

TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME – A

October 11 – 17, 2026

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From a Commentary by St. Augustine

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Sunday

THE LOVE THAT SPRINGS FROM A PURE HEART

From a Commentary by St. Augustine

All believers are familiar with the story of the wedding of the king's son and the banquet that followed it, and of how the Lord's table was thrown open to all comers. When everyone was seated, *the master of the house came in to see the guests, and among them he noticed one without a wedding garment. So he said to him, "My friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?"*

Now what precisely does this mean? Let us try to find out what it is that some believers have, but which the wicked lack, for that will be what the wedding garment is.

Can it be one of the sacraments? Hardly, for these, as we know, are common to good and bad alike. Take baptism for example. It is true that no one comes to God except through baptism, but not every baptized person comes to him. We cannot take this sacrament as the wedding garment, then, for it is a robe worn not only by good people but also by wicked people. Perhaps, then, it is our altar that is meant, or at least what we receive from it. But we know that many who approach the altar eat and drink to their own damnation. Well, then, maybe it is fasting? The wicked can fast too. What about going to church? Some bad people also go to church.

Whatever can this wedding garment be, then? For an answer we must go to the Apostle who says: *The purpose of our command is to arouse the love that springs from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and a genuine faith.* There is your wedding garment. It is not love of just any kind. Many people of bad conscience appear to love one another, but you will not find in them *the love that springs from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and a genuine faith.* Only that kind of love is the wedding garment.

If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, says the Apostle, but have no love, I am nothing but a booming gong or a clashing cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, if I have all knowledge and understand all mysteries, if I have faith strong enough to move mountains, but have no love, I am nothing. In other words, even with all these gifts, I am nothing without Christ. Does that mean that prophecy has no value and that knowledge of mysteries is worthless? No, they are not worthless, but I am, if I possess them but have no love. But can the lack of one good thing rob so many others of their value?

Yes, without love my confession of the name of Christ even by shedding my blood or offering my body to be burnt will avail me nothing, for I may do this out of a desire for glory. That such things can be endured for the sake of empty show without any real love for God, the Apostle also declares. Listen to him: *If I give away all I have to the poor, if I hand over my body to be burnt, but have no love, it will avail me nothing.* So this is what the wedding garment is. Examine yourselves to see whether you possess it. If you do, your place at the Lord's table is secure.

Monday

JONAH, A PREFIGURATION OF CHRIST

From a text On Jonah [II 2,5,6,11 (SC 43)] by St. Jerome

If Jonah is a prefiguration of the Lord who evokes the Savior's Passion by his dwelling in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, then his prayer, too, must be an expression of the Lord's prayer. "I am banished from your sight. I will again look upon your holy Temple" (Jon 2:5). When I was with you, rejoicing in your light, then I would not say: "I am banished". But once I am at the bottom of the sea and clothed in human flesh, then I take human feelings and say: "I am banished from your sight." I said this as man, but what follows I say as God: "I who, being in your form, did not regard my equality with you (Phil 2:6) because I wanted to raise humankind to you. But I will again look upon your holy Temple."

In the same way the gospel text says: "Now glorify me, Father, with you, with the glory that I had with you before the world began" (Jn 17:5), and the Father answers: "I have glorified it and will glorify it again" (Jn 12:28). One and the same Lord asks as man and promises as God and is certain of the possession that was always his. "The waters surged around me up to my neck; the deep enveloped me" (Jon 2:6). May hell not imprison me! May it not refuse me a way out! I made the descent freely; may I freely make the ascent. I came as a captive voluntarily, and I have to set free the captives so that this verse may be accomplished: "He ascended on high and took prisoners captive" (Eph 4:8; cf. Ps 68:19). Those, in fact, who formerly were captives in death have been conquered for life by him. "Then the Lord commanded the fish to vomit Jonah upon dry land" (Jon 2:11). And so he commanded this large whale to restore the Savior to the dry land from the deep and from hell. Thus He who had died to free those held in the bonds of death can lead back a great crowd to life together with him.

