

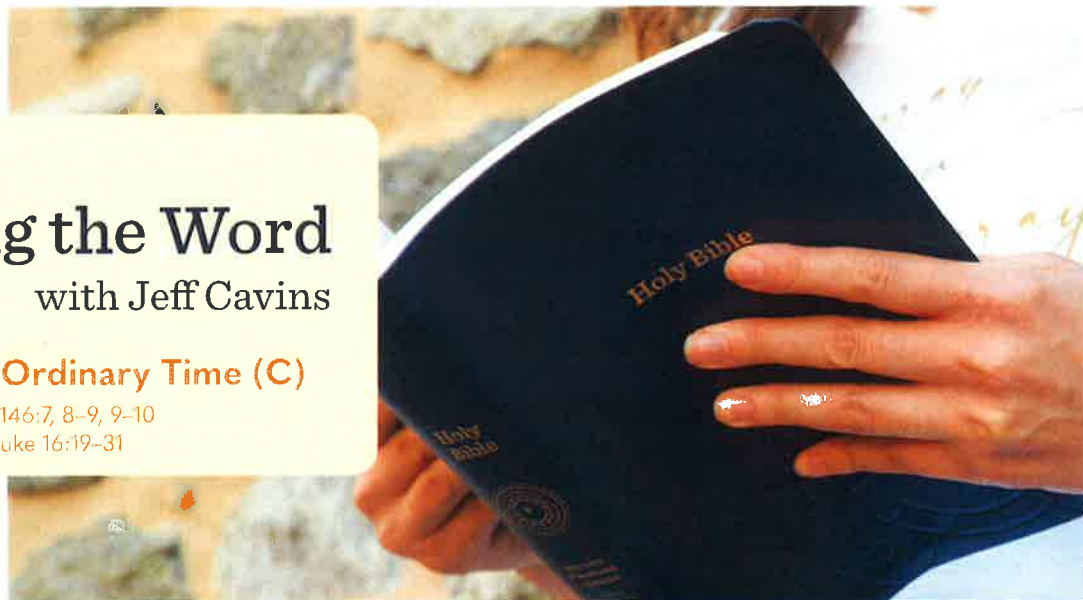
Encountering the Word

with Jeff Cavins

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Amos 6:1a, 4-7 • Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

1 Timothy 6:11-16 • Luke 16:19-31



The Importance of Taking the Wise Walk

The striking story of two men is this week's lesson from Luke's Gospel. One is a rich man who lived in luxury, and the other is Lazarus, a poor man who suffered outside the rich man's gate. Both die, but their eternal destinations could not be more different. Lazarus is carried to Abraham's bosom, a place of eternal joy, while the rich man is tormented in Hades. This parable reminds us of the eternal consequences of our choices and the importance of how we use the time God gives us.

The rich man's request for Lazarus to ease his suffering is denied, and he is told that a great chasm separates them. Realizing his fate is sealed, he begs that a messenger be sent to warn his family. The response is sobering: They already have the teachings of Moses and the prophets. The implication is clear. God has already given sufficient signs for repentance, culminating in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This parable challenges us to examine how we live. Time is one of our most precious gifts, and each moment is an opportunity to repent, to realign our lives with God, and to serve others. The rich man's greatest tragedy wasn't his wealth but his neglect of the eternal consequences of his actions. Lazarus, though poor and suffering, remained faithful and now enjoys eternal peace.

Eternal separation from God is a reality too terrifying to imagine. We must live in the best ways possible, in faith and love, so we may one day share in the joy of God's presence forever.



Live the Gospel

"Watch carefully how you live, not as foolish persons but as wise, making the most of the opportunity, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16). This week, evaluate how you spend your time. Can you conclude that you give God your best? Do you act with wisdom? St. Paul reminds us to make the most of our time. If you have been neglecting your path to eternity, repent and realign your heart. In Christ, it's never too late to turn back to him and choose to use your gift of time wisely.

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to watch:



Or go to:

<https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/twenty-sixth-sunday-in-ordinary-time-c/>

Ponder and Pray

» How do you use the time God has given you? Are there changes you need to make to focus more on eternal priorities?

» Are there people in your life, like Lazarus, whom you might be neglecting? How can you show love and care to them in meaningful ways?

» If today were your last day, what steps would you take to get right with God? What's stopping you from making those changes now?

“

Abraham replied, ‘My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented.’

—Luke 16:25

”

Make It Your Own

You and others in your household may use this space to write anything about today's Mass. It might be your view of Jeff Cavins' reflection, your priest's homily, or your answers to the questions on this page—anything to help you and your household get the most out of today's Mass.

Jeff Cavins is the author of *The Bible Timeline: The Story of Salvation* and the creator of the video series *Sundays with Ascension*, from which this reflection was adapted.

