



# Bringing Home the Word

*The Epiphany of the Lord (B)*

January 3, 2021

## Reaching Far and Wide

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

In Vincent Malo's painting, *The Adoration of the Magi*, a mysterious scene barely comes to light before us. Are we inside or outside of a Roman portico? What is going on in the background? The central scene clearly shows the Child Jesus perched in the Virgin's arms and surrounded by swaddling clothes. A glow emanates from the Child that enlightens the three Wise Men processing toward Jesus. Their whole caravan chaotically crowds around and strains to see the king they have come to worship.

A dalmatian wanders behind while a camel appears in the backlighting with a knowing smirk. The Ethiopian

sage sympathetically stares out from the center of the painting and seemingly asks us if we understand the significance of their travels.

The arrival of these astronomers from the East sends a very important message for all of us at Mass today. Jesus is the light of the whole world, and all peoples—no matter how far or how lost—are invited by his attractive and saving light. This light came to the Chosen People and will be fully consumed in Jerusalem as Isaiah prophesies. Yet he will proclaim that all peoples are invited to be members of the same family and coheirs to the treasures of God's love and mercy. Faith in him and acceptance of his gospel truth is all he asks. So, no matter how far you or anyone you know seems from Jesus and his truth, he loves them and wants them around his table to experience his love. +

## 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.

### Matthew 2:1–12

They opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

*Jesus is the light of the whole world, and to all peoples—no matter how far away or how lost.*

## A Word from Pope Francis

As we begin the New Year, may we discover anew that faith demands worship... For worship involves making an exodus from the greatest form of bondage: slavery to oneself. Worship means putting the Lord at the center, not ourselves.

—Epiphany Homily, January 6, 2020



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do you trust that Jesus wants to and can reach any soul, no matter how far away?
- Will you renew your prayer and gentle testimony to invite those who are still searching?

# Resolutions of Faith

By Kathleen M. Basi

It's a new year. What will you do to live your faith in 2021?

New Year's seems tailor-made for changing for the better. Sometimes it's weight loss or exercise; at other times, we look to our spiritual life, vowing to set aside daily prayer time or regularly go to reconciliation. But goals are fleeting; as motivation falters, good intentions fall by the wayside. Some people have become so jaded they don't even bother anymore.

Resolutions require us to abandon old patterns and institute new ones—to turn our backs on our former ways and seek renewal. If that sounds like spiritual exercise, that's because it is. Actions become habits for a reason. To undo them requires ongoing sacrifice, and for that we need God's help. But it seems so trivial to call in God to help us lose weight. Diet and exercise have nothing to do with faith, right?

Not so fast. The central truth behind St. John Paul II's theology of the body is that as beings with both a body and a soul, our divine purpose is to reflect God's love for the world in the way we use our bodies. In our work, in the way we treat our bodies, even in our most intimate relationships, we are called to love as God loves—fully and sacrificially. Otherwise, we're not really living our faith. We're just playing pretend.

To go to daily Mass is good; to take what we learn there and do something with it is better. To read Scripture every



morning is good; to allow the word to burrow down and needle our souls until we have to get up and act on it is better. Even a diet can be a spiritual exercise, if it's undertaken out of respect for the gift of the body we've been given.

None of us can change for the better on the strength of our own will. We need God walking hand in hand with us, holding us accountable and reminding us why it matters. When we're used to turning to God again and again throughout the day—even for something as trivial as a diet—it bleeds into other areas of our life too. The sacred fuses with the secular, and we truly become beings who (as the *Baltimore Catechism*

said) show God's goodness by knowing, loving, and serving him in this world.

