



# Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)  
January 25, 2026

## A Call from the Wild

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

Sometimes, as if by divine instinct, life draws us into new and uncharted lands, a kind of “call of the wild.” It happens when we leave childhood, when (if) we leave the single life, and when we grieve the loss of love or health. The call, then, is also to trust that God will walk with us and show us the way through the coming wilderness.

At other times, that wild, divine instinct is to go where we would rather not go, but, somehow, we also sense we must, if for no other reason than to be true to ourselves. It happened to Jesus, as this week’s gospel begins with our Lord picking up where John the Baptist left off. “When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee....

From that time on, he began to preach” (Matthew 4:12, 17). Who could know where that divine instinct would lead him?

Sometimes, that call pulls us into what life needs at this moment, whether we choose it or not. It may come in the face of the premature death of a spouse that finds us raising a young family alone, or it may be an aging spouse’s needs that require us to be a caregiver. It may be the daily grind of a job we can’t stand but have to keep for one reason or another, or it may be no job at all that forces us to reorganize our lives. The call of God may come out of the blue and from the many wilds of life. †

## A Word from Pope Leo XIV

Dear brothers and sisters, all too much violence exists in the world and our societies. Amid wars, terrorism, human trafficking, and widespread aggression, our children and young people need to be able to experience the culture of life, dialogue, and mutual respect. Above all, they need the witness of...those who have suffered injustice and violence [and] resist the temptation to seek revenge.

TO THE “ARENA OF PEACE,” ROME,  
MAY 30, 2025



## Sunday Readings

**Isaiah 8:23—9:3**

Upon those who lived in a land of gloom, a light has shone.

**1 Corinthians 1:10–13, 17**

I urge you...that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you.

**Matthew 4:12–23 or 4:12–17**

[Jesus said,] “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”



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God’s call pulls us into  
what life needs at this  
moment, whether we  
choose it or not.*

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Have you ever felt called to go where you did not want to go?
- How did faith help you decide what to do?



# The Unreflective Life

Rev. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR

**T**ime and again, Jesus takes to task people who are willing to notice faults in others but are blind to their own shortcomings. It is important to understand what

Jesus is confronting when he brings a person face to face with this behavior. The sin is not in recognizing faults in another person, but rather in one's failure to recognize and accept his or her personal faults and weaknesses. The sin is in pretending to be someone one is not.

The worst part of this behavior is the clear warning sign of an "unreflective life." As the Apostle James says, "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like" (James 1:23–24). The unreflective life is unaware of what truth is. It is a life in which you repeat the thoughts and opinions of others because you are completely unaware of your own thoughts and feelings. In an unreflective life, you never discover the truth

about yourself, and you never honestly enter a relationship because you do not know who you are. It is a life in which you are doomed to keep pretending.

People who are unreflective, who do not know the truth about themselves, are threatened by the faults and failings of others. Unaware of who they are, they move through life feeling threatened by anyone and anything that might expose their true personalities. You can imitate various qualities, such as being talented, funny, or loyal, but if you do not truly know who you are and why you are loved by God, then, at best, you are an actor. There is a big difference between living the life you are called to through baptism and being an actor. †

***The sin is in pretending to be someone one is not.***

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## Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "How Much Should I Give to My Parish" by Florence Wedge

A parish closing is like a death in the family. There is grief over the loss and sometimes anger, wondering if the closing was due to someone's negligence. It almost never is. All who grieve the closing of their parish must remember that every child baptized in that parish, every person laid to rest, every expression of love, every prayer prayed, every song sung—these live on. Likewise, the houses we made into homes, the people we cherished, the work to which we gave our energy, our very bodies we fed and clothed—these don't last. Only the faith, the hope, and the love last. "Here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come" (Hebrews 13:14).

*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](http://Liguori.org).



God of all people, open our eyes to see what we hold in common with each other so that we may build your kingdom together. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 26–31

**Monday**, Sts. Timothy and Titus:  
2 Tm 1:1–8 or Ti 1:1–5 / Mk 3:22–30

**Tuesday**, Weekday:  
2 Sm 6:12b–15, 17–19 / Mk 3:31–35

**Wednesday**, St. Thomas Aquinas:  
2 Sm 7:4–17 / Mk 4:1–20

**Thursday**, Weekday:  
2 Sm 7:18–19, 24–29 / Mk 4:21–25

**Friday**, Weekday:  
2 Sm 11:1–4a, 5–10a, 13–17 / Mk 4:26–34

**Saturday**, St. John Bosco:  
2 Sm 12:1–7a, 10–17 / Mk 4:35–41



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