



# To the Heights

Year A 2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Download from [www.waterfordlismore.ie/resources](http://www.waterfordlismore.ie/resources) or subscribe to receive by email!

## SPOTLIGHT!



Young people from our Diocese and Holy Family Mission attending the SEEK 2026 Conference in Columbus, USA with 16,000 other young adults!

## HEAR!

### Sunday Gospel

John 1:29-34

If you don't have a Bible handy, click here to access Sunday Mass Readings!



## TUNE!

I Refuse  
Josh Wilson



## GROW



Abiding Together is a weekly podcast hosted by Michelle Benzinger, Sr. Miriam James Heidland, and Heather Khym, providing a place of connection, rest and encouragement for people who are on the journey of living out their passion and purpose in Jesus Christ. With book studies, podcasts for liturgical seasons, Apostolic Letters and series, these podcasts are full of inspirational wisdom and encouragement, particularly for Catholic women who want to go deeper in their faith.



## WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

Ask yourself the questions Fr Mike posed at the end of this week's video:

- "God, what is your vision for my life?"
- "What are the decisions I need to make? What obstacles do I need to remove from my life?"
- "What is one positive step I can take today to help me achieve that vision?"

## POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY

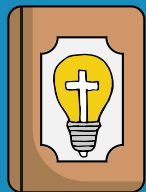
For prayer with the Word of God. Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be that nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.



FR MIKE SCHMITZ



"Christ made my soul beautiful with the jewels of grace and virtue. I belong to Him whom the angels serve."



## REFLECT

- Which John is referred to in this Gospel?
- What does He call Jesus?
- What was John's mission?
- What happened when John baptised Jesus?
- What words did he hear spoken at that moment?
- What does John declare about Jesus at the end of this Gospel?
- Why is Jesus called the Lamb of God? What did the Jews understand by sacrificial lambs?



## GAMECHANGERS!

ST AGNES  
21st January

The Catholic Church's Liturgical Calendar is crammed full of inspirational saints and heroes, or as we like to call them, Game Changers! Check them out on our web page!



## PRAY

Father God, my Father, You have a loving plan for my whole life. I do not know exactly where You want to lead me, but grant me the grace to trust in Your plan. Show me now who it is You want me to be at the end of this year. Teach me daily what I need to do, to become that person, the best version of myself. Help me to commit to small steps faithfully, to grow 1% closer daily to that vision.


[www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry](http://www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry)

[AscendWaterfordLismoreYM](https://www.facebook.com/AscendWaterfordLismoreYM)

[ascendwaterfordlismore.ym](https://www.instagram.com/ascendwaterfordlismore.ym)

[Ascend Youth Ministry](https://www.youtube.com/AscendYouthMinistry)

Vision focuses our decisions.  
Decisions determine our destiny.  
Fr Mike Schmitz

**HIS  
WORD &  
MY LIFE!**



Clarity can be a tricky thing, and yet when we don't have clarity, it leads to frustration and lack of peace.

Jesus had total clarity about his goals in life. He knew what His mission was: to reconcile us to the Father, to show us how to live, and to win eternal salvation for us. All His decisions, all His words and actions were oriented towards that goal, and He never lost sight of the Father's face or heart at any stage, even during His passion and death.

John the Baptist had very clear goals too. He knew He wasn't the Messiah. His goal in life was to prepare the way for the Messiah, to announce His coming, to prepare for it by calling people to repentance. All his decisions (quirky as some of them may have been, like wearing camel skin and eating locusts!) were oriented towards that goal.

Are we as clear about our goals? Do we know where we're headed and how to get there? Do we know who God has created us to be, and are we actively seeking to become that person? God's plan for us is the maximum of our happiness: let's make a start, a small step today towards realising His vision in our lives!

**RESPOND!**



What do you think God could be saying to you in this Gospel? What speaks to your heart? Maybe it raises questions, maybe it's a little uncomfortable, maybe it offers hope... what matters is that we are open to hearing God speak to us individually.

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**FIND THE WORDS FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL IN THE WORDSEARCH!**

**PUZZLE**

baptise  
Chosen One  
dove  
existed  
heaven  
heaven  
Holy Spirit  
Israel  
Jesus  
John the Baptist  
Lamb of God  
Look  
resting  
reveal  
sin  
water  
witness  
world



**DOODLE PRAYER**

Reflect on the scripture quote and allow thoughts and images that come to you to form part of your doodle prayer: it could be people or situations that need prayer or even areas you might need to change in. Certain words or phrases might stand out for you. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your heart as you pray and doodle!

"Look, there is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world."



CLICK HERE FOR SOME RELAXING INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

TOP WORSHIP SONGS OF ALL TIME! - INSTRUMENTAL WORSHIP GUITAR | JON SNODGRASS





VISION FOCUSES  
OUR DECISIONS.  
DECISIONS  
DETERMINE OUR  
DESTINY.

**LIVE**  
*without*  
**REGRETS**



# LIFE GOALS



ICEBREAKER



- What would you most like to be remembered for?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years time? What kind of person do you want to be? What do you want to have achieved?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ (DEVELOPING A CLEAR VISION IN LIFE) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:



Fr Mike thinks most people will get to the end of their lives and realise they wasted it.  
**Why will this be? What kind of life have they not chosen to live?**



**How do we live lives of meaning? What do we need to have?**

**What kind of questions should we ask ourselves?**

- Who is it I want \_\_\_\_\_?
- Who is it that God is \_\_\_\_\_?

