



Bringing Home the Word

Fifth Sunday of Easter (A)

May 3, 2026

Where the Heart Is

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

Some would say that the purpose of life is to save one's soul. And certainly we should try, with the grace of God, to live our lives in such a way that we avoid evil and do good in order to do our part in building God's kingdom on earth. At the same time, we must remember that it is God who saves us. We don't save ourselves. Eternal life and happiness are by-products of loving others. If the focus of our lives is to be happy, we never achieve it. If we seek to serve others, however, happiness seems to find us. So it is also with eternal life.

Robert Frost's "The Death of a Hired

Man" is a poem about Silas, an aging drifter farmhand, and Warren and Mary, a farming couple who give Silas a room whenever he comes around. Silas comes when he is needed the least and leaves when his presence would be most helpful, all of which frustrates Warren. In the poem, Silas has returned, and Mary thinks it will be his last time—that he is dying. She says to Warren that theirs is the only home Silas has. Warren simply shakes his head as if to gently mock the idea of home: "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, / They have to take you in." Mary says it differently, "I should have called it / Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

Is that not also the promise of Jesus? "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?" (John 14:2). Something we somehow haven't to deserve. †



***It is God who saves us.
We don't save ourselves.***

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

We live in a time that rewards self-sufficiency, efficiency, performance. And yet, the gospel shows us that the measure of our humanity is not given by what we can achieve, but by our ability to let ourselves be loved and, when necessary, even helped. Jesus saves us by showing us that asking is not unworthy, but liberating.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, ROME,
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025



Sunday Readings

Acts 6:1-7

The word of God continued to spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly.

1 Peter 2:4-9

Come to him, a living stone...and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house.

John 14:1-12

Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- Where do you feel truly at home?
- Is Jesus invited?



Under Her Mantle

José Antonio Pagola

In his general audience on March 24, 2021, Pope Francis said, “Jesus extended Mary’s maternity to the entire Church when he entrusted her to his beloved disciple shortly before dying on the cross. From that moment on, we have all been gathered under her mantle, as depicted in certain medieval frescoes or paintings.”

Marian devotion is not about looking to Mary for apocalyptic messages that threaten a world engulfed in profanity and disbelief with terrible punishments. It is not about motherly protection being offered to those who do the right penance or recite the right prayers. It is also not about fostering the piety of childlike dependency and the projection of an idealized mother image.

We can recognize Christian truth in Marian devotion by asking whether it encourages self-centeredness in believers or opens them up to God’s plan; whether it pulls them into an immature relationship with an idealized mother or pushes them to live their faith in a mature, responsible following of

Jesus Christ.

Contemporary Mariology at its best offers Christians an image of Mary as the Mother of Jesus Christ, as her Son’s first disciple, and as a model of authentic Christian life. More specifically for us today, Mary is a model of faithful acceptance of God in obedient faith, has an exemplary attitude of service to her Son and solidary concern for all who suffer, and is a woman committed to the reign of God, which is preached and promoted by her Son.

In these days of weary and pessimistic skepticism, Mary’s radical obedience to God and her confident hope can lead us toward a deeper, more faithful Christian life. †

Mary is a model of faithful acceptance of God.

From “Mary, The Mother of Jesus” by José Antonio Pagola, *Liguorian*, May/June 2025. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “Preaching as a Sacramental Encounter” by Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR

“Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” This maxim, attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, applies to homilists and to all Christians who want to model their faith in action. Practice what we preach. During his missionary work in Peru, Pope Leo XIV learned how to repair used cars for service in ministry. Undoubtedly, his preaching benefited from the experience. Most members of a congregation would find it difficult to speak for ten minutes before a crowd. Listeners should pray for the preacher, pray that God’s voice is heard at this time and in this place, and pray that a needed message is spoken. Such listeners will hear what they need to hear.

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.



Lord Jesus, when there is conflict within our family or community, send your Spirit to guide us to reconciliation and unity, we pray. Amen!
Alleluia!

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 4–9

Monday, Easter Weekday: Acts 14:5–18
/ Jn 14:21–26

Tuesday, Easter Weekday: Acts 14:19–28
/ Jn 14:27–31a

Wednesday, Easter Weekday: Acts 15:1–6
/ Jn 15:1–8

Thursday, Easter Weekday: Acts 15:7–21
/ Jn 15:9–11

Friday, Easter Weekday: Acts 15:22–31
/ Jn 15:12–17

Saturday, Easter Weekday: Acts 16:1–10
/ Jn 15:18–21



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