



# Bringing Home the Word

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

July 5, 2020

## Childlike Faith

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

**H**umble souls have a special ability to see things. We exclaim, “Out of the mouth of babes” when kids say the darnedest (and most profound) things (Matthew 21:16 and Psalm 8:2-3). What their uncluttered minds can catch and express with blatant honesty can be refreshing and funny.

Jesus enjoys this simplicity as well. He rejoices because, while “the wise and the learned” have rejected his preaching and mighty deeds, the childlike have embraced them. They are not afraid of the implications; they simply are amazed, impressed, and accept that no one but

God could do such things. Perhaps this is why artists often depict angels like little children!

Jesus can speak of heavenly mysteries because he is the Son. The Father and he are one and share in the fullness of knowledge. Christ sits in glory surrounded by cherubs and angels, yet comes down to reveal what the Father has given him. Let’s embrace all of his revealed word with childlike faith and not just pick and choose what suits us.

Another characteristic of little children is unending energy. It comes partly from their age but also endures because they don’t waste energy worrying or thinking about things they cannot control. They don’t plan, project, or prioritize. They live in the grace of the present. We will find that as we live simply and give our burdens to Jesus, we live more rested, peaceful lives. Let’s take on his childlike humility, which makes the burdensome easy and light. +

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## A Word from Pope Francis

To do good...that is what God wants. He, who became small for our sake, asks us to offer something for the least of his brothers and sisters. Who are they? They are those who have nothing to give in return, the needy, the hungry, the stranger, the prisoner, the poor.

—Homily, January 6, 2018



## Sunday Readings

### Zechariah 9:9-10

Behold: your king is coming to you ...Humble, and riding on a donkey.

### Romans 8:9, 11-13

If you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

### Matthew 11:25-30

[Jesus said,] “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.”

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How can I yoke myself to Jesus, my Lord and king?
- What burdens, stressors, or disappointments can I hand over to God this week?

# Can We Be Saints of the Sandwich Generation?

By Gloria Hutchinson

When my mother died, she left behind an “orphan.” He was eighty and beginning to lose his way. Pop needed parenting, and we were the candidates. The Fourth Commandment loomed large as we faced honoring our father while supporting our son in college, continuing our full-time jobs, and regularly traveling across three states to provide Pop’s care.

I can empathize with “the sandwich generation.” It’s an apt label for the adult children who are getting squeezed between elderly parents and at-home children. Millions of Americans are currently attempting to manage their parents’ needs while supporting their children.

As Catholics, we don’t have to wonder what is expected of us. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says this about the responsibilities of grown children to their parents: “As much as they can, they must give them material and moral support in old age and in times of illness, loneliness, or distress” (CCC 2218). Notice the wisdom of “as much as they can.” My husband, our son, and I struggled to do our best in providing for Pop as his dementia worsened. I repeatedly had to consult my conscience in deciding how



much we could do, and how much had to be done by paid surrogates.

Lack of support is a common complaint of the sandwich generation in whom resentment may rise like bread dough. We need help. What we often get are critical questions from the sidelines about what is being done for “poor Mom” or “poor

Dad.” We need rest. What we often get are desperate late-night calls from worried elders and cancellations from caregivers who need time off.

## Sustaining the Sandwich People

Some parishes have already recognized the sandwich generation as fertile ground for pastoral care. Those who are parenting their children *and* nursing their parents can be bowled over by multiple expectations from young and old alike. The wise, compassionate Christian community offers educational workshops on elder care and provides respite care and spiritual support groups to sustain the sandwich people.

The wise also recognize the daily lives of this caregiver group as a graduate school for saints-in-progress. Having been nourished as children by our parents’ love, we now gladly take up the vocation of shepherding them as their needs require.

We welcome the opportunity to

embody Sirach’s proverb: “With your whole heart honor your father; your mother’s birth pangs do not forget” (7:27). We redouble our commitment when we hear, “Do not cast me aside in my old age; / as my strength fails, do not forsake me” (Psalm 71:9).

As we accompanied my father through the inevitable stages of semi-independent living, at-home care and, finally, a skilled nursing facility, we grew closer to him in his weakness than we ever had in his strength. I never would have survived the twelve-year journey with my sanity intact had I not been refreshed by God’s grace. A primary channel of that grace was the guidance and companionship of the saints. For example, when I muttered angrily about those who seemed to care so little for Pop, Francis of Assisi calmly noted, “Where there is patience and humility, there is neither anger nor vexation.” Or, when I became depressed over my lack of time for spiritual reading, Charles Borromeo pragmatically advised, “Do not give yourself so completely that you have nothing left for yourself.”

For us “saints-in-training,” the advice of the saints will see us through the sandwich generation and to that final banqueting table where the banner over us, our parents, and our children will be love. +



*Lord, you give rest to the weary of heart. Help me create space in my life to rest in your presence.*

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

## WEEKDAY READINGS

July 6–11

**Monday, Weekday:**  
Hos 2:16, 17b–18, 21–22 / Mt 9:18–26

**Tuesday, Weekday:**  
Hos 8:4–7, 11–13 / Mt 9:32–38

**Wednesday, Weekday:**  
Hos 10:1–3, 7–8, 12 / Mt 10:1–7

**Thursday, Weekday:**  
Hos 11:1–4, 8e–9 / Mt 10:7–15

**Friday, Weekday:**  
Hos 14:2–10 / Mt 10:16–23

**Saturday, St. Benedict:**  
Is 6:1–8 / Mt 10:24–33