

INTRODUCTION



Let us enable the Church to experience the unfathomable riches of the risen Lord's word.

Before he died, and before the Israelites entered the promised land, Moses spoke to the people, urging them to give their wholehearted commitment to God. And he reminded them that the word of God “is not too wondrous or remote for you...No, it is something very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it” (Deut 30:11, 14).

By declaring the “Sunday of the Word of God,” Pope Francis is reminding us of what Moses said so long ago and offering all in the Church a wonderful opportunity to let the Scripture become ever more living and active in our lives.

We hope these short reflections and prayers, based on thoughts from Pope Francis’s letter establishing the “Sunday of the Word of God,” may inspire us all to become more active and enthusiastic listeners and doers of the word.

The quotes from Pope Francis were chosen by Deborah McCann, who also wrote the reflections and the “Ponder” and “Pray” pieces.

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*A profound
bond links
sacred Scripture
and the faith
of believers.*



SAMPLE Third
Publications

1 | TOGETHER ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

The most powerful example of the profound bond between Scripture and faith, says Pope Francis, is the story of the risen Jesus meeting the disciples on the road to Emmaus (see Luke 24:13–35). If we are truly to nourish our faith, we have to listen attentively to God’s word, as those two disciples did, and be ready to be transformed. When we make Scripture an ever-deeper part of our prayer and listen for what Jesus is saying to us in the readings at Mass, our eyes will be opened, and our hearts will burn within us at coming to know the Lord, whom we receive in the “breaking of the bread,” the Eucharist.

PONDER

What connections do I see between the readings I hear at Mass and the Eucharist I receive at Mass? How might they each be inviting me to new life?

PRAY

God of word and sacrament, open my eyes, ears, and heart to know you, love you, and follow you.

*The Bible,
the book of
the Lord's people,
unites believers
and makes them
one people.*



2 | NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK...

It is no accident that Pope Francis chose the Sunday closest to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity to observe this celebration of God's word. He also ties it to closer sharing with our Jewish brothers and sisters, giving equal emphasis to the Old Testament. When we truly listen to the word of God, it becomes clear that we are meant to be one family of God's children. Pope Francis is calling here for a deeper response to the Second Vatican Council's call for unity among all who love God. Our readings at Mass from both the Old and New Testaments point the way.

PONDER

Jesus prayed to God for us, asking that we all might be one. How might I reach out today in my own life to help his prayer be fulfilled?

PRAY

God of word and sacrament, help me to listen well so that I may grow closer to all of your children.

*We need to grow
in knowledge and love
of the Lord, speaking
to us through his word
and the breaking
of bread.*



3 | ONLY THE BEGINNING

While Pope Francis has chosen a specific Sunday to celebrate God's word, he is insistent that this is only the launching pad for a continual exploration of how God is speaking to us. God does not speak to us once for all, but is always revealing new and unexpected layers of meaning. Our Sunday readings, broken into a three-year cycle, should not and will not have the same meaning for us when we hear them again the next time they come around. We must develop a closer relationship with Scripture, Pope Francis says, to keep our hearts from growing cold, and to keep us ever aware and awake to what God is saying to us.

PONDER

How have I changed in the last ten years?

Why might I hear Scripture differently now?

PRAY

God of word and sacrament, let me always be open to all that you are trying to teach me.