# ST. BENEDICT CHURCH
# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time 10-25-2026



# Love Is a Verb

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSsR

"Love makes the world go 'round." Or another saying: "Love is all you need." Love, so necessary, so welcome, and seemingly so elusive. How can something be so needed, so valued, and so treasured and at the same time be so rare and even, at times, so difficult? Philosophers, poets, and scribes all provide different insights, each capturing something of the truth yet remaining somehow incomplete. Jesus changes the context: love understood not as a feeling or as an emotion, but as a commandment. In God's kingdom, love is not something you pursue or something you hope to find. Living in God's kingdom, love is something you do. It is core; it is essential. It is how you live. It is how you form your judgments and perceptions. It is what energizes your choices and your decisions. We come closer and closer each day to loving God fully when we understand the need to embrace the "unspoken" commandment: "[Jesus said,] 'For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it'" (Matthew 16:25).

## Reflect Do I think of love as a feeling or as an action—as a noun or a verb?

**Today's readings are all about love — God's faithful love for His people and the love we are called to return to Him and to one another. The stewardship way of life is simply the daily practice of these two greatest commandments.**

**In today's Gospel, Jesus is asked which commandment is the greatest. His answer is both familiar and endlessly challenging. He says, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind... The second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself."**

**Why are these two commandments inseparable? Because both are rooted in love.**

**When we love God above all else, we begin to see others as He sees them. And when we genuinely love our neighbor, we reflect the love we have first received from Him. This is the heart of Christian stewardship. It is simple enough for a child to understand, yet rich enough to spend a lifetime putting into practice.**

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DEAR VISITOR TO ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC CHURCH, ALOHA! THANK YOU FOR VISITINGUS TODAY! WE WISH YOU A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE AND THAT YOU LEAVE St. BENEDICT'S TODAY, REFRESHED IN SPIRIT AND WITH PEACE IN YOUR HEART! SINCE THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CHURCH, IT HAS BEEN A CATHOLIC TRADITION TO

October 25, 2026 • 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A

# His Creative Answer

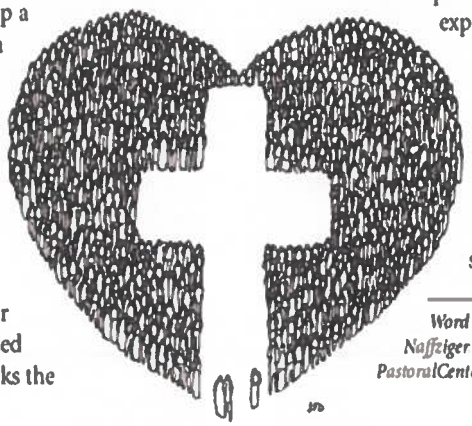
*This Week's Readings at Mass*

- Exodus 22:20-26 • Social laws
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 • A model for believers
- Matthew 22:34-40 • The greatest commandment

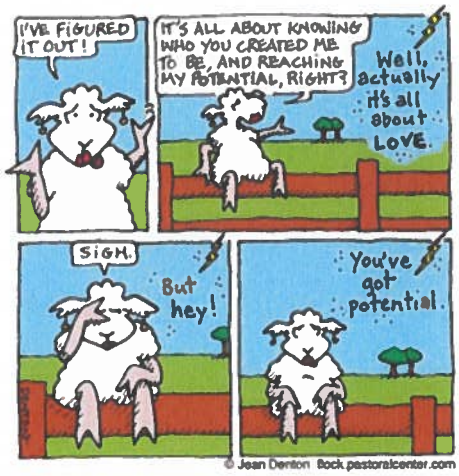
Once again, the first reading gives us insight into the foundations of Jesus' beliefs. As a practicing Jew, Jesus grew up hearing these laws read aloud in his synagogue and home. His religion taught that it is wrong to oppress immigrants, widows, and orphans—those who were the most vulnerable in that ancient society. Jesus took all these teachings to heart and grew into an adult with a keen sense of God's compassion for the vulnerable. His instructions weren't new—they flowed from his ancient tradition. He simply reinterpreted them for his current listeners to understand them better.

The testy interactions between Jesus and the Jewish leaders and scholars continue in today's Gospel reading. This time, the lawyer who questions Jesus thinks he is putting Jesus in an impossible position. The Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament) contain 613 different laws—248 positive ones, "you shall," and 365 negative ones, "you shall not."

