THIRTIETH WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME – A
October 25 – 31, 2026

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Sun Oct. 25 — Thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time
PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR
From a Commentary by St. Augustine

Mon. 26 — Monday of the 30th Week of Ordinary Time
HUMBLE YOURSELF AND BE COMFORTED
From the Writing of St. Alphonsus de Liguori

Tues 27 — Tuesday of the 30th Week of Ordinary Time
HAVING PATIENCE WITH THE MUSTARD SEED
From a Sermon by Peter Chrysologos

Wed. 28 — FEAST of Sts. SIMON and JUDE, Apostles
THE ZEAL OF THE APOSTLES
From a Sermon on Sts. Simon and Jude by St. John Henry Newman

Thurs 29 — Thursday of the 30th Week of Ordinary Time
THE TENDERNESS OF GOD
From a Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis

MONASTIC DESERT DAY

Fri. 30 — Friday of the 30th Week of Ordinary Time
KEEPING THE SABBATH HOLY
From a Reflection by St. Thomas Aquinas

Sat. 31 — Memorial of Our Lady
THE LORD IS WITH US!
A Reflection developed from a sermon by St. Bernard

Sunday

PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR

From a Commentary by St. Augustine

I know, beloved, how well fed you are every day by the exhortations of Holy Scripture, and what nourishment your hearts find in the word of God. Nevertheless the affection we have for one another compels me to say something to you, beloved, about love. To speak about love there is no need to select some special passage from Scripture to serve as a text for the homily; open the Bible at any page and you will find it extolling love. We know this is so from the Lord himself, as the gospel reminds us, for when asked: what were the most important commandments of the law, he answered: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.* And then, just in case you might be tempted to search further through the pages of Holy Scripture for some commandments other than these two, he added: *The entire law and the prophets also depend upon these two commandments.* If the entire law and the prophets depend upon these two commandments, how much more must the gospel do so?

People are renewed by love. As sinful desire ages them, so love rejuvenates them. Enmeshed in the toils of his desires the psalmist laments: *I have grown old surrounded by my enemies*. Love, on the other hand, is the sign of our renewal from the Lord's own words: *I give you a new commandment – love one another.*

Even in former times there were people who loved God without thought of reward, and whose hearts were purified by their chaste longing for him. They drew back the veils obscuring the ancient promises, and caught a glimpse through these figures of a new covenant to come. They saw that all the precepts and promises of the old covenant, geared to the capacities of an unregenerate people, prefigured a new covenant which the Lord would bring to fulfillment in the last age. The Apostle says this quite clearly: *The things that happened to them were symbolic, and were recorded for us who are living in the last age*. When the time for it came the new covenant began to be openly proclaimed, and these ancient figures were expounded and explained so that all might understand that the old covenant promises were pointed to the new covenant.

And so love was present under the old covenant just as it is under the new, though then it was more hidden and fear was more apparent, whereas now love is more clearly seen and fear is diminished. For as love grows stronger we feel more secure, and when our feeling of security is complete fear vanishes, since, as the apostle John declares: *Perfect love casts out fear.*

Monday

HUMBLE YOURSELF AND BE COMFORTED

From the Writing of St. Alphonsus de Liguori

When you…are visited by God with any infirmity, or loss, or persecution, humble yourself, and say with the good thief, "*We receive the due reward of our deeds. Lord, I deserve this cross because I have offended Thee.*" Humble yourself and be comforted: for the chastisement that you receive is a proof that God wishes to pardon the eternal punishment due to your sins… Let this be my consolation, that the Lord may afflict me and may not spare me here below in order to spare me hereafter. O God! how can he who has deserved hell complain if the Lord send him a cross. Were the pains of hell trifling, still, because they are eternal, we should gladly exchange them for all temporal sufferings that have an end. But no: in hell there are all kinds of pain -- they are all intense and everlasting. And though you should have preserved baptismal innocence and have never deserved hell, you have at least merited a long purgatory: and do you know what purgatory is? St. Thomas says that the souls in purgatory are tormented by the very fire that tortures the damned. Hence St. Augustine says that the pain of that fire surpasses every torment that man can suffer in this life. Be content, then, to be chastised in this life rather than in the next; particularly since by accepting crosses with patience in this life your sufferings will be meritorious; but hereafter you will suffer without merit.