"All those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God" (Rom 8,14). It was the Holy Spirit, then, who led Simeon into the Temple. So if you, too, want to hold Jesus, wrap your arms around him, and become worthy of leaving your prison, strive to let yourself be led by the Spirit into the temple of God. Now see how, even now, you are in the temple of our Lord Jesus, namely his Church: his temple built of living stones (1Pt 2,5)...

So if you enter the Temple impelled by the Spirit, you will find the Child Jesus, will take him into your arms, and will say: "Now, Lord, let your servant depart in peace". This deliverance, this departure, takes place in peace... Who are they who die in peace if not those who possess the peace of God that surpasses all knowledge and keeps the hearts of those to whom it belongs? (Phil 4,7). And who are they who leave this world in peace if not those who understand that God was in Christ, reconciling the world?

Tuesday

THE GROANS THE SPIRIT UTTERS WITHIN US

From Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

"We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our complete adoption as children of God". St. Paul goes on to say that this begins with our groaning cry for the redemption of our bodies. Yes, we have the first fruits of the Spirit, and it is the Spirit that groans within and with us for freedom, for liberation from all that weighs us down and keeps us from giving our entire self to our God.

We have already had some taste of what it means to be saved. For example, how often have we groaned to be free from nonsense, or from frustration and the emptiness of what we thought would fill us with joy. So we first groan because we know that our salvation isn't yet complete. Our groans express our deepest and truest desires for liberation, to become fully what we are.

We are really children of God. Yet how often we live out of our ignorance. How we groan to be free of our limited awareness and the mediocrity that goes with it and causes us to lose heart and give in to laziness. We want to speak to our God freely and confidently and experience God's love and salvation.

We groan to be freed from the way our bodies often weigh us down and refuse to help us find the fullness of life we long for. We want to be able to live our bodily condition as a pure gift. St. Pope John Paul II said many wonderful things about our bodiliness, especially as a symbol of our espousal to God in Christ. So we groan under all that weighs us down and prevents us from experiencing this freedom. We are worn out, tempted, sensuous, obtuse, unable, forgetful of self and others. So much to groan about before our Heavenly Father.

All these groanings are the signs that the Spirit is within us, lives in us, and is leading us towards something we don't yet have but whose seeking gives meaning to our long and difficult journey toward the Kingdom of God.

Can we see that these aren't just private and personal groans but those of all our companions and fellow believers? Can we see that they are the Spirit's groans—because God wants all these good things for us even more than we do? Our Heavenly Father speaks to us too in these spiritual groanings. In God's love expressed in this way, we hear peace, God's tenderness, confidence, and a longing to abandon ourselves in the gift that is love. That is the beginning of freedom.

Wednesday

THE PROPEDEUTIC VALUE OF THE LAW

From the Catechesis of Pope Francis on the Letter to the Galatians

Saint Paul, who loved Jesus and had clearly understood what salvation was, taught us that the “children of the promise” (*Gal 4:28*) — that is, all of us, justified by Jesus Christ — are not bound by the Law, but are called to the demanding lifestyle of the freedom of the Gospel. The Law, however, exists. But it exists in another way: the same Law, the Ten Commandments, but in another way, because it could no longer be justified by itself once the Lord Jesus had come. And therefore, in today’s catechesis, I would like to explain this. And we ask: what, according to the Letter to the Galatians, is the role of the Law? In the passage we heard, Paul says that the Law was like a *pedagogue*. It is a beautiful image, that of the pedagogue we spoke about during the last audience, an image that deserves to be understood in its correct meaning.

