



# Bringing Home the Word

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time | October 1, 2017

## Consensus With Christ

By Mary Katherine Deeley

**M**any committees and work teams believe the ideal way to make a decision is by consensus. Though time-consuming, consensus assures that everyone is heard and that all have been given a chance to come to the same point of view. Everyone owns the decision and works to support it.

Saint Paul gives a Christian spin to the whole idea of consensus—not for making decisions but for living as Christ would have us live. The apostle wants us to have the same attitude Jesus had.

For Christians, “the same attitude” means we share the same Spirit, have compassion and sympathy for one another, set aside our own interests, and look to the interests of others.

“Wait,” you say. “Does that mean I can never say what I want?” No, but it does mean trusting others to care for your interests just as you care for theirs.

This is not easy for us, but Paul is adamant: “Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus.” There’s the difference. In the corporate world, consensus is about coming to the same conclusion. In the Christian life, consensus means putting on the one mind of Christ.

If we can do that, we can empty ourselves for the sake of others, take the risk to love and care for others, and live in the utter confidence that Christ dwells in us.

Where does such confidence come from? From Christ himself, who loved us from the very beginning and who invited us through baptism to be one with him.

That’s an idea we can all support. †

*Christians share the  
same Spirit...and look to  
the interests of others.*

## Sunday Readings

### Ezekiel 18:25–28

But if the wicked turn from the wickedness they did and do what is right and just, they save their lives.

### Philippians 2:1–11 or 2:1–5

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus.

### Matthew 21:28–32

[Jesus said,] “When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him.”

## A Word From Pope Francis

Priestly joy is a joy which is sister to obedience....It is likewise an obedience to the Church in service....The availability of her priests makes the Church a house with open doors, a refuge for sinners, a home for people living on the streets, a place of loving care for the sick, a camp for the young....Wherever God’s people have desires or needs, there is the priest, who knows how to listen and feels a loving mandate from Christ who sends him to relieve that need with mercy.

—Homily,  
Holy Thursday,  
April 17, 2014



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- Am I fair to God by giving him thanksgiving, adoration, and obedience for his love?
- Am I fair to others by offering them gratitude and humble kindness?



# Christ Jesus Is Always Our Starting Point

By Fr. Thomas Richstatter, OFM

**B**eing Catholic starts with Jesus Christ. In fact, everything begins with Christ. He is “the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Revelation 22:13). He is “the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15).

Of course, I wasn’t around before the creation, but from my perspective I can imagine things happening something like this: God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—was sitting at breakfast when God the Father said, “Being God is wonderful, but eternity can sure get boring.” “So let’s do something different,” the Son replied. “Let’s create something out of nothing!” The Father asked, “Can we do that?” “Sure,” said the Spirit, “we’re God, aren’t we?” The Father said, “OK, what shall we make?”

And (this is the crucial point) what did God make? Jesus Christ—the firstborn of creation, the Word through

whom God made everything else that exists.

If you are not accustomed to thinking of Jesus in this way, an analogy may help. Years ago when I was teaching at a seminary, one popular hobby among the students was making model airplanes. On winter evenings the hobby shop would be crowded with boys gluing together various shapes of balsa wood pinned to diagrams on a table.

When asked, “What are you making?” the seminarians never said, “I am gluing piece A7 to H5.” One might respond, “I am making a P-51 Mustang.” From the beginning, their minds were on the finished project. Similarly, if you asked God at the creation, “What are you making?” he would have responded: “We’re making Jesus Christ.”

### God’s Masterpiece

Jesus is God’s masterpiece. God created Christ out of love, and Christ returned perfect love to God. We can see this in

everything Jesus said and did while he walked on earth. We see this most clearly in Jesus humbling himself, “becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8). And on the cross “he handed over the spirit” (John 19:30) to the Church so that we who are baptized put on Christ and become his body.

At Mass we ask God to “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.” Our incorporation into Christ is the principal petition at every Eucharist. We pray that we, to paraphrase St. Augustine, be what we see on the altar and receive what we are—Christ’s body. Through Christ, in him, with him, our lives have meaning. We live for more than ourselves. We are taken up into that great, mysterious plan of God that is Jesus Christ. †

## GOD’S COWORKERS

And what is our role in God’s plan? Our mission is reconciliation. While God has reconciled all things in Christ, “making peace by the blood of his cross” (Colossians 1:20), with our incorporation into Christ, God has “given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18). We are to improve the quality of life for all, to alleviate hunger and disease, injustice and conflict.

And while this task may seem impossible, we Catholics know that it is possible. In fact, we know that it will be achieved because it is God’s plan. This is what gives us our inherent Catholic optimism. We are optimistic because we know that grace is more original than sin. God’s great plan of love did not start with Adam and Eve, the fruit, or the snake, but with Jesus. Everything starts with Jesus. † –Fr. Thomas Richstatter, OFM

## WEEKDAY READINGS

October 2–7

Mon. The Holy Guardian Angels:  
Zec 8:1–8 / Mt 18:1–5, 10


Tue. Weekday:  
Zec 8:20–23 / Lk 9:51–56

Wed. St. Francis of Assisi:  
Neh 2:1–8 / Lk 9:57–62

Thu. Weekday:  
Neh 8:1–4a, 5–6, 7b–12 / Lk 10:1–12

Fri. Weekday:  
Bar 1:15–22 / Lk 10:13–16

Sat. Our Lady of the Rosary:  
Bar 4:5–12, 27–29 / Lk 10:17–24



Lord, I am grateful for your example of humble service toward others. Help me to be a humble and loving person toward all people.

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