



Bringing Home the Word

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
September 27, 2026

Being Emptied

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

In his book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, Robert Fulghum lists those basic qualities that enable us to negotiate the rest of life somewhat successfully. It's what you might expect the curriculum of kindergarten to be about: being kind, saying you're sorry, getting along with others, and sharing. In short, what we learned in kindergarten is about putting others' needs ahead of our own comfort. It's a kind of emptying of our selfishness that seems to take place.

Unfortunately, the process isn't finished by the time we reach adulthood.

Sunday Readings

Ezekiel 18:25–28

Since they turned away from all the sins they committed, they shall live.

Philippians 2:1–11 or 2:1–5

Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.

Matthew 21:28–32

[Jesus said,] "Tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you."

We still tend to hoard, slam one another with insults, cheat in business, and neglect to apologize. In spite of that extended learning curve, we slowly do take on those attitudes noted by Fulghum. Marriage can smooth our rough edges. Children's needs call for self-sacrifice. Aging tends to mellow us. And somewhere along the line, we learn that talking things out works better than hitting.

Saint Paul encouraged the Philippians to take on the attitude of the Lord Jesus, who emptied himself for our sake. Still, I think much of that emptying takes place in us unconsciously. Some would say it is simply the process of life. Maybe—but, then again, it may be the gentle hand of God. Saint Teresa of Calcutta is said to have commented that even God can't fill what is already full. So then maybe that emptying is God's way of making room for God. †

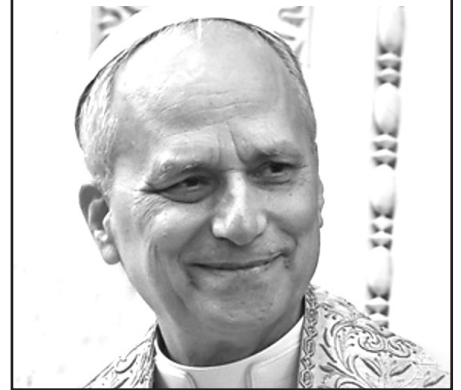


Take on the attitude of the Lord Jesus.

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

Jesus taught us that in discerning how to help our neighbor, we must imitate the example of the Good Samaritan, who selflessly gave of his time and resources to someone whom he had never previously met.... When we help those in need, especially those who cannot repay us, we become the Lord's instruments.

MESSAGE TO FADICA NETWORK,
ROME, FEBRUARY 27, 2026



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

ONE QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

- Since childhood, have I become better at putting others first?
- What do I still need to work on?



Say Yes and Then Do It!

The Redemptorists

Oscar Wilde, the famous playwright and poet, lived a life of pleasure, sin, and disregard for religion. Toward the end of his life, suffering from illness and facing death, Wilde recognized his need for God. He converted to Catholicism on his deathbed, receiving the sacraments before he passed away. He had ignored faith for most of his life, but in the end, he embraced God's mercy.

Ezekiel reminds us that neither past righteousness nor past sin determines our fate; what matters is our response to God today. Saint Paul emphasizes that faith is not about status, but about surrender to God's will. In today's gospel, Jesus has good news for tax collectors, prostitutes, and all who are outwardly unrighteous but repent in their quest for righteousness. These men and women, who were the most despised in Israel, heard John and believed him, repented, and demonstrated a change in heart by both their willingness to receive John's baptism and by their changed lives..

We have a lesson to learn from the second reading also. The Christian community at Philippi was very good, and Paul was proud of it. Yet, even in this community, there was the problem of envy among them. There were members wanting important responsibilities to make names for themselves and to be in commanding positions.

Very delicately, Paul tells them that there must be no competition among them, but everybody is to be self-effacing. Disciples of Jesus should follow the example of their Master.

The issue of who does the Father's will is not in what is said, but in what is done and the heart in doing it. Are you doing God's will? Are you loving in word and tongue or in deed and truth? †

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Faith is not about status, but surrender to God's will.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Why Confession Still Matters" by Fr. Charles Vijay Kumar, CSsR

We all carry invisible burdens in our daily lives. Often, these burdens take the form of a quiet, lingering weight—the regret of harsh words spoken in anger, the guilt of fractured relationships we have been too proud to mend, or the shame of destructive habits we feel powerless to change. We try to ignore this inner weight, numb it with constant busyness, or rationalize it away, yet it stubbornly remains. Where do we put our burdens? For centuries, the Church has offered a profound and liberating, yet increasingly misunderstood, remedy for this exact aspect of the human condition: confession, the sacrament of penance or reconciliation, which is ultimately a sacrament of healing.

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.



God of all people, give us the grace of humility, that we may place others before ourselves and always place you first. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

September 28–
October 3

Monday, Weekday: Jb 1:6–22 / Lk 9:46–50

Tuesday, Sts. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael: Dn 7:9–10, 13–14 or Rv 12:7–12ab / Jn 1:47–51

Wednesday, St. Jerome: Jb 9:1–12, 14–16 / Lk 9:57–62

Thursday, St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus:

Jb 19:21–27 / Lk 10:1–12

Friday, Holy Guardian Angels: Jb 38:1, 12–21; 40:3–5 / Mt 18:1–5, 10

Saturday, Weekday: Jb 42:1–3, 5–6, 12–17 / Lk 10:17–24



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