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Week 39



THE ROSARY IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MARK-MARY AMES, CFR

PHASE 3: MEDITATING ON THE MYSTERIES

The Luminous Mysteries in Art

PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM

This week, we will meditate on a piece of sacred art depicting a moment in Christ's ministry during the Proclamation of the Kingdom when Christ calmed the storm at sea (Matthew 8:23–27): a painting by Rembrandt, *Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee*, painted in 1633.

After taking a moment to collect your thoughts and lift your mind to God, prayerfully gaze upon the image, noticing what catches your eye and what intrigues you. Below are points of reflection to assist in your meditation.



The Storm on the Sea of Galilee by Rembrandt (1633)

Reflection and Contemplation

- This storm at sea is depicted as a terrible tempest. The waves crash against the boat. Has a “storm” in your life made you fear for your safety or the safety of a loved one?
- Look at the dark clouds and the way the waves toss the boat. The sea and the weather are out of our control. What is going on within your life that is out of your control that you can give to Jesus?
- Note the different men in the boat. Some are trying to fix the sail. Some are just staring at the waves. Some are holding on for dear life. One man even seems to be hiding in the boat. However, some men go to Jesus to wake him up. What do you do when you are in the midst of a storm? Do you go to Jesus, do you try to fix it yourself, or do you hide?
- The sun seems to be peeking out in the left corner of the painting as if the storm is already calming down. Have you ever experienced a difficult situation that you did not think was going to end but that suddenly stopped? Can the storms in our life become calm again in an instant if Jesus wills it?
- Notice Jesus sleeping in the boat. Should the men have just let Jesus sleep and waited for the storm to end? Have there been times when it seems Jesus is asleep during your storm?
- The Gospel of Matthew tells us that the men in the boat were amazed that Jesus could control the storm (see Matthew 8:27). How does this event reveal who Jesus is to the disciples?

Make It Your Own

What stood out to you about your Rosary experience this week?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

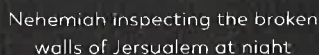
Scan the QR code to view *The Rosary in a Year* videos on the Ascension app. Download the prayer plan at <https://tinyurl.com/2p8s69yd>.

The Rosary in a Year is a daily podcast, produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mark-Mary Ames, CFR. It takes Catholics on a journey to form a lasting habit of prayer and gain tools to enter more deeply into meditation on the lives of Jesus and Mary through the Rosary. This bulletin was adapted from the podcast and materials that complement the podcast.

**THE BIBLE
IN A YEAR**

WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE IS AWARDED IN WAVES



- The prophetic work of Haggai and Zechariah, prophets writing concurrently, can help us understand the historical details provided in Ezra and Nehemiah.
- The book of Haggai is only two chapters, but we can see three parts in it. First, we see apathy. Though Haggai is written just a few years after the Return, the people have not yet begun rebuilding the Temple.
- Second, he describes the discouragement of the people in that they want God's blessings but are not actually serving him faithfully. This leads to the third aspect, in which Haggai teaches that the people must reform their lives to enjoy God's intended blessings.
- Zechariah also offers words of encouragement to let the people know that when they turn from evil, God will bless them.
- Ezra 3 and 4 recount the restoration of worship with the difficult work of rebuilding the Temple.
- Temple restoration, though, is not enough, and Ezra's knowledge as priest and scribe leads him to demand reforms of the people's lives in ways that match the messages of Haggai and Zechariah.
- The problem of intermarriage, which Ezra must confront, is not new. Though living in the midst of other nations, God's People have been set apart and called to live differently. Intermarrying weakens the bond of the covenant. Whenever the Israelites have done this, they end up losing their faith in the Lord.
- Nehemiah sees that the walls of Jerusalem have not been rebuilt, so the city is vulnerable to attack. He leads the efforts to rebuild the walls and secure the people's peace.

