



Bringing Home the Word

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
June 21, 2026

What Is a Soul, If Not...?

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

The Gospel of Matthew warns that the greater danger is not about those who may kill the body, but about those who can destroy both body and soul. Indeed, what if our soul dies long before our body dies? What then has become of our living?

Henry David Thoreau spent a year at Walden Pond in 1845. He did not go to escape life, he said, but to preserve it, to live it more fully. "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life,

and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not when I came to die, discover that I had not lived," he wrote in Walden in 1854. "I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear, nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life."

To have a soul is not as if some otherworldly reality has been given a home in our body. Rather, to have a soul is to have a source of hope even in the face of failure, to love in imitation of Jesus even when we are not loved, to see goodness even when it is hidden, to trust in God even when we are powerless. It is the source of mystery, of all that is transcendent, the home of all that is holy. †

Sunday Readings

Jeremiah 20:10-13

The LORD is with me, like a mighty champion: my persecutors will stumble, they will not prevail.

Romans 5:12-15

If by that one person's transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God...overflow.

Matthew 10:26-33

[Jesus said,] "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."



**To have a soul
is to have a source
of hope.**

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

To It is wonderful to think that, when we consider our individual calling...each of us can say with confidence, "Despite my weakness, the Lord is not ashamed of my humanity. Instead, he comes to dwell within me. He accompanies me with his Spirit; he enlightens me and makes me an instrument of his love for others, for society, and for the world."

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 25, 2025



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- Do I care for my soul as much as my body and mind?
- Is there something I could do to live a more balanced life?



Who Am I?

Tim and Julie Smith

On my driver's license, one line catches my eye: "Corrective Lenses Required." As Catholic Christians, we look at everything we see in this world—creation, history, sexuality, children, culture, each other, and even ourselves—through the "corrective lens" of faith.

To know others and to be known are deep desires of all human beings. Maybe we should look at ourselves as God sees us. And I would propose that we look for examples of our "identity" in the models and mentors of our faith.

- Pope Francis, when asked, "Who is Jorge Bergoglio?", said, "I am a sinner. This is the most accurate definition."
- Saint Maximilian Kolbe, offering his life at Auschwitz, was asked, "Who are you?" He simply stated, "I am a Catholic priest."
- At his execution, St. Thomas More said, "I die the king's good servant, but God's first."
- Saint Joan of Arc stated, "I am not afraid...I was born to do this."

- Saint John the Baptist knew his role: "I am not the Messiah.... I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord'''" (John 1:20, 23).
- Jesus was clear about who he was and is: "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6).
- And Mary, the Mother of Our Lord, when she was but a young maiden in Nazareth, facing an angel's frightening proclamation, stated confidently, "I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

It seems that a mark of true holiness is the humble trust and confidence of seeing, knowing, and naming who we are, by the grace of God. Let us pray that we, like Jesus, Mary, and all the saints, may grow to see our identity and God's plan for us with the "corrective lenses" of our faith. †

As Catholics, we look at everything through the "corrective lens" of faith.

From "Kitchen Table Gospel" by Tim and Julie Smith, Liguorian, May/June 2025. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Stealing Moments of Quiet: Finding God In Prayer" by Michelle Francl-Donnay

Contemplation is sometimes called "the art of stealing time." How much time can you steal from your ordinary routine without missing it? Most of us could spare three minutes, I suspect. Stephen Cottrell, the Anglican bishop of Reading in England, handed out egg timers at a train station and suggested people steal just three minutes out of their day to sit quietly with God. Find three minutes. Gather a bit of silence around you and remind yourself that God is present within you as well as outside you. Ask for the gift of stillness. If you drift away, just return to the reminder that God is there. When time is up (remember to start small), express your gratitude.

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.



Powerful God, we ask for your protection and for the courage to face the trials of this life as disciples of your Son, our Lord Jesus. We pray always in his name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 22–27

Monday, Weekday: 2 Kgs 17:5–8, 13–15a, 18 / Mt 7:1–5

Tuesday, Weekday: 2 Kgs 19:9b–11, 14–21, 31–35a, 36 / Mt 7:6, 12–14

Wednesday, Nativity of St. John the Baptist: Is 49:1–6 / Acts 13:22–26 / Lk 1:57–66, 80

Thursday, Weekday: 2 Kgs 24:8–17 / Mt 7:21–29

Friday, Weekday 2 Kgs 25:1–12 / Mt 8:1–4

Saturday, Weekday: Lam 2:2, 10–14, 18–19 / Mt 8:5–17



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