It's a new year. What will you do to live your faith? +

*To read Scripture every morning is good; to allow the word to burrow down and needle our souls until we have to get up and act on it is better.*

**PRAYER**

*Lord, your light gives us strength and shows us the way to God. Remove my blindness that I may see the light of goodness, peace, and love within myself and others.*

—From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*,  
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 4–9

**Monday**, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton:  
1 Jn 3:22–4:6 / Mt 4:12–17, 23–25


**Tuesday**, St. John Neumann:  
1 Jn 4:7–10 / Mk 6:34–44

**Wednesday**, Christmas Weekday:  
1 Jn 4:11–18 / Mk 6:45–52

**Thursday**, Christmas Weekday:  
1 Jn 4:19–5:4 / Lk 4:14–22

**Friday**, Christmas Weekday:  
1 Jn 5:5–13 / Lk 5:12–16

**Saturday**, Christmas Weekday:  
1 Jn 5:14–21 / Jn 3:22–30

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January 3, 2021

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# Bringing Home the Word

*Baptism of the Lord (B)*

January 10, 2021

## Stories as Windows into the Past

By Mary Katharine Deeley

When we were growing up, my siblings and I would often ask our grandmother to tell us stories about our mother when she was young. We liked listening to our mother tell those same stories from her perspective. The stories varied in some details, but it always felt like a veil was lifted on the past and we had some sense of where we came from along with some insight about our mother's personality.

She, of course, did the same thing for my daughters, making them giggle

## Sunday Readings

**Isaiah 42:1–4, 6–7 or  
Isaiah 55:1–11**

Here is my servant whom I uphold,  
my chosen one with whom I am  
pleased.

**Acts 10:34–38 or John 5:1–9**

He went about doing good and  
healing all those oppressed by  
the devil.

**Mark 1:7–11**

[John the Baptist] proclaimed:  
"One mightier than I is coming after  
me. I am not worthy to stoop and  
loosen the thongs of his sandals."

at the story of my getting into her  
perfume bottle when I was three. Such  
stories connect us with the people we  
know. Old friends trade stories of shared  
experiences; young companions learn  
about the world from the stories of their  
elders and even from the stories their  
friends tell them about their lives.

In Acts, Peter appeals to his listeners  
by telling the story they know so well. He  
even appeals to their shared experience  
as he says, "You know..." (v. 36). Stories  
connect us to one another, opening the  
door to understanding each other a little  
more and a little better. In his story,  
Peter marks the baptism of Jesus as the  
beginning of his ministry. Our story in  
the Christian community begins with  
baptism as well. Peter records that Jesus  
went on "doing good and healing all  
those oppressed by the devil, for God  
was with him" (v. 38). What would the  
story of our lives after baptism tell people  
about us? Would someone like Peter tell  
people that we went about doing good  
and loving God and neighbor? +

*Stories connect us, opening  
the door to understanding  
each other a little more  
and a little better.*

## A Word from Pope Francis

To baptize a child is an act  
of justice toward them.  
Why? Because at baptism  
we offer a treasure, at  
baptism we offer a pledge:  
the Holy Spirit. Baptism  
endows the child with the  
strength of the Holy Spirit:  
the Spirit that will defend  
and assist each of them  
throughout life.

—Feast of the Baptism of the Lord,  
January 12, 2020



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do you tell children you know stories about your life that teach moral lessons?
- Do you look back on your life stories, and use lessons learned to draw closer to God?

# Our Great Mosaic

By Johan van Parys

A few years ago, our church hosted an exhibit of contemporary art. Some considered the art beautiful and engaging; others thought it ugly and offensive. Though acceptable for a gallery, contemporary art was deemed unfitting for our historic church. I was told a classical building should be adorned with classical art, not abstract.

I remembered the many churches I'd visited throughout Europe. Most had been built and rebuilt over the course of many centuries, with each century leaving its own distinctive mark. As a result, it isn't unusual for a church to have a Romanesque nave, Gothic adornments, a Renaissance facade, Baroque side altars, abstract windows, and contemporary appointments such as the altar and ambo. Regardless of their stylistic complexity, they evoke a sense of perfect unity and harmony. Often it takes a guide to remind a visitor that the building is the result of hundreds of years of labor and love.

I have often wished for a similar guide to point out that, similar to its buildings' art and architecture, the Church itself is complex and diverse and was not created all at once. But unlike a tour guide who easily elicits repeated oohs and ahs, someone pointing out the diversity in our Church may not experience the same reception. Many of us probably wish for a kind of cookie-cutter Catholic Church. Wouldn't things be easier if everyone believed and prayed exactly the same and



preferred the same art and architecture? In our search for ecclesiastical safety and security, do we readily confuse unity with uniformity and create a false notion of what it means to be a "true" Catholic?