Dive Deeper

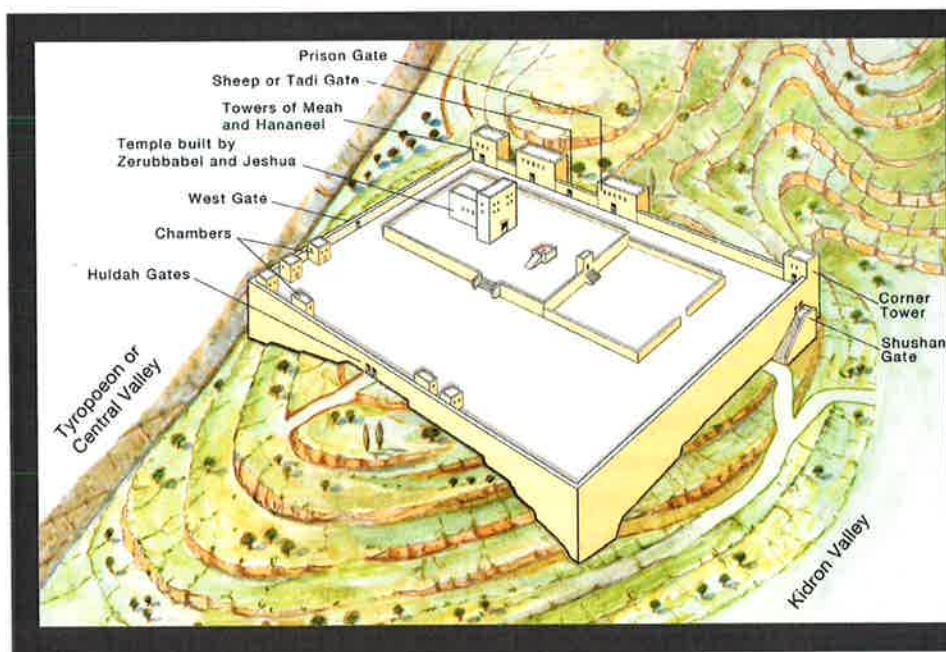
All of the small things in our lives make a difference, and we can rejoice in them. Bring the small things that feel insignificant to God in prayer, and trust that he will make something beautiful out of them in his time.

Bible Answers

Was Ezra being racially prejudiced when he grows distressed with the people for their intermarriages in Ezra 9?

What Ezra finds upon his arrival is “faithlessness” (Ezra 9:2). The people have intermingled and intermarried with the pagan nations of the land (see Ezra 9:1–2). The issue here is not racial but spiritual. We have seen examples of the people turning from God and the covenant when they intermarry, like Solomon (see 1 Kings 11:1–11).

It also appears that the main offenders are the “officials and chief men” (Ezra 9:2)—in other words, the upper echelons of society. These men were using marriage with foreigners as a means to advance their power and wealth, which then becomes an injustice against faithful Jewish women. This is what raises the ire of Ezra and causes the people to agree that foreign wives needed to be dismissed.



NEHEMIAH'S TEMPLE MOUNT

This image shows the Temple Mount as it existed under Nehemiah. Chapter 3 of the book of Nehemiah describes rebuilding projects in Jerusalem.



Scan the QR code to listen to the *Bible in a Year* podcast on the Ascension app, to get exclusive content, and to access transcripts for every episode. Download the reading plan at <https://media.ascensionpress.com/category/ascension-podcasts/bibleinayear/>.

The Bible in a Year is a daily podcast, produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz, where we read the whole Bible following *The Great Adventure* Bible-study program created by Jeff Cavins. This bulletin was adapted from *The Bible in a Year Companion* books that complement the podcast.

Week 39

Paragraphs 2030–2103



THE CATECHISM IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

How We Live PART THREE: LIFE IN CHRIST

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT'S LESSON

The Church is our Mother and teacher. We measure the truth of Church teaching not by those who fail to live up to it but by those, like Our Lady, who do. Despite members who sin or even abuse their power, the Church remains holy, true, and trustworthy. Church teaching flows from the commandments. As the Father's adopted sons and daughters, living out the commandments is personal but not private. When we live faithfully, we witness truth to the world.

Keep in Mind

- The Church feeds, leads, and helps us become holy, especially through applying the Ten Commandments and administering the sacraments.
- As “the ‘pillar and bulwark of the truth,’” the Church is obligated to teach us (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2032).
- “The Roman Pontiff and the bishops are ‘authentic teachers ... endowed with the authority of Christ’ (CCC 2034).
- We are responsible for following Church teaching.
- Catholics are not free to pick and choose the Church teachings that they accept, believe, and embrace.
- Our fidelity gives witness to God for the salvation of others.
- The commandments describe the minimum we must do to love God and others and be spiritually alive.
- Jesus affirms and amplifies the commandments.
- The commandments do not limit our liberty. They allow us to truly be free.
- “The gift of the Commandments is the gift of God himself and his holy will” (CCC 2059).
- To violate the commandments is serious.



Dive Deeper

The Decalogue (“ten words”) that Moses carried from Mount Sinai “sum up and proclaim God’s law” (CCC 2058).

Our love for God is a response to the love he gives freely to us. For practical tips on following the first three commandments, watch “How to Say ‘I Love You’ to God,” an *Ascension Presents* video.



- The commandments are challenging, but “what God commands he makes possible by his grace” (CCC 2082).
- The First Commandment is to worship God alone—not because he needs it, but because our broken hearts are prone to make idols.
- Voluntary doubt is refusing what we know of God and Church teaching.
- Heresy is refusing to be corrected about doctrine.
- Apostasy is totally rejecting the Christian faith and Christ.
- Despair is believing we are beyond God's aid, pardon, or salvation.
- Presumption is believing we do not need God's aid for salvation or seeking pardon without repenting.
- Love (charity) “leads us to render to God what we as creatures owe him in all justice” (CCC 2095).
- The first thing due to God is our recognition that he is God, and we are not.
- We must worship God, who frees us from sin, and pray daily.
- We must sacrifice.
- Jesus' sacrifice alone is complete, but everything we unite with him can become a sacrifice.

