

# The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

## What is being the Body of Christ?

### A Reflection by Brian Wigger

Describing the Catholic Church, James Joyce, an Irish writer and poet, once said, "*Here comes everybody.*"

What an apt description! Here comes everybody. Here comes Peter, the denier. Here comes Thomas the doubter. Here comes Judas, the betrayer.

Here comes the first Christian Martyr, Stephen. Here comes Augustine, a converted pagan. Here comes Ignatius, a soldier. Thomas Aquinas, a philosopher. Here comes Paul, a tent-maker. Here comes the outspoken Catherine of Sienna and the quiet Therese of Lisieux.

Here comes Martin de Porres, Juan Diego, Father Damien, and Lorenzo Ruiz. Here comes Francis, preaching to the birds and Claire, dancing in the fields.

We are all that and even more.

We are monks who copied scripture onto parchment, and preserved God's word during one of the darkest times in history. We are priests and nuns who could barely speak the language, but came to an unruly place called America and created the most extensive parochial school system on earth, passing on what we knew, and what we believed.

We are laborers from Italy and Poland and Germany and Ireland who arrived in Brooklyn with nothing, and left behind towering temples of stone and glass in what we now call a City of Churches. We are G.K. Chesterton and Pope John Paul II.

We are John Wayne, Oscar Wilde and Taylor Swift. We are President Jimmy Carter, and Fulton Sheen. We are Oscar Romero and Dorothy Day and Mother Theresa.

We are the soldier in Iraq praying the rosary, we are the teenager who walked the Walk for Life, we are the people in Los Angeles, California – devastated and lost, and we are the immigrant in the barrio with Our Lady of Guadalupe tattooed on our back.

We are the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Daughters of America. We are the St. Vincent de Paul Society and we are the guest at St. Francis Seraph Kitchen waiting for a meal.

We are young and old, rich and poor. We are saints and sinners. Yet, we are – the Body of Christ. Not perfect. Not whole. Broken. Bruised. In need of healing, in need of grace. Yet we are – the body of Christ.

Like a stained glass window. We are those different glasses. Some are blue, some are green, some are yellow, and some are gold. Some are big, some are small.

When we bring our faces close to the stained glass window, we can admire the beauty of each glass, the way it's cut colored, and shaped.

But as we step back from it, we can see that all these different glasses, all these different colors and shapes reveal to us another beautiful picture, a more complete picture, telling a story none of these different stained glasses can tell by itself.

That is what being the body of Christ is about.  
That is what our life in a community is about. This is St. Stephen Parish

Each of us is like a little glass with a different shape and color, yet a little piece of a magnificent work of art. No one can really say, "You are different. You do not belong. I do not need you. I alone make God visible" – No – only together, as everybody, do we reveal the body of Christ, the face of God to the world.

Let others who see us then – as the Catholic Church, as the Riverview Catholics Family of Parishes, as the Church in Southwest Ohio, as the parish of St. Stephen,  
be able to say: "*They make God visible.*"

That is what being the body of Christ is about!