The fundamental unity of the Church, after all, is not based on superficial uniformity. Rather, it is rooted in our shared belonging to the body of Christ, in which there are many different parts. Like its architecture, art, and music, for example, the Church has evolved and grown for more than twenty centuries into a complex and diverse reality while enjoying harmony and unity within its rich diversity. And as is the case with architecture and art, the differences between the many members of the

Church do not detract from the unity of the Church, but rather enrich, enhance, and strengthen our bond.

Addressing new metropolitan archbishops, Pope Francis said this about unity in our diversity: "In the Church, variety, which is itself a great treasure, is always grounded in the harmony of unity, like a great mosaic in which every small piece joins with others as part of God's one great plan. United in our differences—there is no other Catholic way to be united. This is the Catholic spirit, the Christian spirit: to be united in our differences. This is the way of Jesus!" +

*The Church is the result of centuries of labor and love.*

**PRAYER**

*Lord, help me to discern my gifts and talents and use them for the common good of all people.*

—From *Peaceful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 11–16

**Monday, Weekday:**  
Heb 1:1–6 / Mk 1:14–20


**Tuesday, Weekday:**  
Heb 2:5–12 / Mk 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 10, 2021

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# Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

January 17, 2021

## What's in a Name?

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

In Giorgio Vasari's painting, *The Calling of St. Peter and St. Andrew*, the upper scene shows Peter and Andrew walking toward Jesus. The lower central scene depicts Peter in the center, with Andrew behind him, and Jesus enthroned on a rock pointing toward him.

The scene is simple for a reason. Jesus' call is simple: Follow me. Our response should be simple, too. We often complicate the call with questions, fears, or doubts, wanting clarifications and assurances. But it is a simple imperative that requires a one-word answer: yes or no. Or as Samuel responded, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:9).

## Sunday Readings

**1 Samuel 3:3b–10, 19**

So [Eli] said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'"

**1 Corinthians 6:13c–15a, 17–20**

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you?

**John 1:35–42**

[Jesus said,] "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas (which is translated Peter)."

Once accepted, the call implies a new identity born of a new, deeper relationship. When Jesus calls Simon, he changes his name. In the Bible, a name change indicates a new mission or purpose. Abram was renamed Abraham to father the Old Testament people in faith.

Simon is now Cephas, or rock. His mission is to father the New Testament people in faith. He is to be a solid, unbreakable foundation for his brothers—and eventually the whole Church. His strength comes not from perfection, for we know Peter was weak, but from his acceptance of Jesus' love and call no matter his own weakness.

Similarly, in baptism and confirmation we take new names that come with our new, deeper calls. It is a meaningful Catholic tradition that parents name their children after a saint who becomes a model for their lives. Like Peter, we are called to greatness by Jesus, who looks at us, names us, and says, "Follow me" (John 1:43). Let's live up to that beautiful, simple invitation! +

*Jesus' call is simple:  
Follow me. Our response  
should be simple, too:  
yes or no.*

## A Word from Pope Francis

Jesus does not want disciples who are merely able to repeat memorized formulas. He wants witnesses: people who spread hope, with their way of welcoming, smiling, and loving; above all loving because the power of the resurrection makes Christians capable of loving even when love seems to have lost its motivation.

—General Audience, October 4, 2017



REFLECTION  
QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS  
REFLECTION

- Are you named after a saint or someone in particular?
- If so, how does that saint or person inspire you?



# The Church on Cremation

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

Catholics have loved relics for centuries. Although you may not realize it, the altar where Mass is celebrated usually contains an altar stone with the relic of a saint in it. It's common on saints' feast days to visit their graves or venerate their relics and be blessed with them. Is it possible to connect this adoration of relics to how we commemorate the death of our loved ones?