Take It to Prayer

God our Father, please make our hearts teachable, guidable, and docile to your Word so our lives can be transformed. Help us present our lives as a living sacrifice and conform our wills to yours. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Use the space below to reflect on this week's content.



The best place to listen along is the Ascension app. Scan the QR code to get exclusive bonus content and transcripts for every episode.

The Catechism in a Year is a daily podcast produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz. It helps us understand what it means to be Catholic by reading the entire *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and allowing those truths to shape our lives. This bulletin was adapted from the books that complement the podcast: *The Catechism in a Year Companions* by Petroc Willey, Fr. Mike Schmitz, and Matthew Doering.



BE A KINDNESS "MILLIONAIRE"



Amos 6:1a, 4-7 • 1 Timothy 6:11-16 • Luke 16:19-31

Family Car Talk

Today's Gospel tells the story of Lazarus and the rich man. This story teaches us not to ignore those who need our help. On the way home from Mass today, talk with your family about how you can all be more attentive to those who need you.



Who are the "Lazaruses" in your community?



How can you be generous to those who have less than you?



What are some ways you can practice the virtue of generosity as a family?



UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL!

HRIC AMN _____

OPRO NMA _____

SZALRAU _____

RCASSP _____

GDOS _____

BAHAMAR _____

Answers: rich man, poor man, Lazarus, scraps, dogs, Abraham



COLOR ME BLESSED

Instructions: Today, Psalm 146 says, *"The Lord keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry."* Color the image of Jesus feeding the hungry.



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Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus



KNOWING THE DIFFERENCE

What is a mistake versus a sin?

Parenting or even spending time with children can help us grasp many things about our humanity. One thing in particular is the nature of sin, coupled with God's great love and mercy in healing sin. Bobby Angel, a former teacher and campus minister, reflects on this in a video on *Ascension Presents*, summarized in today's text.

Helping Kids Understand

Recently, my wife and I got to walk with our kids on their journey toward first Reconciliation and first Holy Communion. We got into this conversation about sins versus mistakes and how to teach our kids to understand this dynamic.

We all make mistakes. A mistake is not a sin; it's an accident that could have troubling or inconvenient effects, such as a little thing like drawing on the wall or accidentally flushing an entire roll of toilet paper and the resulting flood on the floor. A mistake is not willed or purposeful, but it doesn't mean there are no consequences or people won't get hurt by it. We may need to apologize or repair the damage done by a mistake, whether it's among family, friends, or in the workplace.

A sin, on the other hand, is something willed, a bad choice, a bad deed. It goes against God's will for our flourishing and the flourishing of other people, and we do it anyway. We all have Original Sin and are inclined toward disorder and wanting things that won't really make us happy. Around the age of reason, which is about seven or eight years old, kids can discern that something is a bad thing and still choose to do it. This is when the behavior becomes a sin.

Toddlers hitting each other is not a sin, but as children grow older and are able to understand right from wrong at a deep level—especially in light of how God has created us and wants us to flourish—actions like not helping someone or failing to speak up to defend someone become sinful.

We all tend to shift the blame, to hide when we know we've done something wrong, but God sees it all. He is no tyrant; he is a loving Father who desires all of us to be reconciled with him and live in the freedom of the truth. This is why he gave his only Son, Jesus, whose name means "God saves."

In the Catholic understanding, not all sin is the same. There is a hierarchy of sin, but there's always God's mercy. It's not just judgment or wrath; it is always

*"... but there's always
God's mercy."*

the heart of the Father
who desires all of us to be
reconciled with him.

As parents, we have the responsibility to form our kids, help them understand right from wrong, and teach them to live in the light of Christ without fear of making an error because God's love is always there for us, no matter what.

Ponder and Pray

- How do you now understand sins versus mistakes?
- What are some big moments that have shaped your conscience?

Make It Your Own

Plan a conversation with your children, grandchildren, or godchildren to help them understand sins versus mistakes by talking about your own experience of God's mercy. Take the space below to plan how you will talk about it.



Tip of the Week

Make an examination of conscience this week.
You do not need to wait until you go to confession.
Here is one to work through:

Scan the QR code or visit:
[https://ascensionpress.com/
pages/examination-of-conscience.](https://ascensionpress.com/pages/examination-of-conscience)



Dive Deeper

To watch Bobby Angel's *Ascension Presents* video on this topic, scan the QR code or visit: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/mistakes-vs-sins/>.

