

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A – October 25, 2026
Exodus 22:20-26 / 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 / Matthew 22:34-40

A story is told about a little boy who approached a priest after Mass and asked, “Father, can I stay in the church and not go home?”

The priest was surprised and asked, “Why?”

The boy replied, “Because here you have only ten commandments. At our house, we have so many!”

We may smile at that story, but today’s Gospel invites us to ask an important question:

What is the most important thing in our relationship with God?

A Pharisee asks Jesus, “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”

At that time, the Jewish religious leaders had many laws and regulations. So, it was not an easy question. But Jesus goes straight to the heart of the matter. He gives us two commandments.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

My dear brothers and sisters, Jesus brings our entire religious life back to one essential word: LOVE.

Notice that Jesus gives us two commandments, but they belong together. We cannot separate our love for God from our love for our neighbor. They are like two sides of the same coin.

Sometimes we may think that loving God means praying, coming to Mass, receiving the sacraments, and saying the Rosary. These are all important. They help us grow closer to God. But our love for God must also be seen in the way we treat the people around us.

There is a beautiful story about a journalist who visited the home of Mother Teresa’s Sisters in Kolkata, India. He saw a young sister gently cleaning the terrible wounds of a sick and suffering man.

Deeply moved, the journalist said to her, “Sister, I wouldn’t do that for a thousand pounds!”

The sister replied, “Neither would I. But I do it for the love of God.”

What a beautiful expression of love! The sister saw more than a sick and suffering man. She saw a person who was precious in the eyes of God.

My dear brothers and sisters, this is what Jesus asks of us. We show our love for God when we care for someone who is sick, listen patiently to someone who is lonely, forgive someone who has hurt us, or offer a kind word to someone who is discouraged.

Sometimes the person who needs our love is not a stranger. It may be someone in our own family, a friend, a fellow parishioner, or even someone we find difficult to get along with.

The first reading reminds us that God wants us to care for the stranger, the poor, and those who are vulnerable. Our faith must move beyond words and become loving action.

Think of a tree. If a tree is to grow tall and strong, it must spread its roots deep into the ground. The stronger its roots, the stronger the tree.

Our spiritual life is similar. If we want to grow closer to God, we must deepen our roots through prayer, the Eucharist, and the sacraments. But the strength of our relationship with God must also be seen in our love for others.

The deeper our roots grow in God's love, the more our lives should bear the fruits of kindness, patience, forgiveness, and compassion.

My dear brothers and sisters, we have come into the house of God to pray, celebrate the Eucharist, and grow closer to Him. But after Mass, we are sent forth to bring that love into our homes, our workplaces, our parish, and our daily lives.

We come to church to grow in God's love, and we go forth to share that love with others.

So, let us remember this simple message: We love God through our prayer, and we show that love through the way we treat one another.

We love God by giving Him our hearts, and we show that love by giving our hearts to one another.

As we receive Jesus in the Eucharist today, let us ask Him to deepen our love for God and open our hearts to our neighbors.

May others recognize our love for God not only by the prayers we say, but also by the kindness, patience, forgiveness, and compassion we show.

Amen.