

Sunday Families by **FR. TONY**

Sunday Homily 06-28-2026

I am a member of several discipleship online forums and Facebook discussions. I have had a conversion of mind. For many years I really believed that if we cared for the beauty of what it means to be faithful Christians that would be enough. We all like beautiful things, we want to have beautiful experiences, we sacrifice a lot to make ourselves handsome and beautiful. The truth of the matter is that beauty, though attractive is best appreciated in a spiritual way for those who already consider themselves believers. Beauty can help us move into deeper experiences of the divine, but it doesn't normally have the ability introduce another person into relationship with Jesus Christ. In the recent weeks I have come across two lists that have helped put into words things I know and have thought but was at a loss to speak. The first is a short bylaws of a small faith group called, "The No-Names." As they sat and tried to put their experiences of the Christian Life into words, they came up with seven "It is Normal" Statements. The Group's vision, "That we would be a Catholic community that nurtures the faith and gifts of lay Catholics, enabling them to become effective, committed disciples of Jesus Christ who have discerned and are living out their God-given mission in life."

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“It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to have a living, growing, love relationship with God.” As Christians we are called into a living, growing relationship of love with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This relationship is one built of invitation to enter into divine life, and is lived in daily life, and grows in depth and breadth. If we do not live out this divine invitation, if our love for God does not grow in profundity and desire to share with fellow man and woman, if it is not lived out daily, then it will slowly wither and die.

“It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to be excited Christian activists.” Our loving relationship with our Triune God invites and encourages shared life with others, both believer and not. When we enter into the divine life of Christian we are able to see that there is injustice all around. We begin to see the responsibility that we each and all possess to help solve and prevent social ills and injustice. So we begin to act in concrete ways to alleviate injustice, sometimes with our financial abilities, sometimes with our hands, and sometimes by our sacrifice.

“It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to be knowledgeable about their faith, the Scriptures, the doctrinal and moral teachings of the church, and the history of the Church.” We are told over and over again in Seminary formation that no one wants to see a doctor who hasn’t attended a class since Medical School. No one

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wants a CPA to do their taxes who hasn't attended a seminar on the recent changes to the tax code. The Catholic Priest has the same responsibility to care for and hone their skills through continuing to gather and accumulate knowledge. The Catholic Christian has the similar need. Just as you expand and grow your knowledge gained in your profession and your hobbies and crafts, the lay Catholic needs to delve into the scriptures, and the teachings and history of the Church to better understand where we are and how we got here.

“It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to know what their charisms of service are and to be using them effectively in the fulfillment of their vocation or call in life.” Our God has called each and every Baptized Christian to a definitive and unique mission, and has equipped us to fulfill them. He has given each and every local church all the graces and charisms to call the nations home to Jesus Christ. Not only for the growth of the Church, but also in the self-satisfaction of her people. If our charisms are not being used, then we will never find completeness.

“It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to know that they have a vocation/mission in life (primarily in the secular world) given to them by God. It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to be actively engaged in discerning and living this vocation.” We live in an era where human worth and dignity are measured in dollars gained. This

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is not the Christian view. We are not measured by what we do, but by who we are.

We are first and foremost children of the Most High God. We are called, chosen, and redeemed. And we are sent into the world as Ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

We can spend our lives on gaining financial security and finer wines and fairer seasons, but that is not what we are made for.

“It is NORMAL for lay Catholics to have the fellowship of other committed lay Catholics available to them, to encourage, nurture, and discern as they attempt to follow Jesus.” We are called to be a community that breaks bread and drinks wine not just at Sacramental meals but other times as well. We are called to community of believers that share common goals, and sometimes that goal is not a project to be accomplished, but a meal to be completed. The common goal of conversation and good meal, are every bit as important and sometimes more so than mowing lawns, assembling food baskets, and providing faith formation catechists.

“It is NORMAL for the local parish to function consciously as a house of formation for lay Catholics which enables and empowers lay Catholics to do all the above.” The role of a Catholic Parish is not to maintain institutions and facilities,

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it is to form disciples. It is a house of formation. Institutions and facilities are part of that formation, but not the end goal. Discipleship in Christ Jesus is the end goal.

St. Pope John XXIII had ten daily rules that he followed every day. It is the second list I will share with you, without comment from me. It seems that putting some of these “only for today’s” make the “it is normal’s” an awful lot easier

Only for today, I will seek to live the livelong day positively without wishing to solve the problems of my life all at once.

Only for today, I will take the greatest care of my appearance: I will dress modestly; I will not raise my voice; I will be courteous in my behavior; I will not criticize anyone; I will not claim to improve or to discipline anyone except myself.

Only for today, I will be happy in the certainty that I was created to be happy, not only in the other world but also in this one.

Only for today, I will adapt to circumstances, without requiring all circumstances to be adapted to my own wishes.

Only for today, I will devote 10 minutes of my time to some good reading, remembering that just as food is necessary to the life of the body, so good reading is necessary to the life of the soul.

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Only for today, I will do one good deed and not tell anyone about it.

Only for today, I will do at least one thing I do not like doing; and if my feelings are hurt, I will make sure that no one notices.

Only for today, I will make a plan for myself: I may not follow it to the letter, but I will make it. And I will be on guard against two evils: hastiness and indecision.

Only for today, I will firmly believe, despite appearances, that the good Providence of God cares for me as no one else who exists in this world.

Only for today, I will have no fears. In particular, I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful and to believe in goodness. Indeed, for 12 hours I can certainly do what might cause me consternation were I to believe I had to do it all my life.