

June 13, 2025

Daily Reflections



EARTHEN VESSELS

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

Brothers and sisters:

*We hold this treasure in earthen vessels,
that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us.
We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained;
perplexed, but not driven to despair;
persecuted, but not abandoned;
struck down, but not destroyed;
always carrying about in the Body the dying of Jesus,
so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body.
For we who live are constantly being given up to death
for the sake of Jesus,
so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-11

Reflection

For much of my adult life, the concept of “**treasure in earthen vessels**” has fascinated me and drawn me into prayerful reflection. It was the theme for our final vow celebration in 1977. I still have the beautiful earthenware pot that was given to me at the time. The beauty and the fragile nature of pottery is a universal reality. Earthen vessels are an apt symbol for human life that is at once strong and fragile, broken and yet resilient. God’s life abides within my humanity, making me a gift of God’s great love.

As I have grown into the person God has created me to be, I recognize that I am also broken, frail, wounded, sinful. We are all broken in some way. But “the cracks are how the light gets in.” (Hemingway and Cohen)

My brokenness makes room for God, who seeks to love me into life. Only God can truly heal my brokenness. My brokenness, when accepted and reconciled, enables me to humbly relate to others who also know their fragility in this life. As Henri Nouwen says, “we become wounded healers.” God’s healing light shines through us and we are more beautiful.

There is a Japanese art form, Kintsugi (/kɪn 'tsu:gi/, lit. “golden joinery”), also known as kintsukuroi (“golden repair”) -- the art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with urushi lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. It is worth looking up on the internet. The broken and repaired pottery becomes even more beautiful than it was in its original state. And the same is true for us who seek forgiveness for our brokenness, which is healed and reconciled. We are indeed earthen vessels with the surpassing power of God as the treasure within us.



"Hand Pinned Kintsugi Pottery Bowl" by Ruthann Hurwitz is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0
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For Pondering

Ask yourself:

- What wounds in my life have been turned into life energy for the good?
 - How has my own human frailty brought me closer to God?
 - How has my facility created compassion for another?
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For Prayer

*Gracious God, the Master Potter,
I come before you as clay in Your hands.
In humility and trust, I surrender my life to You,
asking that you shape me according to Your will and purpose.
Help me to remain pliable in your hands, responsive to your touch,
and willing to be transformed.
Amen.*

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