Console yourself also in suffering with the hope of paradise. St. Joseph Calasanctius used to say: "*To gain heaven all labor is small.*" And before him the Apostle said: "*The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*" It would be but little to suffer all the pains of this earth for the enjoyment of a single moment in heaven: how much more, then, ought we to embrace the crosses that God sends us when we know that the short sufferings of this life shall merit for us an eternal felicity. That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us... an eternal weight of glory. We should feel not sadness but consolation of spirit when God sends us sufferings here below. They who pass to eternity with the greatest merits shall receive the greatest reward. It is on this account that the Lord sends us tribulations. Virtues, which are the fountains of merits, are practiced only by acts. They who have the most frequent occasions of annoyance make the most frequent acts of patience; they who are most frequently insulted make most frequent acts of meekness. Hence St. James says, "*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life…*"

This thought made Job exclaim: "*If we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?*" He meant to say, if we have gladly received good things, why should we not also receive with greater joy temporal evils, by which we shall acquire the eternal goods of paradise? This thought also filled with jubilation the hermit whom a soldier found singing in a forest, though his body was covered with ulcers so that his flesh was falling to pieces. The soldier said to him: "*Is it you that were singing*?" "*Yes, I sang, and I had reason to sing; for between me and God there is nothing but the filthy wall of my body. I now see it falling to pieces, and therefore I sing, because I see that the time is at hand when I shall go to enjoy my Lord.*" This thought made St. Francis of Assisi say: "*So great is the good which I expect, that to me every pain gives delight.*" In a word, the saints feel consoled when they see themselves in tribulation, and are afflicted when they enjoy earthly consolations.

Tuesday

HAVING PATIENCE WITH THE MUSTARD SEED

From a Sermon by Peter Chrysologos

You have heard how the kingdom of heaven, as vast as it is, can be compared to a mustard seed. Is that the sum of a believer's hopes? Is this what the faithful are longing for – a mustard seed? Is this the blessed reward of virgins for their long years of self-restraint, the glorious prize won by martyrs at the cost of their blood? Is this the mystery no eye has seen, no ear heard, no human heart imagined; the mystery past telling that St. Paul assures us God has prepared for all who love him?

Let's not be too easily disillusioned by our Lord's word concerning the mustard seed. If we remember that God's weakness is stronger than human strength, and God's foolishness wiser than human wisdom, we will be able to grasp the fact that the smallest seed in God's creation can prove greater than the whole wide world.

It is up to us to sow this mustard seed in our minds and let it grow within us into a great tree of understanding and love, reaching up to heaven and elevating all our faculties. Then it spreads out branches of knowledge and the pungency of its taste will make our mouths burn to speak the Gospel and kindle a flame within our hearts – the taste and heat of it will take away all repugnance born of misunderstanding.

A mustard seed is the image of the Kingdom of God. Christ is the Kingdom of Heaven. Sown like a mustard seed in the Virgin's womb he grew up into the tree of the Cross whose branches stretch across the world. Crushed in the grinder of the passion it has produced seasoning enough for the preservation and flavoring of every living creature. As long as a mustard seed is intact its taste lies dormant, but when it is crushed everything is different and revealed. Christ chose to have his body crushed because he would not have his power concealed.

We too must crush this mustard seed in order to feel the force of Jesus' parable. Christ is king because he is the source of all authority. Christ is human because all humanity is restored in him. Christ is a mustard seed because the infinity of divine greatness is contained in the littleness of flesh and blood. Christ has now sowed this seed in his garden, the Church. It is a garden that is to cover the entire world, tilled by the plow of the Gospel and protected by doctrine and discipline, cleared of every weed by apostolic labor, fragrant with the perennial flowers of virgins and martyrs, amid the green plants which are all those who bear witness to Christ by their lives.

Now you must take the wings of the dove, the Psalmist speaks of, and gleam like gold in the rays of divine sunlight. You are to fly to rest forever among the branches of this great tree. Spread the wings of love and service and fly confidently. Do not be afraid. What seems so tiny contains all the riches of God and it is within you. Let yourself be crushed in labors for the Gospel with Christ. Trust and wait for God's word to mature in you.

Wednesday

THE ZEAL OF THE APOSTLES

From a Sermon on Sts. Simon and Jude by St. John Henry Newman

The Apostles commemorated on this Festival direct our attention to the subject of Zeal. St. Simon is called…the Zealous; a title given him (as is supposed) from his belonging before his conversion to the Jewish sect of Zealots, which professed extraordinary Zeal for the Law… The designation marks him as distinguished for this particular Christian grace. St. Jude's Epistle, which forms part of the service of the day, is almost wholly upon the duty of manifesting Zeal for Gospel Truth, and opens with a direct exhortation to *"contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints."*

It will be a more simple account of Zeal, to call it the earnest desire for God's honor, leading to strenuous and bold deeds in His behalf; and that in spite of all obstacles. Now Zeal is one of the elementary religious qualifications; that is, one of those which are essential in the very notion of a religious man. A man cannot be said to be in earnest in religion, till he magnifies his God and Savior; till he so far consecrates and exalts the thought of Him in his heart, as an object of praise, and adoration, and rejoicing, as to be pained and grieved at dishonor shown to Him, and eager to avenge Him. In a word, a religious temper is one of loyalty towards God; and we all know what is meant by being loyal from the experience of civil matters.

