



Bringing Home the Word

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

June 14, 2026

Bucket List Questions

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

The Bucket List is a movie about two men, played by Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman, who find themselves sharing a hospital room, each diagnosed with terminal cancer. As they talk about the days that remain for each of them, they begin to discuss what they would yet hope to experience before they die. Hence, the title of the film.

At one point, amid their many escapades together, Freeman suggests that God is going to ask two questions when they stand before the pearly gates. Nicholson hears this and grows edgy,

suspecting his eternal future may be at risk. Freeman then tells him that the first question will be, “Have you ever experienced joy in life?” At that, Nicholson beams with a silly grin that suggests he is thinking more of pleasure than he is of joy. Nonetheless, he decides his lock on eternal bliss is halfway there. Then, Freeman reveals the second question: “Have you ever brought joy to the lives of others?” With that, Nicholson’s face drops, realizing his life has been more about himself than about others.

Religion is not just about “going to church,” but also about “going from church into the world.” That, in a sense, is what Jesus did when he named the Twelve Apostles and sent them out to heal, bring life, and overcome evil. It is also what we find ourselves sent to do amid the scattered events of every week—to bring joy into the lives of others. †



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“going to church,” but
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the world.”**

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

Humility is really freedom from ourselves.... Those who exalt themselves generally think that nothing is more interesting than themselves; yet, deep down, they are quite insecure.... Dear friends, today let us pray that the Church will always be a school of humility for everyone, a home where all are welcome, a place where rivalries are set aside and where Jesus...teaches us to imitate his own humility and freedom.

ANGELUS, ROME, AUGUST 31, 2025



Sunday Readings

Exodus 19:2–6a

[The LORD said to Moses:] You will be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.

Romans 5:6–11

God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

Matthew 9:36–10:8

At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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- When did I experience joy this week?
- Did I bring joy to someone else?



First Things First

Scott Czarnopys

I was listening to a reflection that quoted C.S. Lewis from his book *God in the Dock*: “You can’t get second things by putting them first; you can get second things only by putting first things first.”

What is first? Perhaps what is the closest and most reachable take priority. For me, this is my wife, my children, my immediate family, and my colleagues. These are the people I encounter daily, and if I strive to live a life of meaning and to be impactful, I need to take the first steps with these people.

Too often, I let myself become entangled in issues over which I have no influence. Why do I spend so much time worrying about problems that I have no ability to fix? I meet with a men’s group weekly, and I realize I’m not alone; other men also spend their time and energy worrying about foreign policy, wars, and other matters over which they have no control. To what end does such fretting take us? I have come to realize that it is nothing more than anxiety-inducing behavior

and a use of energy that does not bear fruit or allow me to impact the issues directly in front of me or appreciate the immense beauty surrounding me.

C.S. Lewis understood the importance of prioritizing what truly matters in life. When we dedicate ourselves to the most important things, the secondary things often fall into place. But if we prioritize what is secondary, we risk losing sight of what truly matters and may even miss out on the relationships and the work to which we are called. Take time in prayer to reflect on proximity. Who is closest to you? Where can you have the greatest effect? What holds the most significance? Then, and only then, will the secondary things fall into place. †

When we put first things first, secondary things fall into place.

From “Face to Face” by Scott Czarnopys, Liguorian, May/June 2025. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “Humility Is Still a Virtue” by Christopher M. Bellitto

Humility is the first step in self-reflection. It makes us have second thoughts. It opens us up to our blind spots and ignorance, our flaws and weaknesses. It tells us that it’s fine to have doubt. Pope Francis put it this way in an interview with Fr. Antonio Spadaro, SJ: “If a person says that he met God with total certainty and is not touched by a margin of uncertainty, then this is not good. For me, this is an important key. If one has the answers to all the questions—that is the proof that God is not with him.... You must leave room for the Lord, not for our certainties; we must be humble.”

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.



Compassionate God, inspire us to speak gently, act kindly, and share generously so that everyone we meet may feel safe, valued, and loved. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 15–20

Monday, Weekday: 1 Kgs 21:1–16
/ Mt 5:38–42

Tuesday, Weekday: 1 Kgs 21:17–29
/ Mt 5:43–48

Wednesday, Weekday: 2 Kgs 2:1, 6–14
/ Mt 6:1–6, 16–18

Thursday, Weekday: Sir 48:1–14
/ Mt 6:7–15

Friday, Weekday: 2 Kgs 11:1–4, 9–18, 20
/ Mt 6:19–23

Saturday, Weekday: 2 Chr 24:17–25
/ Mt 6:24–34



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