

## Just Come in the Side Door

This fragment is from a church ceiling fresco that crumbled and fell to the ground. It was eventually added to the Vatican collection. A piece of rubble is now a priceless object of art. Viewers look up at the apostle from below as he gazes toward Christ's divine glory.

We also are striving to attain that heavenly vision, and Jesus advises us on how to realize it. We should work to enter the smaller gate, the narrow door. It's not the bigger main entrance that everyone uses. The narrow door is a less-traveled side entrance used by those who are close to the owner and his family. Christ invites us to be so familiar and comfortable with him that we come through the side door.

Many pass the Master's house, know where it is, but have lost the practice of stopping inside. They know about God, even pray occasionally, and don't hurt anyone. No doubt not hurting others is admirable, but there is so much more for someone baptized into Christ. We're not called to merely avoid hurting others but to have a deep, transforming experience of healing love that we then share with others.

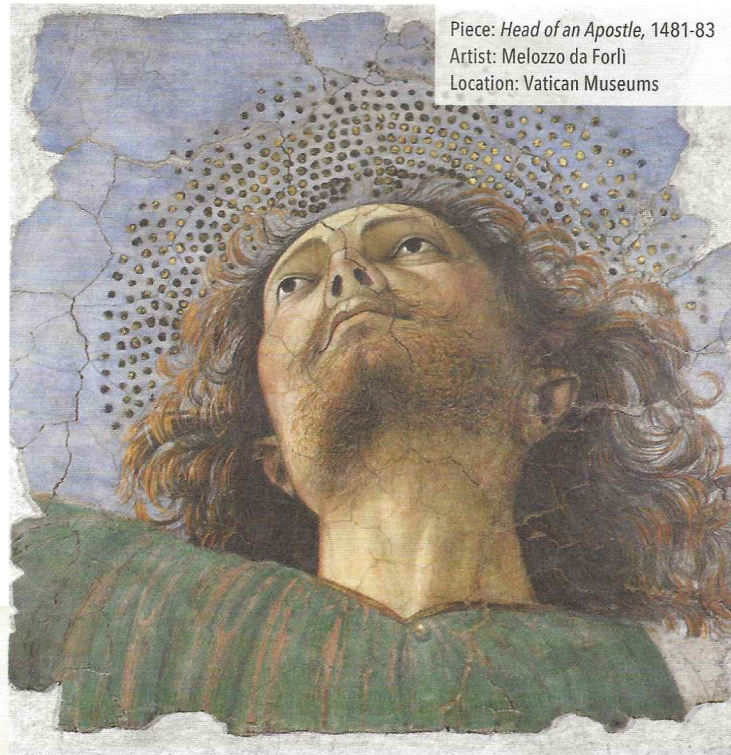
### *For Reflection*

*Do I make getting to know our Lord in prayer a priority?*

Jesus' warning seems to be that when there is a mad rush to enter the front gate, those well-intentioned but out-of-practice souls who "don't know him" might find themselves struggling to squeeze in.

Jesus and the Church don't want that to happen to anyone. He invites us to get familiar, stop in often. He might say, "When you get here, just come in the side door!"

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC



Piece: *Head of an Apostle*, 1481-83  
Artist: Melozzo da Forlì  
Location: Vatican Museums

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*[Jesus said,] "Strive to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough."*

*Luke 13:24*