



Bringing Home the Word

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

July 12, 2026

Words, Words, and THE WORD

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

Our lives seem to be plagued by an abundance of words, all seeking to influence us. Television ads try to convince us to buy; teachers seek to pass on knowledge; parents cajole, discipline, and beg; society warns us against drinking and driving, smoking, and drugs; preachers hope to convert and change. They all do so with limited and varying success—and, at times, seeming failure. Too often there is the presumption that more words will achieve greater results.

In the face of such questionable success, the prophet Isaiah proclaims

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 55:10–11

So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; It shall not return to me empty, but shall do what pleases me.

Romans 8:18–23

The sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us.

Matthew 13:1–23 or 13:1–9

[Jesus said,] “Whoever has ears ought to hear.”

that God’s word “shall not return to me empty, but shall do what pleases me, achieving the end for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11). Yet the gospel also suggests that the seed of God’s word sown in our lives may wither and be choked off, failing to take root, though also promising that what does produce fruit will surpass anything hoped for.

Because war is news, and the media is obliged to report on it, it may appear that war is prominent worldwide. Not so. Statistically, there is less war today than ever before, less violence, less conflict. Nations are more inclined to try to negotiate peace. We are more likely to die in our beds than at any other time in history. While there is still much hunger in the world, there is less than at any other time. Great generosity abounds amid natural disasters, and while injustice prevails, we still fight to overcome it. All of this is the fruitfulness of God’s word.

Creation is groaning in labor pains, says St. Paul in the reading, and we also groan. Yet the groaning attests to the pains of growing in fruitfulness. †

*It is God’s word that
is fruitful.*

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

Mission is not so much about “departing,” but instead “remaining” in order to proclaim Christ through hospitality and welcome, compassion, and solidarity. We are to remain...so as to look upon those who arrive from lands that are distant and violent, to remain and open our arms and hearts to them, welcoming them as brothers and sisters, and being for them a presence of consolation and hope.

Homily, Rome, October 5, 2025



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What passage in Scripture encourages me?
- What passage challenges me?



Holy Scrolling

Adam Tran-Chung

In today's world, social media has become a core aspect of daily life. It can be a tool that helps us connect with our friends and family, share our faith, and stay informed. It can also be a way to deepen our relationship with God.

One aspect of social media is the amount of easily accessible faith-based content. From Catholic influencers sharing reflections on Scripture to live-streamed Masses and prayer sessions, there are so many ways to practice our faith online. Many sites provide daily reminders to turn our hearts and minds toward God. A simple scroll can reveal quotes from saints and even practical advice for living a virtuous life.

Social media serves as a mirror that reflects our priorities. What do my posts and interactions say about my relationship with God? Am I consuming content that is nourishing my soul? By questioning the actions we take on social media and how they impact our spirituality, we are creating a "safety zone" to ensure that the time we spend online is nurturing our faith and our connection with God. Such questioning serves as

a kind of modern-day examination of conscience.

It's quite easy to get swept up in the constant flow of information and notifications that are the nature of these platforms. I know I often spend too much time "doomscrolling"—a term that refers to consuming an endless procession of content—and then losing the initial intention I had when I logged on. That "safety zone" can help us keep our intentions clear. If we approach social media as a tool for drawing us closer to God, we might begin to see ourselves becoming more faithful disciples of Jesus and growing in holiness. Instead of just a way to pass the time, social media becomes a faith-focused space where we strengthen our relationship with our gracious God. †

What do my posts say about my relationship with God?

From "Social Media Perspectives" by Adam Tran-Chung, *Liguorian*, March-April 2025. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Saint Carlo Acutis: From Coding to Canonization"

Saint Carlo Acutis was born the same year that the World Wide Web was introduced. He liked video games but limited himself to playing them only one hour a week because he had read about children who were addicted to these games. He taught himself coding and developed a website that became a tool for religious instruction in parishes all over the world. He cataloged more than 150 miracles, listing them in many languages. His intention was to help people realize that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist and to encourage people to come back to Mass. This is why St. Carlo Acutis is known as the "Patron of the Internet" and "God's Influencer."

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.



Creator God, you still speak through your word and through your holy ones. Help us to hear and to heed your voice, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

July 13–18

Monday, Weekday: Is 1:10–17 / Mt 10:34–11:1

Tuesday, St. Kateri Tekakwitha: Is 7:1–9 / Mt 11:20–24

Wednesday, St. Bonaventure: Is 10:5–7, 13b–16 / Mt 11:25–27

Thursday, Weekday: Is 26:7–9, 12, 16–19 / Mt 11:28–30

Friday, Weekday: Is 38:1–6, 21–22, 7–8 / Mt 12:1–8

Saturday, Weekday: Mi 2:1–5 / Mt 12:14–21



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