- Upon my entry to greet a third-grade class, a little girl's hand shot up with a sense of urgency. I couldn't avoid calling on her. "My grandma died," she reported matter-of-factly. Stunned, I responded with, "I'm sure she's in a good place, and one day you'll see her again." The girl answered instantly: "I know she is. I saw her this morning. Her ashes are on our kitchen table."
- Siblings are in turmoil over the sale of their childhood home. A few years ago they fulfilled their mother's dying wish by spreading her cremated remains in the backyard flower garden. They never dreamed they would have to sell the family home. Should they tell the prospective buyers?
- Another family placed their mother's ashes in small lockets on gold chains that can be worn. They distributed them to their mother's dearest relatives and friends at her memorial service.



- A father's cremated remains were divided between his two children. He has two burial plots, one in a cemetery in Philadelphia and one in Brazil, his home country.

I'm sure you've heard similar stories about cremations and the distribution of a loved one's ashes. Reactions are either extremely positive or negative. It seems no one is indifferent on the subject. What does the Church say?

Catholic teaching on this is clear. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body" (CCC 2301). Furthermore, the

Church usually has clear instructions reflecting the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' guidelines about the placement of the cremated remains in a cemetery or place of respect, such as a mausoleum.

The Catholic News Service reported that "Catholic cemeteries have lost 1 percent of their potential business each year since the Second Vatican Council relaxed burial and cremation restrictions." Many parishes have opened their own columbariums.

More and more, it seems cremation is prevailing over the tradition of burial. This is a leap, but maybe our fascination with relics has predisposed us to this latest trend. If we desire to be close to saints we've never met, how much more will we desire to stay close to those we love and have known for a lifetime, even when they've gone home to God? It's important that we understand and uphold the Church's teaching on the subject. +

***Does our fascination with relics predispose us to choose cremation?***

**PRAYER**

***Lord, draw me close to your heart that I may come to know and love you more deeply.***

—From *Peaceful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 18–23

**Monday, Weekday:**

Heb 5:1–10 / Mk 2:18–22

**Tuesday, Weekday:**

Heb 6:10–20 / Mk 2:23–28

**Wednesday, Weekday:**

Heb 7:1–3, 15–17 / Mk 3:1–6


**Thursday, St. Agnes:**

Heb 7:25–8:6 / Mk 3:7–12

**Friday, Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children:** Heb 8:6–13 / Mk 3:13–19

**Saturday, Weekday:**

Heb 9:2–3, 11–14 / Mk 3:20–21

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January 17, 2021

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# Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
January 24, 2021

## God's Patient Call

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

The Sistine Chapel fresco, *The Prophet Jonah*, is directly above *The Last Judgment*. Michelangelo chooses to depict Jonah for his theological connection to Jesus, who said, "Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (Matthew 18:40).

Unlike Jesus, Jonah initially balks at God's call until he grudgingly accepts and preaches to the city of Nineveh. In his rebellion, he gets in a boat and goes the opposite direction from where God was calling. Eventually he was thrown

overboard and swallowed by the fish, seen painted at his side. After a three-night stomachache, the fish spewed Jonah up on the shore, back where he had started.

Jonah looks up to heaven with a weary longing, which might denote his melancholy personality. The fig tree further reinforces his weakness because it recalls the episode when Jonah lay under the fig tree in depression and lethargy.

Like Peter and Andrew, James and John, God entered Jonah's life and called him. Unlike the apostles, it took him a while to say yes. We can also be slow to respond to the invitation of God in our soul, whether in big or small things. Perhaps the attraction of the world or fear of sacrifice keeps us from saying yes. Yet his voice is constant and persistent.

Michelangelo paints Jonah dangling above *The Last Judgment* as if to subtly say, you are cordially invited to say yes to God's patient callings...while you still have time. +

## Sunday Readings

### Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.

### 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

I tell you, brothers, the time is running out....For the world in its present form is passing away.

### Mark 1:14-20

Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Then they abandoned their nets and followed him.

***We can be slow to respond to the invitation of God in our soul, whether in big or small things.***

## A Word from Pope Francis

In these, our troubled times, rent by the tragedies of war and menaced by the baneful tendency to accentuate differences and to incite conflict, may the Good News that in Jesus forgiveness triumphs over sin, life defeats death, and love conquers fear, be proclaimed to the world with renewed fervor.

