

The Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday June 21, 2026

Men helping men step up as spiritual leaders by following the teachings of Christ and His Church.

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PART ONE - The Mass Readings

Reading 1: Jeremiah 20:10-13

Jeremiah said:

"I hear the whisperings of many:

'Terror on every side!

Denounce! let us denounce him!'

All those who were my friends
are on the watch for any misstep of mine.

'Perhaps he will be trapped; then we can prevail,
and take our vengeance on him.'

But the LORD is with me, like a mighty champion:
my persecutors will stumble, they will not triumph.

In their failure they will be put to utter shame,
to lasting, unforgettable confusion.

O LORD of hosts, you who test the just,
who probe mind and heart,

let me witness the vengeance you take on them,
for to you I have entrusted my cause.

Sing to the LORD,

praise the LORD,

for he has rescued the life of the poor
from the power of the wicked!"

Responsorial Psalm:Psalm 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35

R. (14c) Lord, in your great love, answer me.

For your sake I bear insult,
and shame covers my face.

I have become an outcast to my brothers,
a stranger to my mother's children,
Because zeal for your house consumes me,
and the insults of those who blaspheme you fall upon me.

R. Lord, in your great love, answer me.

I pray to you, O LORD,
for the time of your favor, O God!

In your great kindness answer me
with your constant help.

Answer me, O LORD, for bounteous is your kindness;
in your great mercy turn toward me.

R. Lord, in your great love, answer me.

"See, you lowly ones, and be glad;
you who seek God, may your hearts revive!
For the LORD hears the poor,

and his own who are in bonds he spurns not.
Let the heavens and the earth praise him,
the seas and whatever moves in them!"
R. Lord, in your great love, answer me.

Reading 2: Romans 5:12-15

Brothers and sisters:
Through one man sin entered the world,
and through sin, death,
and thus death came to all men, inasmuch as all sinned—
for up to the time of the law, sin was in the world,
though sin is not accounted when there is no law.
But death reigned from Adam to Moses,
even over those who did not sin
after the pattern of the trespass of Adam,
who is the type of the one who was to come.

But the gift is not like the transgression.
For if by the transgression of the one the many died,
how much more did the grace of God
and the gracious gift of the one man Jesus Christ
overflow for the many.

Gospel: Matthew 10:26-33

Jesus said to the Twelve:
"Fear no one.
Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed,
nor secret that will not be known.
What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light;
what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.
And 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.
Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?
Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge.
Even all the hairs of your head are counted.
So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.
Everyone who acknowledges me before others
I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father.
But whoever denies me before others,
I will deny before my heavenly Father."

PART TWO - A Short Reflection

The readings for June 21 highlight the tension between fear and trust in God. Jeremiah experiences betrayal, ridicule, and threats from those around him, yet he remains confident that the Lord is his protector and defender. His example reminds us that faith does not remove hardship, but it gives us the courage to persevere through it. The psalm echoes this trust, calling on God to answer in His great love and assuring us that He hears the cries of the poor and afflicted.

In Romans, St. Paul contrasts the reality of sin and death that entered through Adam with the abundant grace that comes through Jesus Christ. While human weakness and sin affect all people, God's gift of salvation is far greater than the damage caused by sin. This message offers hope that no failure or brokenness is beyond the reach of Christ's redeeming grace.

The Gospel brings these themes together with Jesus' repeated command: "Do not be afraid." God knows and cares for each person so intimately that even the hairs on our heads are counted. Because we are precious in His sight, we can live boldly, witnessing to our faith without fear of rejection or opposition. These readings invite us to place our trust in God's providence, rely on His grace, and confidently acknowledge Christ in our daily lives.

PART THREE - Leadership Principles in the Readings

1. Courage Under Opposition

Jeremiah demonstrates remarkable courage as he faces criticism, betrayal, and threats from those around him. Despite the pressure to give up, he remains committed to his mission because he trusts that God is with him. Leaders often encounter resistance, but true leadership requires the courage to stand firm in one's convictions.

2. Seeking Strength in God's Love

The psalmist turns to God in a time of suffering, trusting in His kindness and mercy. Rather than relying solely on personal strength, the psalm shows the importance of seeking help and guidance when challenges arise. Effective leaders recognize that humility and dependence on a higher purpose can be sources of great strength.

3. Leading Through Grace

In Romans, Paul contrasts the consequences of sin with the abundance of grace offered through Jesus Christ. This reminds leaders that growth and transformation are possible, even after mistakes and failures. Great leaders create environments where people are encouraged to learn, improve, and move forward.

4. Boldness Rooted in Faith

Jesus calls His disciples to proclaim the truth without fear. He reminds them that God's care extends to every detail of their lives, giving them confidence to act courageously. Leaders who trust in their mission are better equipped to speak honestly and lead decisively, even in difficult situations.

5. Integrity That Withstands Scrutiny

Jesus teaches that what is hidden will eventually be revealed, emphasizing the importance of living and leading with integrity. Trust is built when actions consistently align with values and principles. Leaders who act honestly and transparently earn credibility and inspire confidence in those they lead.

PART FOUR - Five Questions for Discussion

1. Jeremiah remained faithful despite facing criticism and betrayal. How do you respond when your values or beliefs are challenged by others?

2. The psalm emphasizes trusting in God's mercy during difficult times. What are some practical ways we can turn to God when we feel overwhelmed or discouraged?

3. Paul teaches that God's grace is greater than the effects of sin. How have you experienced forgiveness, second chances, or personal growth through grace in your own life?

4. Jesus repeatedly says, "Do not be afraid." What fears most often prevent people from living out their faith or doing what they know is right?

5. Jesus calls His followers to acknowledge Him before others. What does it look like to be a witness for Christ in everyday life at home, work, or in the community?

PART FIVE - BETWEEN NOW AND NEXT WEEK

One Week. One Step. One Brother.

Suggested action activities

1. Practice Courage in a Difficult Situation

Identify one conversation, decision, or responsibility that you have been avoiding because of fear or discomfort. Take a positive step toward addressing it this week, trusting God to guide and strengthen you.

2. Begin Each Day with a Prayer of Trust

Spend five minutes each morning asking God for the courage and confidence to face the day's challenges. Reflect on Jesus' words, "Do not be afraid," and carry that message with you throughout the day.

3. Offer Grace to Someone

Look for an opportunity to forgive, encourage, or support someone who has made a mistake or is struggling. Follow Paul's example by extending the same grace to others that God continually offers to us.

4. Share Your Faith Through Action

Perform a visible act of Christian witness this week, such as helping a neighbor, volunteering, inviting someone to Mass, or openly sharing how your faith has impacted your life.

5. Examine Your Integrity

At the end of each day, spend a few minutes reflecting on whether your actions matched your values and beliefs. Ask yourself where you demonstrated honesty, courage, and faithfulness, and where you can improve tomorrow.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, like the prophet Jeremiah, we sometimes face fear and worry. In moments when the world feels overwhelming, remind us that You are with us like a mighty champion. Banish our anxieties and give us the courage to boldly speak Your truth in the light. Grant us the grace to trust in Your unfailing protection.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

- Readings based on the USCCB lectionary for June 21, 2026.