

Dear Pat and Rafael,

I have just celebrated 40 years in the ministry, another 12 in preparation. While I never paid tuition for all the teaching and learning I received at your hand (and feet!), I must acknowledge that much of what you have shared goes waaaaay beyond text and commentary to matters of the heart and soul. Fr. Jim Smith (of "Celebration" fame) once shared that the most intimate thing preachers do is to preach. The splendor of that truth has finally dawned on me, I am a bit slow, I guess.

I am struck by Ezekiel's consumption of the scroll from today's liturgy, you must have been nourished with a mother's milk who loved the Lord dearly. May God hold you now in the palm of her hand.

Blessings, Mike Barrett

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Thank you for the update on Patricia Sanchez. As a subscriber to Celebration for nearly 40 years I always look forward to seeing if Pat is the author. I save 10 years of Celebration primarily, though not only, for her writing. She has been a true gift to me in priestly ministry.

On a personal note, I thank Pat for accepting a donor kidney. I was blessed to be able to donate a kidney to my sister 14 years ago, after she experienced dialysis for two years. She is doing fine! As Pat 'retires' I also do so in a few weeks after fifty years in priestly ministry. She is a true blessing to my ministry.

Blessings and peace,  
George F. Carlson

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Pat and Rafael Sanchez, Thank you for your tremendous contribution to my homilies over the years. I have read your work in Celebration for years and you have built my faith in the power of God's Word to create a new world. Ad multos annos! Fr. Justin Reis, Columbus, OH

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Hello,

I read the article in the October Celebration, "Thank you, Pat and Rafael Sanchez." I am sorry to hear about the retirement Pat's retirement. I have subscribed to Celebration for many year. Of all the commentaries, I found hers most helpful. Please extend my thanks to her, with best wishes for good health and happiness. May God bless her.

Sincerely, Fr. Mike Volkmer, CPPS  
St. Mary's Parish, Albia, IA

**Subject:** Note of thanks; Patricia Sanchez

Hello Patricia,

I am sad to hear about your retirement but I am happy to have been a recipient of your wonderful knowledge regarding the Scriptures. Your words have helped me tremendously with my Sunday homilies. You were my Number 2 source! (Sorry, the Holy Spirit comes first but I know that you will understand!)

God Bless you in your health and future years!

God Bless,  
Sunday Preacher

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Our deep thanks to Patricia Sanchez for her many years of providing us with scripture reflections. Hers was always the first we turned to. God bless her with improved health.

The Carmelite Nuns of Hudson, WI

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Dear Pat,

I discovered your Spirit-filled and scholarly Sunday Lectionary commentaries while a student in the Dominican Order in the early 1990s; and for the past 26 years you have been a constant source of inspiration for my preaching, but most importantly, for my own personal spiritual nourishment. I always use your commentaries as part of my personal Sunday Lectio Divina.

Your "solid scholarship and love for the church combined with a commitment to uncover the radical challenge of the Gospel for every age" make you a true and inspirational member of the Order of Preachers!

Prof. Alejandro Crosthwaite, OP

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Dear Patricia

I was so impressed with the article on your history and role in the Celebration publications. I have been using your and the other commentaries for @ 6 years to prepare my weekly homilies. THANK YOU!

I will continue to read the commentaries, as I saved them according to the liturgical year...so you will be appreciated, as long as I preach!

Peace  
Fr Lou

Dear Patricia,

Thank you so much for your commentaries. Your name is the first thing I look for when I go to the Celebration publication to prepare for Sunday liturgy. In the Celebration publication I have not experienced any other commentaries that incorporate the level of wholeness and wisdom that you bring to your writing. Most, in my opinion, are too ecclesiastical and do not contain your level of application to daily life, which I experience as consoling and encouraging. I appreciate how you give a succinct, yet thorough, historical and theological background as well as the guidance of practical application.

I, too, am a wife (now widow since December) and mother and have co-authored with Sr. Marie Schwan many guides for prayer focusing primarily on Ignatian spirituality. I am now 78 and dealing with grieving the loss of my husband as well as spinal degeneration. Scripture has always been, and especially at this time of my life, continues to be my love and sustenance. My call to scripture began when I was a very young girl sitting on my grandfather's knee as he daily read his bible and spent time in silence. He and my grandmother gave me an incredibly precious gift of scripture and contemplative prayer. Your writing enhanced that gift.

