



# FAITH: A *FRESH TAKE*



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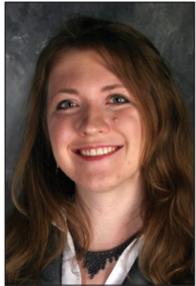


CNS/SOE ZEYA TUN, Reuters

**COLLECTING WATER:** A girl collects drinking water at the Dala River outside Yangon, Myanmar, March 3. The United Nations reports that, worldwide, 900 children, age 5 or younger, die each year because of dirty water.

## Putting Important Things on Your Bucket List

The movie "The Bucket List" inspired the public to reflect on what each person wants to do before he or she dies. What's on your bucket list?



From the time I was a teenager, my list was always full of flights of fancy. I wanted to sing on Broadway, play the violin at Carnegie Hall and visit New Zealand. Even teens

I know have made bucket lists, too. Ever since the movie came out a few years ago, everyone seems to have been busy imagining what they want to do in life.

I have actually been able to accomplish some of the crazy things on my bucket list, and until recently I was pretty proud of that. I visited Roman ruins, got married and saw the pope.

I honestly thought I was doing well — until the cancer scare.

Recently, I sat in a doctor's office in a revealing, embarrassing white paper gown, watching the doctor put me on the fast track to the surgery suite. A few days later, I was being wheeled down a hallway on my way to anesthesia and a biopsy.

I became terrified of the road ahead, of the possibility that the decades stretching before me had become years or days. It was easy to think I was invincible, before that hallway and that white paper gown.

When that changed, so did my bucket list.

Gone were the "things" I wanted and wanted to do: the Victorian house with the wraparound porch, the birthday trip on the "vomit comet" space plane. Suddenly, I found that my bucket list was small and topped off with people.

I wanted to talk with my mom and eat her chicken soup, to hang out with my dad and hear his dad jokes, see

my friend from Boston and talk about obscure books and movies, sing with my band from college again, babysit my best friend's new daughter and reminisce with my post-college theater group and my friends in Florida.

All of the material things I wanted suddenly didn't seem so important anymore. In fact, they didn't seem important at all.

A common complaint from parents about teenagers is that teens don't always understand that they're not invincible: They drive too fast, risk too much and don't think about their future enough. On top of that, it's really easy to get caught up in the cultural noise that says our self-worth is based on having the newest iPhone or being able to drive at 16 or how popular we are on Instagram.

Our culture puts emphasis on things, when we really should be focusing on people.

It's not healthy to be morbid or crazy about the future, especially when you're young and looking forward to a long life, but the truth is, our time in this life is transitory. We're only going to be here a short time, and we're not going to be able to take our things with us when we move onward.

As you're putting your life together — and your own bucket list — don't forget to put people on it: your friends and your family, your college best friend. Don't forget the moments that seem small but are unforgettable: That feeling you get on a sports team or drama cast, when you've won a game or closed a show, laughter at a school dance, high-fives, jokes, hugs, triumphs, emotional moments, singing along at concerts, smiles and people doing what people do.

That kind of bucket list is one full of life.

— Karen Osborne

(This column is part of the CNS columns package.)

## Viral Videos Restore Faith

It is no secret that the Internet is overloaded with viral videos that have taken over our social media accounts.



I can't login to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram without being blasted with tempting videos. Click on this link to see a man tumbling down a snowy hill. Click on this link to see a young girl dancing to Taylor

Swift's latest song. Click on this link to see this presidential candidate's argument with a public figure.

While I'll admit that many of the videos are entertaining, sadly, many are just staged attempts to capture our attention or make us feel guilty when giggling at someone else's clumsy nature while procrastinating to keep from doing tasks we should be doing instead of watching YouTube.

Fortunately, though, viral videos have taken a turn for the better. Stories of faith are swarming the web if you look for them. For example, an image of a young teen praying over a homeless man caught my attention this morning. As I watched, I found myself crying in appreciation of his gesture. The next video I clicked on showed how a stranger left a \$100 tip for a waitress who was eight months pregnant and facing eviction from her apartment. The anonymous tipper

had no idea that she was in financial distress. He just felt the need to pay his fortunes forward.

Although many of the videos that have gone viral are guilty of sucking away our time, it is worth the time to spend a few minutes each day watching something inspirational. After watching a few videos and reading stories on websites such as the Little Things or the Greater Good, I find myself contemplating how I can impact the lives of others. It prompts me to think about how my struggles are nowhere nearly as devastating as the struggles other people face. Just a two-minute video restores my faith in humanity and encourages me to be a better person.

Whether you find yourself surfing the web to avoid a task or chore or to kill some time, it's the optimal time to explore your faith. Avoid clicking on those videos that reveal something "shocking" about a celebrity and seek out the feel-good stories. Although some of these videos may be fake or staged, that's really not the point. A story or narrative that helps you to develop as a Catholic, seek out ways to help others and share your own faith is never a waste of time.

— Shannon Philpott

*Shannon Philpott is a freelance writer and college journalism instructor, but most of all a mother of two teens. You can see her work at [www.shannonphilpott.com](http://www.shannonphilpott.com).*



CNS/STOYAN NENOV, Reuters

**STRUGGLING TO LIVE:** Migrants waded across a river near the Greece-Macedonia border, west of the village of Idomeni, Greece, March 14. Some 12,000 migrants are camped in Idomeni on Greece's border with Macedonia. Migrants are fleeing from war and poverty in countries such as Syria and Afghanistan.

### Fresh Take: a way to look at faith from a different perspective

This is an online-only page dedicated to young adult Catholics, their interests, their needs, their challenges and their faith.

We want to give young adults something to "chew on," to think about when they're looking for something more than an on-line horoscope or the

latest star news.

This page offers columns we believe will interest our young adults. Let us know.

Email us at [cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org](mailto:cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org) with questions, suggestions or for more information.

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