

Jesus' Coming Down Among Us

Marc Chagall, a painter in the late last century and one of the favorites of Pope Francis, shows Jesus' crucifixion as a global mystery. It is not just an event in the past. Jesus is still coming down among the throngs of needy souls of the modern day, laying down his life and accompanying them in their sufferings.

The Gospel of John uses this term of “coming down” to take up the theme of the Incarnation. Jesus left his heavenly home and came down among us. He lowered himself to dirty his feet along the tortuous routes on which humanity travels. He is not unapproachable, far from the sufferings of his followers, but has become like them in all things but sin. He knows the hunger and needs of his people.

This is nothing new for God. He came down to walk in the Garden with Adam and Eve. He came down to see the people building the Tower of Babel. He came down to Moses in the burning bush and in giving the Ten Commandments. And he came down to console and feed Elijah, who was despairing of his life. He gave Elijah food for his journey, strengthening him to travel in the desert.

In the Eucharist, Jesus comes down to you today to carry your



Piece: *The Martyr*, 1970
Artist: Marc Chagall
Location: Vatican Museums

For Reflection

Jesus comes down to be with me. Am I available in my heart to be with him?

burdens and give you his life. He urges us to get up, eat. He is the Living Bread come down from heaven that, if we unite with him in holy Communion, he will give us his divine force and we will live eternally with him.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

[Jesus said,] “I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

John 6:51

Calendar

Monday

August 13

Weekday

Ez 1:2–5, 24–28c

Mt 17:22–27

Tuesday

August 14

St. Maximilian Kolbe,

Priest and Martyr

Ez 2:8–3:4

Mt 18:1–5, 10, 12–14

Wednesday

August 15

Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin Mary

Rv 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab

1 Cor 15:20–27

Lk 1:39–56

Thursday

August 16

Weekday

Ez 12:1–12

Mt 18:21–19:1

Friday

August 17

Weekday

Ez 16:1–15, 60, 63

or Ez 16:59–63

Mt 19:3–12

Saturday

August 18

Weekday

Ez 18:1–10, 13b, 30–32

Mt 19:13–15

Sunday

August 19

Twentieth Sunday in
Ordinary Time

Prv 9:1–6

Eph 5:15–20

Jn 6:51–58

Dear Padre,

What does *doxology* mean?

The verses of a popular gospel song, “How Can I Keep From Singing,” speak of our struggle with sorrow and darkness, and the ultimate joy we have knowing “Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, / How can I keep from singing?” The songwriter joyfully sings out because of God’s love; it’s a doxology of praise.

Doxology, “a glorious utterance,” is a prayer the Church uses to give God praise. We have countless examples in Scripture, such as the psalms, which by their nature give God rightful praise. The Sanctus acclamation is another

example. Taken from Isaiah 6, it directs our focus to praising God for his power and might. On Christmas night we sing “Glory to God in the highest,” a doxology from the angels. The eucharistic prayers end with a doxology to the Trinity showing how “the Holy Spirit who thus awakens the memory of the Church then inspires thanksgiving and praise (*doxology*),” *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1103.

We use doxologies to emphasize our worship of God, acknowledging his rightful praise. Doxologies are part of major liturgical prayers such as the eucharistic prayers, the communion rite where we add a doxology following the Our Father. We

also add doxologies to our personal prayers. The rosary contains a well-known doxology called the *Gloria Patri*, a prayer praising the eternal nature and love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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A Word From Pope Francis

In Jesus his Son, God has come down among us. He took flesh and showed his solidarity with humanity in all things but sin....

He saw and embraced all of creation. But he did more than just see; he touched people’s lives, he spoke to them, helped them and showed kindness to those in need.

—World Day of Peace, January 1, 2016