



Bringing Home the Word

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
February 8, 2026

No More Than Enough

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

“You are the salt of the earth.” Prior to industrialization, salt was a highly valued commodity. In the Middle Ages, a ton of salt sold for thirty-three gold ducats. Much earlier, Roman soldiers were often paid in salt. Hence, our word “salary.”

“You are the light of the world.” Like salt, light also is a valuable and necessary part of life. Without light, living plants die, and human beings grow depressed.

Curiously, we become aware of salt and light only when they are absent. Food tends to be bland and less tasty without salt. And without light in

the room, we stumble and trip. Yet, too much salt ruins food, while too much light blinds us, like when we see oncoming headlights when driving at night. As valuable as salt and light are, both are at their best when unnoticed.

I offer these realities as images for persons of faith. Too much of “us” in the mix, and we become the center of our lives, our egos blinding others to the workings of God. Yet, a world without persons of faith grows flat for lack of values and wisdom.

Likewise, the Church. Whenever the Church draws attention to itself, whenever it is clothed with pomp and majesty, God recedes into the background. Without the Church’s wisdom, however, a world hungry for meaning grows lost; charity is forgotten. We are called to be salt and light, no more than enough. †



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A Word from Pope Leo XIV

In a divided and troubled world, the Holy Spirit teaches us to walk together in unity. The earth will rest, justice will prevail, the poor will rejoice, and peace will return once we no longer act as predators but as pilgrims. No longer each of us for ourselves, but walking alongside one another. Not greedily exploiting this world, but cultivating it and protecting it.

HOMILY, ROME, JUNE 7, 2025



Sunday Readings

Isaiah 58:7–10

If you lavish your food on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; / Then your light shall rise in the darkness.

1 Corinthians 2:1–5

I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Matthew 5:13–16

[Jesus said,] “Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How do I keep a balance between too much of me in the picture and too little?
- Which way do I lean?



God Is Still Speaking

Carrell Jamilano

As a spiritual director, I have the privilege of accompanying directees on their spiritual journey to God.

Directees want to feel God's loving presence and hear him speak in response to their prayers. What many are missing, however, is a fundamental understanding and experience of what prayer is. It's not just a set of memorized lines or something to check off a to-do list. Prayer is the way we communicate with God and the way God communicates with us. It is an ongoing encounter with our Creator, Redeemer, and Friend. As such, prayer requires two essential actions from us: talking to and listening to God.

For many of us, talking to God comes easier than listening. Still, we may try to keep parts of our lives hidden from God or fall into a routine of sharing the same things over and over. Listening to God presents even more challenges. We think, "How can I hear God when he is not physically present?" What is so incredible about God is that he can speak to us not only

through human tongues but also in everything he created. His voice compels us. His words change us. His presence enlivens us. We cannot help but be moved and inspired when we discover his voice in our lives.

Often, the reason we cannot hear God is because we do not understand how he speaks. Because God is limitless, so are the ways in which he chooses to communicate. God can speak to us in the stillness of our hearts, through Scripture, through his living Word, through traditions handed down to us by the apostles. God can speak to us in unexpected ways that are unique to us alone. God's loving presence and compassionate voice is closer to us than we might imagine.

From *The Alluring Voice of God: Forming Daily Encounters* by Carrell Jamilano, Liguori Publications (828416). To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Prayer is an ongoing encounter with our Creator, Redeemer, and Friend.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Preaching as a Sacramental Encounter" by Fr. Byron J. Miller, CSsR

While many people readily encounter the transcendent mystery of God in preaching, too often others regard the homily as a discipline to patiently endure before partaking of the Eucharist at Mass. However, nourishment derived from "breaking open the word" and reflecting on it is intended to prepare us for the sustenance that comes from the "breaking of bread." Pope Benedict XVI, in his exhortation *Verbum Domini* (The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church), echoed the words of the Second Vatican Council when he explained, "Word and Eucharist are so deeply bound together that we cannot understand one without the other."

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521, or visit Liguori.org.



Gracious God, Jesus calls us to be salt and light for the world. In his name, we ask for your grace that we may be signs of your goodness to all we meet. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

February 9–14

Monday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 8:1–7, 9–13 / Mk 6:53–56

Tuesday, St. Scholastica:

1 Kgs 8:22–23, 27–30 / Mk 7:1–13

Wednesday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 10:1–10 / Mk 7:14–23

Thursday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 11:4–13 / Mk 7:24–30

Friday, Weekday:

1 Kgs 11:29–32; 12:19 / Mk 7:31–37

Saturday, Sts. Cyril and Methodius:

1 Kgs 12:26–32; 13:33–34 / Mk 8:1–10



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