—Letter recognizing missionary work, October 22, 2017



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What has God been calling me to do?
- Do I understand that putting off his voice is also putting off God's joy and goodness?

# Being Authentic to God

By Kathleen M. Basi

I have a theory about nurturing faith in the family. It goes like this: If a child's faith is an integral part of his or her everyday life—not just the overtly religious parts—it will become so central to that person's identity that he or she could never leave the Church because it would mean an abandoning of self. The question is, how do you accomplish that goal?

I believe the answer is twofold: authenticity and practicality.

First Corinthians 12 exhorts us to remember that our gifts are uniquely given by God and so is our calling. In my family, nurturing the faith in an authentic and practical way means leading a choir at Mass and teaching natural family planning with the kids sitting in the room with us. It means letting them watch the news and having no-question-off-limits discussions of what they see there. It means carrying snacks in the car to give to homeless men and women, digging into piggy banks to contribute to the family's Christmas charity, and regarding conservation and recycling as signs of Godly stewardship, not just civic responsibility.

In your family, an authentic, practical application of the faith might look quite different. It's not about doing what everyone else does. It's about being authentic to the gifts residing within individual households. It's about applying the faith to every moment of every day.



This isn't just for the kids, either. Adults cannot nurture in our children what we do not possess ourselves. Conversion is a lifelong process. When Pope Francis visited the United States, for instance, he challenged Catholics as well as nonbelievers. Did we listen? Did we revisit dearly held opinions in light of our identity as Catholic Christians?

Our children need to see us engaged in an authentic search for God, one that doesn't profess to have all the answers but instead constantly seeks his will over our own limited understanding of the world. They need to see us wrestling with concepts like forgiveness and "do unto others" in the mundane interactions that

make up the vast majority of life.

In this, they mirror the adult world. The Church suffers when its members pass judgment on others while failing to recognize the ways in which our worldly biases lead us away from the Gospel. The good news is that an authentic and practical application of the faith is the key not only to the next generation of the Church but also to evangelizing the world. +

*Our children need to see us engaged in a genuine search for God.*

**PRAYER**

*Lord, you call me to do the work of God in the world. Help me to say yes to your work of peace and reconciliation.*

—From *Peaceful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 25–30

**Monday**, Conversion of St. Paul:  
Acts 22:3–16 or Acts 9:1–22 / Mk 16:15–18


**Tuesday**, Sts. Timothy and Titus:  
2 Tm 1:1–8 or Ti 1:1–5 / Mk 3:31–35

**Wednesday**, Weekday:  
Heb 10:11–18 / Mk 4:1–20

**Thursday**, St. Thomas Aquinas:  
Heb 10:19–25 / Mk 4:21–25

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

**Saturday**, Weekday:  
Heb 11:1–2, 8–19 / Mk 4:35–41

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# Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
January 31, 2021

## Progress Isn't Always Easy

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Jesus' miracles and preaching were part of what convinced people that he was the Son of God. He spoke like no other and then backed up his words with amazing and wonderful actions. For example, he confronted evil spirits and cast them out. The people were amazed and saw this as evidence of his divinity, because no one had absolute power over evil—except God himself. This is a power the Church continues to practice today through the ministry of healing and exorcism.

Jesus did not want to see people suffer under the power of Satan but rather wanted them to live full and happy

lives. "I came that they might have life and have it abundantly," Jesus said in John 10:10. This strong desire of Jesus to heal and save drove him to tirelessly preach and do good. And because of this combination of goodness and power in his person, his fame spread. Yet the message he preached was challenging and demanding. Eventually many preferred to silence that good, powerful, but demanding voice.

Today, like Jesus, the Church still longs for nothing less than humanity's complete health and happiness. Yet, at times, the path to that human progress is not the easiest. Like temperamental children are chided by loving parents to eat healthy food rather than just what they like, so the good and powerful voice and actions of the Church are challenged.