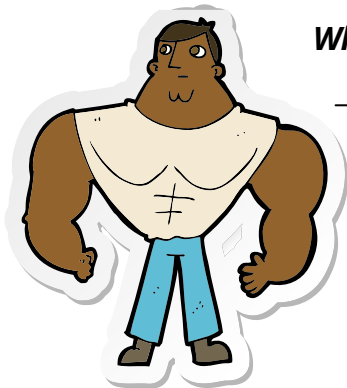
**REFLECT:** Have you spent any time thinking about this question in the last year or six months?

**We should ask ourselves:** "What is the vision God has placed in my heart of who He wants me to be?"

This does not mean: "How many people does He \_\_\_\_\_ or people to know \_\_\_\_\_ or for me to be \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_."



**What two things are body builders very clear about?**



Vision focuses our \_\_\_\_\_. Without vision we have no parameters or principles to base on decisions on.

**REFLECT:** What kind of decisions do body builders or professional athletes make based on their vision?

**Vision focuses our decisions. Decisions determine our \_\_\_\_\_.**

If we don't orient our decisions towards the vision God places in our hearts, then we can get to the end of our lives and realise we have wasted it.



**Do we need more time?**

How many hours a week do we already have? \_\_\_\_\_

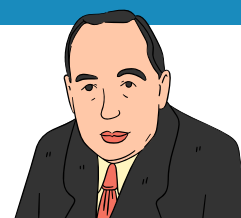
How do we spend that time? Is it oriented towards the vision or just wasted?



## LIFE GOALS



Fr Mike points out we don't just spend our time not doing what we \_\_\_\_\_ to do, but we don't even do what we \_\_\_\_\_ to do!  
What do we settle for instead?



CS Lewis: Author of

"The \_\_\_\_\_ Letters"

### What can we do?

Ask these three questions:

- "God, what is Your \_\_\_\_\_?"

(be specific - what does God want you to look like in a year!)

- "What are the \_\_\_\_\_ I need to make?"

(keep it simple: what are the things in my life that are preventing me from that vision? What do I need to say no to?)

- "What is one \_\_\_\_\_ step I could take today?"



(something that if I continue it on a regular and consistent basis, not only will I not have wasted my life, but I'll become the person God has created me to be!)



READ: JOHN 1:29-34

Clarity can be a tricky thing, and yet when we don't have clarity, it leads to frustration and lack of peace. Jesus had total clarity about his goals in life. He knew what His mission was: to reconcile us to the Father, to show us how to live and to win eternal salvation for us. All His decisions, all His words and actions were oriented towards that goal, and He never lost sight of the Father's face or heart at any stage, even during His passion and death.

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Are we as clear about our goals? Do we know where we're headed and how to get there? Do we know who God has created us to be, and are we actively seeking to become that person? God's plan for us is the maximum of our happiness: let's make a start, a small step today towards realising His vision in our lives!



YOUR MISSION!

ASK YOURSELF THE THREE QUESTIONS FR MIKE POSED AT THE END OF THIS VIDEO:

- "GOD, WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR MY LIFE?"
- "WHAT ARE THE DECISIONS I NEED TO MAKE? WHAT OBSTACLES DO I NEED TO REMOVE FROM MY LIFE?"
- "WHAT IS ONE POSITIVE STEP I CAN TAKE TODAY TO HELP ME ACHIEVE THAT VISION?"



MAKE TIME FOR GOD

God, what is your vision for my life? Help me to become that person, no more and no less. Help me to identify concretely the changes I need to make in my life, and to act decisively, so I can become the best version of myself. Amen



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON DECIDING FOR GOD'S VISION

- Josh Wilson: I refuse
- Eleventh Hour Worship: Your Plans for Us
- Paul Baloche: Open the Eyes of my Heart
- Brian Doerksen: Today I Choose



- Matthew West: The Motions
- Rend Collective: You are my Vision
- Matt Redman: When All Is Said and Done
- Jenn Johnson: God I look to You



The Secret to Sticking to a New Year's Resolution (Fr Mike Schmitz)



# LIFE GOALS

## 1. GOD, WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR MY LIFE?

*(be specific - what does God want me to look like in a year's time!)*



## 2. WHAT ARE THE DECISIONS I NEED TO MAKE?

*(keep it simple: what are the things in my life that are preventing me from that vision? What things am I doing, what have I included in my life, what relationships are there that are obstacles to that vision? What do I need to say no to?)*



## 3. WHAT IS ONE POSITIVE STEP I COULD TAKE TODAY?

*(something that if I continue it on a regular and consistent basis, not only will I not have wasted my life, but I'll become the person God has created me to be!)*



**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Vision**  
*FOCUSES OUR*  
**Decisions.**



**Decisions**  
*DETERMINE OUR*  
**destiny.**



- FR MIKE SCHMITZ -



# DOODLE PRAYER



Allow yourself some space to sit and reflect on your future. You might prefer to play some music in the background, or just sit in silence. Read the words of Thomas Merton below and pray with them. Allow ideas, thoughts and images that come to you as you pray to form part of your doodle prayer. What are the areas of your life you need to invite Jesus into? What situations, relationships do you need His help with? What decisions do you have to make? Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your heart and your thoughts. This is a particular space you are creating for God in your life today. Speak, and listen.

My Lord God,

I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end.

nor do I really know myself,

and the fact that I think I am following your will

does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you

does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this

you will lead me by the right road,

though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust you always though

I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,

and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

[CLICK HERE FOR SOME RELAXING INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC](#)

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

