Clown.”

According to an article in *Time* last August, suicides in this country are at their highest number in thirty years. Sixteen million people in the US are affected by clinical depression, making it “the leading cause of disability in the world, costing the US economy alone \$210 billion a year in lost productivity [and] missed days of work.”

More surprising than melancholic clowns are members of the cloth with clinical depression. A study by the Clergy Health Initiative at Duke Divinity School says Methodist ministers were twice as likely to be depressed than the general public. Mental health specialists cite guilt about not doing enough, doubts about one’s call to ministry, and “vicarious trauma” as possible factors. “Bearing witness to another person’s trauma can itself be traumatic and can activate feelings and behaviors associated with earlier traumatic experiences clergy may have had in their own lives,” according to a study published in *MentalHealth.org*. It asserts that vicarious trauma affects clergy as it does professional caregivers and first responders.

However, a growing number of people today assume the role of caregiver, not as a profession but as a responsibility to a family member or friend who is sick,



elderly, disabled, or dying. In a 2015 report, “Caregiving in the US,” 39 percent of adults are caregivers, and of these, sixty percent are women. Nearly half of caregivers assist a parent or parent-in-law; one in ten care for a spouse. Round-the-clock caregivers are more likely to experience stress in their duties, which can also lead to secondary traumatic stress (STS) or “compassion fatigue.” Symptoms include mental and physical exhaustion, numbness in interacting with others, and difficulty in finding fulfillment in work.

Compassion literally means “to suffer together.” Jesus was moved with compassion, but he also withdrew to pray and rest with his disciples. He told them: “Come away by yourselves to a deserted

place and rest a while. People were coming and going...and they had no opportunity even to eat” (Mark 6:31)

So a message to caregivers—professional or otherwise—on the verge of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma: Take care of yourself as you care for others. This isn’t selfishness, but prudence. It’s hard to give what you don’t have. For this reason, Mother Teresa required her sisters to take a mandatory year off from their caregiving duties every four to five years. In F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Absolution*, the priest, teetering on a nervous breakdown, tells the kid who is trying to make a confession: Go to an amusement park but don’t get up close, “because if you do, you’ll only feel the heat and the sweat and the life.”

Lighten your load, caregivers! Go to the circus, amusement park, movies—or chapel—wherever numbness can be prevented in you. For it’s in feeling the heat, the sweat, and the life that the Way, the Truth, and the Life is found! +

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Creator God, help us to find holy balance as we seek to attend to others and take care of ourselves. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 16–21

Monday, Weekday:

Heb 5:1–10 / Mk 2:18–22

Tuesday, St. Anthony:

Heb 6:10–20 / Mk 2:23–28

Wednesday, Weekday:

Heb 7:1–3, 15–17 / Mk 3:1–6

Thursday, Weekday:

Heb 7:25—8:6 / Mk 3:7–12

Friday, Weekday:

Heb 8:6–13 / Mk 3:13–19

Saturday, St. Agnes:

Heb 9:2–3, 11–14 / Mk 3:20–21



Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
January 22, 2023

Is Christ Divided?

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

“You’re breaking the back of the body of Christ!” Saint Paul might have said this to members of the Corinthian community who rival each other, claiming that the leader who baptized them is greater than the one who baptized others: “I belong to Paul!” “I belong to Apollos!” “I belong to Cephas!” (1 Corinthians 1:12). This suggests that, based on the one who baptized them, the members thought of themselves as superior. Such rivalry sounds so petty. We should be careful here because some of this rivalry still exists in the Church.

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 8:23—9:3

Upon those who lived in a land
of gloom,
a light has shone.

1 Corinthians 1:10–13, 17

I urge you...that all of you agree
in what you say, and that there be
no divisions among you.

Matthew 4:12–23 or 4:12–17

[Jesus said,] “Repent, for the
kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

In any healthy group there will be diverse opinions. We all have our own tastes, preferences, cultural habits, and so on. This is true in church music, preaching style, and religious devotion. The relative uniformity of the Church prior to the Second Vatican Council has given way to great diversity. What is different is not necessarily bad. Nor is our preference necessarily superior. Such diversity need not pit us against each other, but sometimes it does. Is Christ divided over points of preference?

We are all part of the body of Christ. We are all God’s beloved. The diversity among us challenges us to work toward the common good, to “be united in the same mind and in the same purpose” (1 Corinthians 1:10). Let us not divide Christ. +

*We are all part of the
body of Christ. We are
all God’s beloved.*

A Word from Pope Francis

What is important is the journey toward unity. It is very good that theologians study and discuss; that is what specialists are for. But it is also good that we...walk together on the journey. Together. Let us build unity through prayer, works of charity, and mutual cooperation.