We find our full flourishing as human beings and as Catholics by embracing Jesus' words and desires for us. +

## Sunday Readings

### Deuteronomy 18:15–20

If a prophet presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.

### 1 Corinthians 7:32–35

I should like you to be free of anxieties.

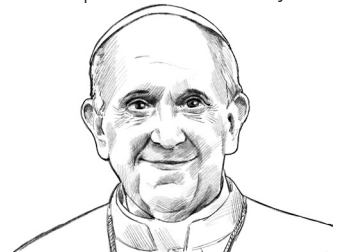
### Mark 1:21–28

Jesus...said, "Quiet! Come out of him!"...He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.

## A Word from Pope Francis

We must never forget that true power, at any level, is service, whose bright summit is upon the cross.... Although man frequently equates authority with control, dominion, success, for God authority is always synonymous with service, humility, love. It means entering the logic of Jesus who kneels to wash the Apostles' feet.

—Address to International Union of Superiors General, May 8, 2013



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Have I ever been tricked into eating spiritually unhealthy "moral junk food"?
- Have I thanked God for times of health and happiness?

# Beautiful Diversity

By Kathleen M. Basi

*“...Grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ” (from Eucharistic Prayer III).*

The term “relativism” gets a lot of attention in Catholic circles these days. The idea of not drawing a distinct line between right and wrong contradicts everything we believe as Christians. It’s a dangerous threat.

But equally dangerous is the opposite: fundamentalism. We are often tempted to view every issue, conflict, and situation in black-and-white, defining right and wrong in circumstances where there is more than one right answer.

The beauty of the Catholic faith is its depth, complexity, and nuance. These characteristics make it possible for a richly diverse collection of humanity to unite under one Creed. But unity doesn’t necessarily require strict uniformity. All too often, we try to apply fundamentalist principles to things that are not critical to the faith and, in so doing, create division instead of unity within the body of Christ.

Perhaps the clearest example is what is sometimes referred to as the “liturgy wars.” Mostly they seem to swirl around music choices. The organ-and-chant crowd insists that guitars and drums are unfit for Catholic worship. Meanwhile, the guitar-and-drum group dismisses centuries of tradition out of hand.



Neither position acknowledges the fact that the diversity of the Church accepts, and indeed needs, both tradition and enculturation.

If you attend Mass in a place where everybody looks basically like you, it’s easy to forget that we are a Church whose members span every race, language, and culture on the planet. Within that rich tapestry springs diversity even more beautiful and complex. Each of us is shaped by our nature and by life experiences too numerous to count. We all have our own job to do in God’s plan, for which we are uniquely qualified by virtue of who we are, what we’ve learned, and what we’ve experienced.

When we consider all this, it should

be obvious that it’s neither necessary nor desirable to try to force the entire body of Christ to walk in the exact same footprints. Yes, there are fundamentals that cannot be compromised. Yes, relativism is a threat we cannot afford to underestimate in our Church and, especially, in our hearts. But so is the opposite extreme. If we truly hope to “become one body, one Spirit in Christ,” as the third Eucharistic Prayer says, we have to embrace not only what unites us, but also what makes us unique. +

***We must create unity,  
not division within  
the body of Christ.***

**PRAYER**

*Lord, you created me to live  
in the freedom of your love.  
Give me the courage to share  
your love with all people.*

—From *Peaceful Meditations for Every Day  
in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage  
and Mary Ann McSweeney

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## WEEKDAY READINGS

February 1–6

**Monday, Weekday:**

Heb 11:32–40 / Mk 5:1–20

**Tuesday, Presentation of the Lord: Mal 3:1–4 /**

Heb 2:14–18 / Lk 2:22–40 or 2:22–32

**Wednesday, Weekday:**

Heb 12:4–7, 11–15 / Mk 6:1–6

**Thursday, Weekday:**

Heb 12:18–19, 21–24 / Mk 6:7–13

**Friday, St. Agatha:**

Heb 13:1–8 / Mk 6:14–29

**Saturday, St. Paul Miki and Companions:**

Heb 13:15–17, 20–21 / Mk 6:30–34

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Bringing Home  
the **Word**   
January 31, 2021

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