



# Bringing Home the Word †

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
November 15, 2015

## Follow God's Recipe

By Janel Esker

I've never been creative, but I do enjoy baking. It allows me to create something while following a strict set of instructions, which appeals to my love of organization. Most recipes I use come with a picture of the completed dessert in all its delicious glory. However, even if I adhere religiously to the recipe, my baked creations rarely look like the pictures. Maybe I didn't whisk the eggs briskly enough or twist the frosting tube just so.

It's frustrating not to know exactly how my dessert will look. However, as long as I put the right ingredients in, the result

usually tastes great. Dessert is dessert—sugar always triumphs in the end!

The readings we're given at the end of the liturgical year are focused on another kind of end—the end of the world. The varying descriptions of this “end time” usually include cosmic battles between good and evil that can leave us feeling confused, uncertain, and even frightened. As with baking, we can't know exactly how the events of this end time will play out.

But what we hear consistently from Jesus is that no matter how the events occur, good will triumph over evil. The world is ultimately in God's hands, and God (and good) will emerge victorious.

Our challenge, then, is to trust God and be prepared to follow the recipe, so to speak. The key ingredients: recognition of our mortality and a desire to fervently follow the Lord. Our lives are brief, and we can't delay discipleship. We need to be centered in God now. By sticking to the recipe today, we can remain confident that God will welcome us into his kingdom in the end. †

## A Word From Pope Francis

As Archbishop of Buenos Aires I experienced two catastrophes like this one: a fire in a dance hall, where a pop music concert was being held, and 193 persons died. Another time, a train disaster—I believe 120 people died. At the time, I felt the same way: a need to draw close. Human suffering is powerful, and if at these sad times we draw closer, we help one another greatly.



—In-flight news conference (from Korea to Rome), August 18, 2014

## PRAYER

Lord, I am grateful you keep me safe in your love. You are my hope. Help me to trust you.

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

## Sunday Readings

### Daniel 12:1–3

“Many of those who sleep...shall awake; Some to everlasting life....”

### Hebrews 10:11–14, 18

“This one offered one sacrifice for sins, and took his seat forever at the right hand of God.”

### Mark 13:24–32

“When you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates.”

# God Makes All Things New

By Paige Byrne Shortal

I wanted to be a writer when I was still a little girl. Dad was a newspaperman and, longing to imitate him, I learned to type on his old manual Royal typewriter. I still cannot set down a drink to the right of my keyboard because, as I learned the hard way, the carriage return would send it flying. (I can just hear my children: “What’s a carriage return?”)

My going-away-to-college present was a portable electric Hermes typewriter in a cute mint-green case, and I was thrilled. Then I discovered the IBM Selectric. On that baby I could type 110 wpm (that’s words per minute) with no mistakes. In the eighties, I had the first personal computer at the parish office. Now I carry my laptop to the coffee shop (or occasionally even back to bed) and email my column to my editor, sometimes without seeing it on paper until the magazine arrives in my mailbox.

The world changes, and it’s changing faster all the time. My husband and I like to make note of the things we say today that would make no sense to our grandparents. “Fast food,” for example. Or, “Do you want to rent a movie?” Or, “You can follow his blog.” Or my husband’s favorite: “I can’t find my phone.”

A few weeks back I read a note from my granddaughter’s school that would have mystified my grandparents. It read, “We are asking you to provide a nonperishable snack to be stored in



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How do I relate to and share God’s Word?
- How do I remain connected to Christ and others?

your child’s homeroom in the event of a security lock-down.”

*Security lock-down?* A few days later I was talking with some mommies at the park. One remarked that her son is still terrified of the school fire drill (he hates noise), but he doesn’t have any trouble with the lock-down drill. I must have looked confused, so she elaborated. When the principal announces “Code

Red” over the PA system, the teacher dims the lights and locks the door while the kids hurry into the closet. In rooms without a closet, there is a hiding place where they can’t be seen through the glass in the hall door. The teacher closes the window blinds and joins the huddled kids until the all-clear is sounded.

Maybe the world doesn’t change nearly enough. Our grandparents endured their 9/11, which they called Pearl Harbor, followed by another “war to end all wars”; their economic meltdown, which they called the Crash of 1929, was followed by the Great Depression.

Today we prepare for terrorist attacks, school shootings, and send snacks for our children to eat in the closet. When I was in grade school, we practiced “duck and cover” drills in the event of nuclear war. I wasn’t traumatized by those rehearsals for the end of the world because the adults did a good job of maintaining a sense of normalcy.

We’re made for peace and goodwill, and if we can’t have peace and goodwill we at least try to keep our children innocent and untroubled, even if it means making a game out of the unthinkable and providing a snack for the end of the world.

God promises to make all things new. Forecast in Isaiah, confirmed in the Book of Revelation, we are assured that God will wipe every tear from our eyes “and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain” (21:4). Until then, we must be as much like God as possible—feeding our little ones, creating peace, doing the best we can to make the world as it should be.

## WEEKDAY READINGS

November 16–21

<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Weekday: 1 Maccabees 1:10–15, 41–43, 54–57, 62–63 / Luke 18:35–43</i>	<i>Thu.</i>	<i>Weekday: 1 Maccabees 2:15–29 / Luke 19:41–44</i>
<i>Tue.</i>	<i>St. Elizabeth of Hungary: 2 Maccabees 6:18–31 / Luke 19:1–10</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Weekday: 1 Maccabees 4:36–37, 52–59 / Luke 19:45–48</i>
<i>Wed.</i>	<i>Weekday: 2 Maccabees 7:1, 20–31 / Luke 19:11–28</i>	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary: 1 Maccabees 6:1–13 / Luke 20:27–40</i>