Address to an ecumenical delegation,
Rome, January 17, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How do you act toward someone who understands faith differently?
- Which religious voices do you listen to? Why?

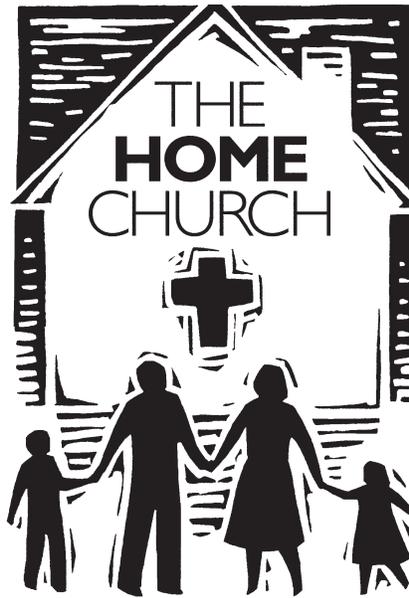
Harmony

By Paige Byrne Shortal

Saint Paul's letters to the Christians in Corinth are also letters to us. In them, he addresses problems that were particular to that community; problems that recur down through the ages so that we can find striking similarities between the issues in the church at Corinth and those in a modern parish or diocese.

In today's second reading, St. Paul sternly corrects the Corinthians, exhorting them to cease their rivalry in the name of those who first brought them to Christ. He had heard that the Corinthian Christians were boasting: "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ."

The significance of these divisions is both intellectual and social. Apollos, a brilliant Jewish scholar and engaging speaker, appealed to the educated members of the community who wanted a more sophisticated presentation of the gospel. The Jewish Christians from Palestine boasted of their attachment to Cephas, (the Aramaic name for Peter). The majority of the community were poor and less educated, and they tried to compensate for their lack of social status by aligning themselves to Paul, who brought the gospel to Corinth. Less is known about the "Christ party," but



some scholars think it might refer to the "Gnostics"—those who follow no disciple but claim to receive divine revelation directly from Christ.

Paul begs them to understand that Christ cannot be divided. He is especially pained because he himself is being used as a source of division, and so he asks, "Was Paul crucified for you?"

Saint Paul's letters are not just interesting documents for the student of church history. They are the living word of God and, properly understood, are a source of wisdom and sound advice for

the church in the modern world.

This is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18–25). Many Christians feel the pain of the division of the body of Christ and hear the call to unity while still remaining faithful to their home church. In my community we began an effort we call the Combined Christian Choirs—over one hundred singers from twenty-five different congregations, including Lutheran, Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist, United Church of Christ, Baptist, and several nondenominational churches.

While theologians find the paths to unity and church leaders take the necessary tentative steps, perhaps we people of the Church might prepare the way by singing together. The beauty of the music is often in the blend, the harmony of different voices creating a sound that moves the spirit and makes the difficult task of unity seem not only possible but inevitable. We are one in Christ Jesus; we truly are. +



God of all people, open our eyes to see what we hold in common with each other so that we may build your kingdom together. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 23–28

Monday, Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children:
Heb 9:15, 24–28 / Mk 3:22–30

Tuesday, St. Frances de Sales:
Heb 10:1–10 / Mk 3:31–35

Wednesday, Conversion of St. Paul:
Acts 22:3–16 / Mk 16:15–18

Thursday, Sts. Timothy and Titus:
2 Tm 1:1–8 or Ti 1:1–5 / Mk 4:21–25

Friday, Weekday:
Heb 10:32–39 / Mk 4:26–34

Saturday, St. Thomas Aquinas:
Heb 11:1–2, 8–19 / Mk 4:35–41

Bringing Home
the **Word** 

January 22, 2023

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Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time (A)
January 29, 2023

The Beautiful Beatitudes

By Mark Haydu, LC

To follow Christ is to seek lowliness, humility, mercy, and righteousness. The Ten Commandments summarize God’s teaching to his people. Jesus gives us a new law that builds on the old. Before it was “You shall not...”; now it is, “Blessed are you when...” He calls us to greater happiness, greater blessing, but it comes with a challenge. Saint Augustine says that Jesus went up the mountain to preach the Beatitudes because he was preaching a higher moral doctrine: “greater precepts of righteousness.”

The new law contradicts what our wounded human nature tends to think and feel. We are challenged to believe blessings can come from tears, meekness,

and poverty; that living meekly leads to strength and security. Appreciating these truths requires transforming our minds and hearts. Faith is required. Deeply desiring and living in the right does bring satisfaction. There is consolation in mourning the things that sadden Christ’s heart.