The Apostle seems to suggest to Christians that they divide the history of salvation into two parts, and also his personal story. There are two periods: before becoming believers in Christ Jesus and after receiving the faith. At the center is the event of Jesus’ death and resurrection, which Paul preached in order to inspire faith in the Son of God, the source of salvation, and in Christ Jesus we are justified. Therefore, starting from faith in Christ, there is a “before” and an “after” concerning the Law itself, because the Law exists, the Commandments exist, but there is one attitude before the coming of Jesus, and another one afterward. The previous history is determined by being “under the Law”. And those who followed the path of the Law were saved; they were justified; the subsequent one, after the coming of Jesus, is to be lived by following the Holy Spirit (cf. *Gal 5:25*). This is the first time that Paul uses this expression: to be “under the Law”. The underlying meaning implies the idea of a negative servitude, typical of slaves: to be “under”. The Apostle makes it explicit by saying that when one is “under the Law” it is as if one is “watched” and “locked up”, a kind of preventive custody. This period, Saint Paul says, has lasted a long time — from Moses to the coming of Jesus — and is perpetuated as long as one lives in sin.

The relationship between the Law and sin will be explained in a more systematic way by the Apostle in his Letter to the Romans, written a few years after the one to the Galatians. In summary, the Law leads to the definition of transgression and to make people aware of their own sin: “You have done this, and so the Law — the Ten Commandments — say this: you are in sin”. Indeed, as common experience teaches, the precept ends up stimulating the transgression. In the Letter to the Romans, he writes: “While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive” (*Rom 7:5-6*). Why? Because the justification of Jesus Christ has come. Paul succinctly expresses his vision of the Law: “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law” (*1 Cor 15:56*). A dialogue: you are under the law, and you are there with the door open to sin.

Thursday

SURRENDERING OUR WILL TO GOD

A Reading from the works of St. Teresa of Jesus

We can promise easily enough to give up our will to someone else, but when it comes to the test, we find it the most difficult thing in the world to do perfectly. But God knows what each of us can bear, and when he finds a valiant soul, he does not hesitate to accomplish his will in that person.

So I want to warn you and make you understand what God's will is, so that you may realize with whom you are dealing (as the saying goes) and what the good Jesus is offering on your behalf to the Father. I want you to make sure you know what you are giving him when you say, "Your will be done." You are asking that God's will may be done in you; it is this and nothing else you are praying for. You need not be afraid he will give you wealth or pleasures or great honors or any earthly good things; his love for you is not so weak as that. He sets a far greater value on your gift and desires to reward you generously, giving you his kingdom even in this life.

Would you like to see how he treats people who make this petition without reserve? Ask his glorious Son, who made it genuinely and resolutely in the garden. Was not God's will accomplished in him through the trials, the sufferings, the insults and the persecutions he sent him until at last his life was ended on the cross? You see then what God gave to one he loved best of all, and that shows you what his will is. These things are his gifts in this world, and he gives them in proportion to his love for us. To those he loves most he gives more, to those less dear he gives less; his gifts are measured by the courage he sees we have and the love we bear his Majesty. Fervent love can suffer a great deal for his sake, while lukewarmness will endure very little. I myself believe that love is the gauge of the crosses, great or small, that we can bear.

So if you have this love, think what you are doing. Do not let the promises you make to so great a Lord be no more than empty compliments, but brace yourselves to suffer whatever God wishes. Any other way of surrendering our will to him is like offering someone a precious stone, entreating him to accept it, and then holding onto it when he puts out his hand to take it. Such mockery is not for him who endured so much mockery for us. If for no other reason, it would be wrong to mock him in this way every time we say the Lord's Prayer. Let us give him, once and for all, the precious stone we have offered him so many times -- for he in fact first gave us the thing we now give back to the Father.

My whole aim in writing this is to encourage us to yield ourselves entirely to our Creator, to submit our will to his, and to detach ourselves from created things. Since you understand how important this is, I will say no more on the subject, but will explain to you why our good Master wishes us to make this petition. He knows very well how we shall benefit by fulfilling the promise we have made to his eternal Father, for in a very short time we shall find ourselves at our journey's end, drinking at the fountain of living water.

Friday

WHERE HEAVEN BEGINS

From the Morning Meditation by Pope Francis on October 16, 2013

A Christian cannot allow himself “to be lukewarm”: he has a specific identity that was given by the seal of the Holy Spirit. The Lord not only chose us but also gave us an identity. This means that we did not inherit merely a name, “but an identity, a way of life, which is not only a list of customs; it is more: it’s an actual identity”. And how have we been “marked” so deeply? The Apostle writes: you have been “sealed with the Holy Spirit”. Our identity “is this very seal, this power of the Holy Spirit, which we have all received in Baptism”.