How could Jesus name just one as the most important? His opponents stand ready to find fault with him for whichever ones he doesn't elevate. They are also aware that Jesus has regularly broken some of the 613 laws. For example, healing people on the Sabbath, which Jesus repeatedly did, is against the law which forbids working on the Sabbath. They might wonder if he will make up a new law, in which case they can accuse him of being unfaithful to their religious tradition.



As usual, Jesus gives a creative and surprising answer with which none of them can find fault. He quotes Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart..." a verse pious Jews recited several times a day. Then he links the love of God to love of others by quoting Leviticus 19:18, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." He doesn't make up a new law, nor does he dismiss the other 611 mandates he hasn't quoted. He simply upholds those two as a way to observe and interpret the others. From then forward, Jesus' followers have a tool to analyze if they are faithful to all of the laws—in their observance of them, are they expressing love for God and others? If so, they are on the right path.




"You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

**Sheepish Question:**
The Lord has given me the capability to fully love God and my neighbor—so what holds me back?

## Questions of the Week

1. People in any religious tradition can go astray if they focus on the letter of the laws rather than the spirit behind them. When have you experienced this?

2. As you consider all the laws and "rules" of your church today, which are most or least helpful in supporting your efforts to love God and love others as yourself? How so?

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# Dear Padre,

## *I occasionally need to be reminded why I should remain Catholic. Can you help?*



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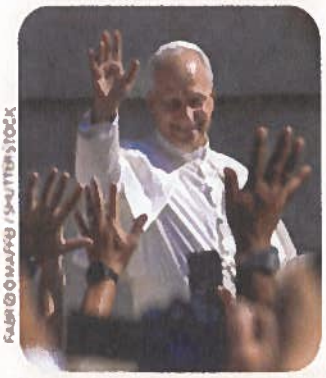
Whether our faith was inherited at birth or adopted later, it's healthy to periodically reexamine our beliefs and practices with the intent to grow closer to God. Saint Paul uses the metaphor of moving beyond milk to solid food to explain our maturing faith. (See Hebrews 5:12–14). Questions or doubts are not necessarily signs of crisis or disloyalty to God or the Church. Indeed, it's often when we challenge pat answers that God moves us to a deeper meaning and stronger relationship—that is, if we're steadfast on the path to holiness. People remain Catholic for numerous reasons, including:

- the Church's belief in God's goodness to us through the sacraments;
- a 2,000-year tradition of living the gospel in a universal, multicultural community of faith;
- a proven track record as an agent for personal and spiritual growth and social transformation.

When Church members' behavior is contrary to Christ's mission, and our confidence to remain is tested, it's good to recall that the Church is divinely fortified and humanly composed. People remain Catholic because the Church exists to bring us into full communion with God, through Christ, by working toward the fullness of the kingdom. "The Church 'is the visible plan of God's love for humanity,' because God desires 'that the whole human race may become one people of god, form one body of Christ, and be built into one temple of the Holy Spirit'" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 776). ●

**Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org**

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV



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***Health cannot be a luxury for the few.... Universal health coverage is not merely a technical goal to be achieved; it is primarily a moral imperative for societies that wish to call themselves just. Healthcare must be accessible to the most vulnerable, then, not only because their dignity requires it but also to prevent injustice from becoming a cause of conflict.***

**ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS, ROME, MARCH 19, 2026**

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## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to **DearPadre.org** to send your question and to learn more about ***Dear Padre***.

**Monday**
October 26
*Weekday*
Eph 4:32–5:8
Lk 13:10–17

**Tuesday**
October 27
*Weekday*
Eph 5:21–33
Lk 13:18–21

**Wednesday**
October 28
*Sts. Simon and Jude, Apostles*
Eph 2:19–22
Lk 6:12–16

**Thursday**
October 29
*Weekday*
Eph 6:10–20
Lk 13:31–35

**Friday**
October 30
*Weekday*
Phil 1:1–11
Lk 14:1–6

**Saturday**
October 31
*Weekday*
Phil 1:18b–26
Lk 14:1, 7–11

**Sunday**
November 1
*All Saints*
Rv 7:2–4, 9–14
1 Jn 3:1–3
Mt 5:1–12a

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We are grateful that Bishop Michael Castori came to the St. Benedict for traveling to the St. Benedict Beach Lot where the St. Benedict church building originated, offering a Special Blessing



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