If we live by the Beatitudes, many will treat us more generously. We know people who are merciful, and we are quick to show them mercy. When our hearts are clean, we can see God more clearly. Those who seek and create peace are considered by all to be children of God. They are not without trials and suffering, but they are blessed and happy.

Christ calls us to store up treasures in heaven, spiritual blessings that cannot be taken away. Even if we experience difficulty, we will still receive the highest and greatest gift: the kingdom of heaven. +

A Word from Pope Francis

What does...*blessed* mean? The original term does not mean one with a full belly... but rather it is a person who is in a condition of grace, who progresses in God’s grace and progresses on God’s path: patience, poverty, service to others, comfort....Those who advance in these things are happy and shall be blessed.

General Audience, January 29, 2020



Sunday Readings

Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12–13

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, / who have observed his law; / Seek justice, seek humility.

1 Corinthians 1:26–31

God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong.

Matthew 5:1–12a

[Jesus said,] “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus gives us a new law that builds on the old. Before it was “You shall not...”; now it is, “Blessed are you when....”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I really believe the messages of the Beatitudes?
- How does believing the Beatitudes make a difference in how I live?

Softening Christianity

By Fr. John F. Kavanaugh, SJ

If we are to judge by the Sermon on the Mount, even Jesus, who is God with us, has a view of human affairs thoroughly at odds with our own. If we have to tune out the prophets' mistrust of humankind, imagine the skills of repression we must employ to ignore Christ's rejection of our every human impulse.

The benighted Nietzsche was clever enough to see the terrible truth in the Sermon on the Mount. What Jesus proposes is a bald reversal of human nature. Nietzsche knew that every last one of us wants wealth abounding and a full stomach. We dread suffering and tears. Being hated, ostracized, and insulted by others is among our greatest nightmares.

But Jesus deemed such conditions blessed. We are to rejoice if we are poor and hungry. We are to take delight in our tears and accept gladly our rejection by the powers of the age. This outright rejection of natural wisdom and desire so infuriated Nietzsche that he raged at those who might dare to follow Christ.

Perhaps the most constant failure of Christians is our reluctance to take our own gospels seriously and accept them in their entirety. We have an uncanny ability to block out those portions of Scripture that challenge our prejudices and to magnify those that confirm our own advantage.

A question much ignored these days is whether our faith has anything to do with justice, economics, poverty, or other



sociopolitical issues. We have pried open a yawning gap between the world of faith and the world of "real" issues. As a result, we never have to worry about changing our behavior or confronting our culture. This is quite strange for a people that contends that its way is the way of the Lord Jesus.

Nietzsche realized that there is something in Christianity dreadfully at odds with our natural impulse. He would never settle for some watered-down, feel-good Jesus who pals along with us in our strutting.

Unfortunately, Christians have done just that. Rather than rejecting outright Christ's teachings, we soften and suffocate them with the pillows of our more realistic wisdom. As the great

English writer and theologian Dorothy Sayers observed, we have snared the lion of Judah, trimmed his claws, and turned him into a domesticated kitten. +

Excerpted from *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter* by John F. Kavanaugh, SJ. Visit Liguori.org to learn more and review our list of *Daybreaks* authors, including Fr. Ron Rolheiser, Sr. Dianne Bergant, Fr. Daniel Horan, and others.

Henri Nouwen writes: Jean Vanier, who founded a worldwide network of communities for mentally disabled people, [said] Jesus did not say, "Blessed are those who care for the poor," but "Blessed *are* the poor." As simple as this remark may seem, it offers the key to the kingdom. I asked Vanier: "How do you find the strength to see so many people each day and listen to their many problems and pains?" He smiled and said: "They show me Jesus and give me life." Here lies the...mystery of Christian service: those who serve Jesus in the poor will be fed by him whom they serve. +

Excerpted from *Henri Nouwen: In My Own Words*, © 2001 Liguori Publications, 825170.


PRAYER

Gracious God, you who have blessed us so richly, please give us the grace to be a blessing to others. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 30—February 4

Monday, Weekday:
Heb 11:32–40 / Mk 5:1–20

Tuesday, St. John Bosco:
Heb 12:1–4 / Mk 5:21–43

Wednesday, Weekday:
Heb 12:4–7, 11–15 / Mk 6:1–6

Thursday, Presentation of the Lord: Mal 3:1–4 / Heb 2:14–18 / Lk 2:22–40 or 2:22–32

Friday, Weekday:
Heb 13:1–8 / Mk 6:14–29

Saturday, Weekday:
Heb 13:15–17, 20–21 / Mk 6:30–34

Bringing Home
the **Word** 
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