And since the Holy Spirit had been promised to us by Jesus, “He sealed our heart” and, what’s more, He “walks with us”. He not only gives us an identity, but it is also the guarantee of our inheritance. Heaven begins there. A Christian thus acts in earthly life but is already living from the perspective of eternity. With this seal, we have Heaven in our grasp.

Everyday life is sprinkled with temptations, first of all, with that of “not realizing this beauty that we’ve received”. When this happens, the Spirit, to use an expression of Paul’s, “grieves”: this happens not when we want to erase the identity, but to render it opaque. This is the case of the “lukewarm Christian”, the one who “goes to Mass on Sunday, yes, but the identity isn’t seen in his life”; the one who, despite being a Christian, “lives like a pagan”. Then there is another risk, the other sin “which Jesus speaks to the disciples about” when he tells them: “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy”. It happens that some “pretend to be Christians”, those who lack “transparency” in their actions, who profess one thing in words but act differently in fact. And this is what the doctors of the law did; it is the leaven of “hypocrisy” which risks growing inside us.

Rendering our identity opaque and betraying it in our actions are “two sins against this seal,” which “is a beautiful gift of God, the Spirit,” and is the “guarantee of what awaits us”, of what “we have been promised”. This is why we are able to say that “we have Heaven in our grasp”.

What, then, is “the true conduct of a Christian?” We learn it from Paul himself: “The fruit of the Spirit, which comes from our identity, is love, joy, peace, magnanimity, goodwill, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control”. And this is “our road toward Heaven.”

Saturday

MY LOVE FOR THIS LIFE HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED

From a Letter to the Romans by St. Ignatious of Antioch

I am writing to all the churches to let it be known that I will gladly die for God if only you do not stand in my way. I plead with you: show me no untimely kindness. Let me be food for the wild beasts, for they are my way to God. I am God's wheat and shall be ground by their teeth so that I may become God's pure bread. Pray to Christ for me that the animals will be the means of making me a sacrificial victim for God.

No earthly pleasures, no kingdoms of this world can benefit me in any way. I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. He who died in place of us is the one object of my quest. He who rose for our sakes is my one desire. The time for my birth is close at hand. Forgive me, my brothers. Do not stand in the way of my birth to real life; do not wish me stillborn. I desire to belong to God. Do not, then, hand me back to the world. Do not try to tempt me with material things. Let me attain pure light. Only when I arrive there can I be fully a human being. Give me the privilege of imitating God's passion. If you have him in your heart, you will understand what I wish. You will sympathize with me because you will know what urges me on.

The prince of this world is determined to lay hold of me and to undermine my will, which is intent on God. Let none of you here help him; instead, show yourselves on my side, which is also God's side. Do not talk about Jesus Christ as long as you love this world. Do not harbor envious thoughts. And supposing I should see you, if then I beg you to intervene on my behalf, do not believe what I say. Believe instead what I am now writing to you. For though I am alive as I write to you, still my real desire is to die. My love for this life has been crucified, and there is no yearning in me for any earthly thing. Rather within me is the living water which says deep inside me: "Come to the Father." I no longer take pleasure in perishable food or in the delights of this world. I want only God's bread, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, formed of the seed of David, and for drink I crave his blood, which is love that cannot perish.

I am no longer willing to live a merely human life, and you can bring about my wish if you will. Please, then, do me this favor, so that you in turn may meet with equal kindness. Put briefly, this is my request: believe what I am saying to you. Jesus Christ himself will make it clear to you that I am saying the truth. Only truth can come from that mouth by which the Father has truly spoken. Pray for me that I may obtain my desire. I have not written to you as a mere man would, but as one who knows the mind of God. If I am condemned to suffer, I take it that you wish me well. If my case is postponed, I can only think that you wish me harm.