

I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven...

Today the Hebrew Scripture in the First Reading and the Gospel run on converging tracks. Jesus connects the manna given to Moses with the Eucharistic bread he will give, and with his very person.

Most Sundays I have a home mass, and one of the most faithful attendees is my Jewish neighbor, Dorothy who is a person who lights up our lives. When Rosemary is here, she loves to sit out on the patio in the morning with Buddy and wait for Dorothy to appear just across the way. For every morning Dorothy appears to dazzle the day. Each morning she appears dressed in a different, beautiful and classy outfit.

She is a sight for sore eyes and she brightens our days. I am so blest to have such great neighbors like she and Shirley.

When we have our home mass Dorothy holds a place of honor sitting right next to me. At communion time, I hold the Eucharist over her and pray: "May the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, the God of Ruth, and Sarah bless you today!"

Are we trying to convert Dorothy? Of course not. In fact Pope Benedict cautioned Christians to NOT try to convert the Jewish people; rather recognize God has a plan for them, and it is up to us to respect their special place in God's plan.

This week on Net Flick I watched a fascinating film: *My Italian Secret*."

It tells the story of the many Italians in World War II who gave shelter to so many Jews to protect them from the Nazis, at great risk to their own lives.

Assisi was a special place of refuge. One of the stories was about nuns who sheltered Jewish children. Their Jewish identity was a closely guarded secret even kept from the knowledge of the gentile children. Each night at the end of night prayer, the Sister would move among the children in the dorm and have them kiss the crucifix as the conclusion to their prayers. But when she came to a Jewish child, she would whisper: "Just kiss my finger."...out of respect for the child's Jewish heritage.

Dorothy is 91 years old. Her eyes sparkle and when she is well, her sense of humor lifts our spirits. August 8 will be her 92nd birthday.

This week,she was so excited about a date with friends to celebrate her birthday that she got up in the night to get ready or the party, and fell and broke her hip.

I commend her recovery to your prayers.

Jesus tells us, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

He does not say: "Love just your Christian neighbor!"

Every man. Every woman is to be our neighbor.

And when we are blest with such a treasured nighbor as Dorothy, love comes easy.

And so we pray:

May the God of Abraham,

of Isaac, Moses,

Ruth and Sarah

bless us all

☩ and gather us together

in mutual esteem

and friendship.

Amen