



Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday of Easter (C)
May 11, 2025

Every Nation, Race, People, and Tongue

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Today's readings tell us of the Church's universality. The Church might have been born of the people of Israel, but, from its beginning, it was meant to spread throughout the world—and it has.

The first reading describes the success that Paul and Barnabas enjoyed in cities in what today is Turkey. Believing that Jesus was the fulfillment of Jewish expectation, these missionaries naturally went first to the synagogues, where they preached to the Jewish people and those who had recently converted to Judaism.

The next week, the entire city came to hear them. This angered many of the

Jewish people. The text says that this was because they were jealous of Paul and Barnabas. Jealous of what?

We know that many Jewish Christians believed that converts had to accept the practices of Judaism before they were considered full members of the Jesus movement. (See Acts 15:1.) They maintained that everyone should be the same. Mention of converts in this story suggests this may have been the issue. Whatever the problem might have been, the movement spread, adapting itself as it did.

The vision reported in Revelation assures us that, in the end, the spread of the gospel will see completion. It will have been preached to and accepted by "every nation, race, people, and tongue" (7:9). This speaks of genuine universality rather than uniformity. This is unity among diversity. The distinctiveness of nation, race, people, and tongue will be respected, because what really unites them is the "blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14). †

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Sunday Readings

Acts 13:14, 43–52

The word of the Lord continued to spread through the whole region.

Revelation 7:9, 14b–17

I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue.

John 10:27–30

[Jesus said,] "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

A Word from Pope Francis

What do those who follow Christ do? They go where he goes.... They go to seek those who are lost...take to heart the situation of those who suffer... they reach out their hands to their neighbors.... May the Holy Virgin help us listen to Christ, know him always more, and follow him on the way of service.

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 8, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How open am I to people of other nations, races, or languages?
- What could I learn from people with different backgrounds?



Truly Encountering the Poor

Anthony J. Gittins

People on the margins of society, whose voices are not commonly heard in theological circles, may have as much to offer as they have to receive. Because they can “tell it

like it is,” we simply cannot claim not to have heard the cries of the poor of which the psalmist speaks so often (Psalms 10:12; 34:7; 130:1). God’s own poor—the *anawim*, the remnant, the virtually invisible and usually overlooked—can help remove the scales from our eyes and allow us to look into their faces. These are, after all, the faces, in our own time and place, of the very people Jesus privileged in his. They can become the catalyst for our own conversion.

At its heart, ministry is encounter. Viktor Frankl was exactly right: to love, you must encounter. People of faith must do better than acknowledge “the poor” as a class: we must make the invisible visible by our encounters. Ministry is also attending to. The homeless poor have a human right to the care, compassion, and attentiveness of others. All who desire to be among those others must move beyond notional Christianity; they will soon discover how difficult it is truly to encounter others and to love their neighbor as they love themselves. †

[The poor] can become the catalyst for our own conversion.

From *Where There’s Hope There’s Life: Women’s Stories of Homelessness and Survival* by Anthony J. Gittins, Liguori Publications (814105). To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “Building Communion in Culturally Diverse Parishes” by Hosffman Ospino, PhD

Culturally diverse parishes are defined as faith communities that normally celebrate Mass in at least two languages—most in English and another language—and have large concentrations of immigrant Catholics and/or Catholics who self-identify with non-majority racial/ethnic groups. During the latter half of the twentieth century and the first two decades of the twenty-first, millions of Catholic immigrants came to the United States. Today, immigrants represent about 25 percent of US Catholics. Most originate from Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Euro-American, English-speaking Catholics now share parishes with Catholics from various language and cultural groups. Today, nearly 40 percent of all Catholic parishes in the country are culturally diverse, representing nearly 6,500 parishes.

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



Lord Jesus, please give me the grace to greet each person I meet as part of your flock—a person you love and invite me to welcome into my life. Amen! Alleluia!

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 12–17

Monday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 11:1–18 / Jn 10:1–10

Tuesday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 11:19–26 / Jn 10:22–30

Wednesday, St. Matthias:
Acts 1:15–17, 20–26 / Jn 15:9–17

Thursday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 13:13–25 / Jn 13:16–20

Friday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 13:26–33 / Jn 14:1–6

Saturday, Easter Weekday:
Acts 13:44–52 / Jn 14:7–14



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