



# Bringing Home the Word

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
February 7, 2021

## Offering the Gospel to All

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

If you asked Jesus what he did while on earth, I believe he would say, “preached and healed.” Those were his missions. He had good news to share and a longing to convince his listeners of the truth of this gospel of love and freedom. He was moved because he saw them like sheep without a shepherd. The Gospels are nothing other than documentation of Jesus’ efforts to preach the gospel.

Paul shared Christ’s ardor. He was entrusted with preaching to the Gentiles the truth of the Gospel, and he did all he could to convince them of his message.

He says he became all things to all, to save at least some. He worked hard during the day so he could pay his own way and offer his message for free. He adapted himself to his audience—their customs and ways of thinking—so they wouldn’t take offense at him, closing their hearts to his message.

How many missionaries have used this same approach? Just think of the French Jesuits Sts. Jean de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues of the Great Lakes region, St. Junípero Serra in the West, or Mother Cabrini serving European immigrants on the East Coast. They learned new languages, ate new foods, and adopted new traditions to insert themselves into these cultures and share the gospel. They took a page out of Paul’s book, becoming all things to all to save at least some.

We are modern-day apostles and missionaries. Let’s take a page out of Paul’s book, and offer this gospel of hope and love to so many souls in need. +

### Sunday Readings

#### Job 7:1–4, 6–7

Is not life on earth a drudgery, / its days like those of a hireling?

#### 1 Corinthians 9:16–19, 22–23

If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me.

#### Mark 1:29–39

[Jesus said,] “Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.”

***Paul adapted himself to his audience’s customs and ways of thinking so they wouldn’t take offense at him.***

### A Word from Pope Francis

Jesus sends his disciples out to all nations...We too were part of all those people of two thousand years ago. Jesus did not provide a short list of who is, or is not, worthy of receiving his message and his presence. Instead, he always embraced life as he saw it.

—Canonization of Fr. Junípero Serra, September 23, 2015



### REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- When you look around, what needs for the gospel of love do you see?
- Which of these needs can you fill as Jesus’ apostle?

# In the Divine Potter's Hands

By Johan van Parys

**M**y father was a great storyteller. Every night he read from the Bible. He had the talent to depict biblical scenes in such a way that we could see them unfold in our minds' eyes.

I clearly remember the night he read the creation story to us. Though I loved all the other stories, I was mostly intrigued by the creation of Adam. I visualized God collecting the clay before lovingly molding Adam and blowing life into him. This image of God as primordial potter molded and shaped *me* as well.

There is something wholesome, something sacred, about pottery. Pottery is about clay, and clay is about soil—in Adam's case, primordial soil.

Pottery, of course, is not only about clay; it also bears the imprint of the potter's hands. A potter takes the clay and judges its quality and its consistency. She carefully places a lump of clay on the potter's wheel and starts spinning it. She works the clay with her skillful hands as the undefined mass of clay takes shape, never giving up on the clay, starting over until she is pleased with the result.

As every cup bears the imprint of its maker's hands, so each member of the human race bears the imprint of the Divine Potter's hands. But unlike a cup, which can't be changed once it's fired, humans can be reshaped. God shaped humans in his own image, and he continues to mold and remold us.



In the sacred liturgy, we're molded and remolded by God; this is our time to worship and God's time to shape.

During the celebration of the liturgy, God molds us into the Body of Christ. The liturgy is the divine hands, and we are the clay. Sunday after Sunday, we're shaped and reshaped. In liturgy upon liturgy, God focuses and refocuses us on what is right. During our ongoing catechesis, we have the opportunity to learn more about what God has in mind for us as it is revealed to us through Scripture and Tradition. The goal, of course, is to go into the world and do what is right in the eyes of God.

Any potter knows it's difficult to

create the perfect shape and that it takes a long time to get it just right. Similarly, becoming a good Christian isn't an easy task. It takes a lifelong commitment to celebrate the liturgy and to engage in learning so we can live a truly Christian life. However, thanks to God's persistence and unflinching commitment to keep shaping and reshaping us, one day we'll be molded into perfect shape as members of the Body of Christ. +

***Unlike a cup, which can't be changed once it is fired, humans can be reshaped.***

**PRAYER**

***Lord, you hear the cry of the poor.  
Hear my cry for inner peace and happiness.***

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

## WEEKDAY READINGS

February 8–13

**Monday, Weekday:**

Gn 1:1–19 / Mk 6:53–56

**Tuesday, Weekday:**

Gn 1:20–2:4a / Mk 7:1–13

**Wednesday, St. Scholastica:**

Gn 2:4b–9, 15–17 / Mk 7:14–23

**Thursday, Weekday:**


Gn 2:18–25 / Mk 7:24–30

**Friday, Weekday:**

Gn 3:1–8 / Mk 7:31–37

**Saturday, Weekday:**

Gn 3:9–24 / Mk 8:1–10

Bringing Home  
the **Word** 

February 7, 2021

© 2021 Liguori Publications, a ministry of the Redemptorists. One Liguori Drive, Liguori, MO 63057. Scripture quotations in this publication are from the *New American Bible*, revised edition, © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, DC. The Pope Francis quotation is used with permission and copyright © 2020 *Libreria Editrice Vaticana*. All rights reserved. 1-800-325-9521. Liguori.org.