

NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS

by Ken Pullis

In these first days of 2026, many people are making New Year's Resolutions. In some ways, this is a very Catholic thing to do, as we often try to improve ourselves during the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent in preparation for Christmas and Easter. We are called to constantly turn away from sin and to turn towards Jesus and the graces that He offers in the Sacraments. Recently, Pope Leo XIV spoke with young Catholics gathered in Indianapolis for the National Catholic Youth Conference. He challenged young people to invest in some new habits, and these are new habits that would also benefit each of us.

Go to confession regularly.

God gives us grace and strength to overcome temptation and sin in this sacrament.

Begin and end each day with Jesus.

We start and end each day with prayer at Foley. We can find time to thank God at the start of the day as well as review our day with Him before we fall asleep.

Make Eucharistic adoration a habit.

My wife and I try to go to adoration every Thursday. It is a beautiful time of silence and prayer that is so peaceful and rejuvenating.

Commit to a real friendship with Jesus.

We can chat with Jesus as we do with our friends.

Find and invest in one "faithful friend."

We can pick one of our closest friends and make a concerted effort to strengthen and enhance our friendship with that person.

Pray the rosary for help and protection.

I have fond memories of praying the rosary with my family as a child. Mary is Our Mother, and she wants to protect us.

Limit your screen time.

Every Sunday, I receive a summary of my screen time for the week. Over the break, my screen time nearly doubled. We can lead by example and reduce our screen time.

Choose one way to be more present in person.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem so that God could be with us in person, in the flesh, not virtually present.

Join something in your parish.

Each of us is blessed with talents and treasures that we can share with others.

Teach the faith to someone.

God blesses us with the gift of faith. He wants us to share it with others.

We can start small with one or two of these ideas to make 2026 a year of personal growth and improvement. Be assured of my prayers that you will be open to allowing God to do great things in your life this year. Happy New Year!

REKINDLING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SCRIPTURE

by Tim McCormick


For the month of January, Pope Leo's prayer intention is the following:

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God."

If you have been regularly reading my monthly article here on Catholic Corner, you know that the Bible is central to my spiritual life. I love teaching Scripture and learning more and more about it. So, I was pretty excited to see this as the Pope's monthly prayer intention for January.

Connected to this, Pope Francis in 2019 designated the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time (in January) as Sunday of the Word of God. As Vatican News reported at the time, Pope Francis desired the Church to recall **"the importance given by the Second Vatican Council to rediscovering Sacred Scripture for the life of the Church."** This month is as good a time as any to begin (or rekindle) a relationship with Scripture. Check to see if your local parish will be starting a Bible study soon.

I will be leading one during the season of Lent at Guardian Angels starting in February. (More info on that next month.) Also, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided a helpful resource page if you want to dig a little deeper into the Sunday of the Word of God:



Sunday of the Word of God

www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/sunday-word-god >>

THE BEATITUDES: PART V

Reflection by Steve Petty

The human heart longs for fulfillment. The only way the human heart can find fulfillment is to live a righteous life. This simply means that what we love and how we live are right in the eyes of God. If the heart is oriented toward righteousness, it loves, in its own imperfect way, what God loves. This is the meaning behind the fourth Beatitude. Jesus is telling us not to put our trust in the allurements of a sinful world. The fulfillment the world offers always leaves the heart broken and restless. Jesus invites us to trust him when he says:

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." Matthew 5:6

Jesus tells us in the fourth beatitude that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are blessed. This simply means that a Christian is a person who has a passion for the Kingdom of God and all that it means for humanity. A person who hungers and thirsts for righteousness is a person who seeks the wholeness of others, the material and the spiritual. The Christian must always advocate for the poor. Poverty can touch a person in so many different ways (i.e., a person can suffer spiritual poverty as well as material). At baptism Christians become members of Christ's Body. Receiving the Holy Spirit at baptism, Christians take on the mission to become Christ's body in the world. Christ fed the multitudes, he brought glad tidings to the poor, and sight to the blind. He healed the lame, made the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. He wants total and complete fulfillment for all God's children. Total and complete fulfillment for the human person, however, only comes with a relationship with God. Christian disciples are to bring justice to others in this world, for sure, but they need to make sure to bring Christ into the social realm as well; for "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Mt 4:4). The mission is to bring others to Jesus Christ in whom they will find their complete fulfillment.

Venerable Fulton Sheen, an American bishop who was arguably the first television evangelist, published a book in 1937 titled: The Cross and the Beatitudes. Concerning the fourth Beatitude, Sheen writes:

"If the world does hunger and thirst, it is always for something less than the justice of this Beatitude...The godless, for example, hunger and thirst, but not for the justice of God; they hunger and thirst for a world system built, not upon love, but upon superiority of classes and upon revolutionary upheaval. They seek to fill a want, but only a material want...It is just against such a filling of the animal in us, and the starving of the spiritual, that Our Lord said: 'Woe to you that are filled; for you shall hunger'; and 'Your Father knows that you have need of all these things. Seek you therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.'"

As we transition from the Christmas season back into ordinary time, make the fourth Beatitude a priority in your spiritual development. Put before your heart the imperative to bring the presence of Christ to the vulnerable. You don't need to look far in our broken world to find the forgotten and defenseless. As you continue to deepen your relationship with God, may you become a vessel by which Christ may bring healing to others.