I feel a kinship with you in your writing...in this yet patriarchal church –somehow we and others like us have managed to speak. It is a bold testament to the Spirit's movement.

Thank you for persevering in these past years of your illness. I, and many, will miss you. I know God will continue to embrace you in love and grant you abundant graces in this quieter time of "retirement".

Sincerely, Jacqueline Syrup Bergan

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A message for Patricia and Rafael:

I wish to say thank you for all the years that you both have contributed to Celebration Worship pages. I have used your ideas and interpretation of the Scriptures very much over the years.

When you published your book *The Passages We Celebrate*, I still have it and use it for weddings and funerals to get some ideas for homilies.

Thank you both. I have appreciated your monthly synopses both in English and Spanish for the Scriptures.

Again, thanks from the bottom of my heart for your faithful columns.

Sincerely,  
A very appreciative pastor,  
Fred Duschl

Date: Mon, Oct 31, 2016  
Subject: Patricia Sanchez

Yes indeed. I would like to thank Patricia for the wisdom and inspiration she has given me as I have read her many commentaries. I will miss those wonderful contributions.

Sincerely,  
Fr. Dick Haldane, retired  
Diocese of Boise

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Dear Patricia Datchuck Sanchez:

Over the years I've always looked forward to reading your helpful commentaries as a way to prepare for mass because my parish priest has a language problem and the content of his homilies are sadly lacking. This leaves many of us deeply frustrated, but thanks to you, I go to mass better prepared to grasp a deeper meaning of the readings and feel more spiritually fulfilled. So, thank you for your profound analysis and inspiring commentary. May God bless you and your family.

With gratitude, a faithful NCR reader,  
Herman Gallegos

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Date: Mon, Nov 28, 2016 at 1:56 PM  
Subject: Patricia Sanchez

I have been a subscriber to Celebration since 1998. I have found Patricia Sanchez's reflections on the Sunday readings the best resource for my preaching ministry. She has skillfully combined scriptural, liturgical, literary and real-life material to help us preachers with a full plate to prayerfully take in, digest and share with other hungry spirits who gather at the Sunday Assembly.

I can't tell you how many times I have been working on a homily, read Patricia's reflections and said, "Yep, that's what I am looking for!"

With gratitude and prayers for Patricia's health and well being,

Jude Siciliano, OP  
Itinerant preacher

I have been a priest for a bit more than 37 years and have depended upon Patricia's commentaries week after week. When she was ill and could not produce new commentaries, I went to the archives.

I am happy for her and her family that she will be retiring, but saddened that there will be no new contributions. It is like the radio show, "Car Talk." Yes, there is a huge library of former offerings, but the newness will never be there again to help spark the thought necessary for a decent (or better) homily.

Best wishes to all.

Msgr. Francis V. Cilia  
Vicar General  
Diocese of San Jose in California

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Thanks so much to Patricia for the wonderful work she has done so beautifully in writing for CELEBRATION. God's Blessings on you, Patricia.

Sister Ramona Bezner  
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Patricia,

I feel like writing to Pat or Patty, so familiar and beloved are you to me. I am a professional religious educator, retired from being recompensed for my ministry but scarcely retired from doing it. In my retirement, for the past 28 years, I have facilitated a lively Scripture study group named by its participants as Searchers of Scripture. You are quoted most frequently and with great reverence and much pondering. I tell them, "now a word from my pal Patricia Sanchez!" All this to say, I am saddened by your resignation/retirement while gladdened that you are going to enjoy an well-earned respite from deadlines. Your gain is most assuredly our loss. I have learned so much from your writing and have been heartened by its depth. So, I offer you shalom as you journey into the future. Know that you have made a difference, not just in my life but in the lives of so many others. Your pebble tossed into the ocean of our lives has had a profound and lasting effect. Thank you!!!

Peace and all good,  
Fran Salone-Pelletier  
Author of Awakening to God: The Sunday Gospels in Our Lives

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