To be loyal is not merely to obey; but to obey with promptitude, energetic dutifulness, disinterested devotion, disregard of consequences. And such is Zeal, except that it is ever attended with that reverential feeling which is due from a creature and a sinner towards his Maker, and towards Him alone. It is the main principle in ***all*** religious service to love God above all things; now, Zeal is to love Him above all other people, above our dearest and most intimate friends. This was the special praise of the Levites, which gained for them the reward of the Priesthood, that is, their executing judgment on the people in the sin of the golden calf. Zeal is the very consecration of God's Ministers to their office.

Accordingly our Blessed Savior, the One Great High Priest… of all Priests who went before Him and the Lord and Strength of all who come after, began His manifestation of Himself by two acts of Zeal. When twelve years old he deigned to put before us in representation the sacredness of this duty, when He remained in the Temple *"while His father and mother sought Him sorrowing,"* and on their finding Him, returned answer, *"Do you not know that I must be about My Father's business?* And again, at the opening of His public Ministry, He went into the Temple, and *"made a scourge of small cords, and drove out the sheep and oxen, and overthrew the changers' tables"* that profaned it: thus fulfilling the prophecy contained in the text, *"Zeal for your house has eaten me up."* Being thus consumed by Zeal Himself, no wonder He should choose His followers from among the Zealous.

Thursday

THE TENDERNESS OF GOD

From a Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis

In the face of today's disasters, wars motivated by the worship of the god of money, the bombing of innocent people, a humanity which apparently does not desire peace, God weeps with the tears of a father and mother.

Looking at today's Gospel (Lk 13: 31-35), it appears that Jesus had lost his patience, and he uses forceful words: it is not an insult, but neither is it a compliment to call a person 'fox'. He uses this term when speaking to the Pharisees about Herod: "Go and tell that fox". However, there had been "other occasions in which Jesus spoke severely": for instance, he had spoken of the "evil and adulterous generation". He had even referred to the disciples as "hard of heart" and "foolish". In Luke's account, Jesus summarizes "what will happen: 'I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem'". Essentially, the Lord "says what will happen, he prepares to die".

However, then Jesus quickly changes his tone. After this very strong outburst, in fact, he changes his tone, and looks to the people, and upon the city of Jerusalem: "Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings!'". This is "the tenderness of God, the tenderness of Jesus". That day, he "wept over Jerusalem". However, those tears of Jesus were not the tears of a friend before the tomb of Lazarus; nor were those of a friend before the death of another. Instead, these are the tears of a father who weeps; it is God the Father who weeps here in the person of Jesus.

Someone said that God was made man in order to be able to be able to mourn for what had been done to his children. Here we recall the attitude of the father of the Prodigal Son, when the younger son asked for his inheritance, and then left. And this father did not go to his neighbors and say: 'Look at what happened to me, what this poor wretch did to me, I condemn this son!" Instead, he went away to weep alone. While the Gospel does not give an account of this detail, it nonetheless shows that when the son returns, he sees the father from afar: this indicates that the father would continuously go up to the terrace to watch out for his son's return. And a father who does this is a father who lives in tears, waiting for the return of his so". These are the "tears of God the Father; and with these tears, the Father recreates, in his Son, all of creation."

When Jesus went with the Cross to Calvary, the pious women wept, and he said to them: "Do not weep for me, weep for your children". These are the tears of a father and mother, which God also continues to shed even today while saying, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, my children, what are you doing?". And he says this to the poor victims, as well as to arms traffickers, and all those who sell the lives of people. Let us reflect on how God was made man in order to be able to weep. And we would do well to think that God our Father today weeps: he weeps for this humanity which does not end, to understand the peace which he offers us, the peace of love".

Friday

KEEPING THE SABBATH HOLY

From a Reflection by St. Thomas Aquinas

We are commanded to keep the Sabbath holy in part to strengthen our faith in the promise of eternal rest and to foreshadow its fulfillment. Scripture says, "It shall come to pass that God will give you rest from all your work, from your vexations and from your bondage". Again, "my people shall sit in the beauty of peace, in the tabernacle of trust and in the wealth of rest". We hope for rest from three things: labors, struggles, and servitude to the Devil. Christ promises such rest to all those who come to him. However, as we know, the Lord worked for six days and on the seventh rested because that was necessary in order to do a perfect "work". Eternity is rest exceeding anything one can know here on earth.

We are also commanded to keep holy the Sabbath to increase our love. Unless one takes time to raise oneself above ordinary things one always tends toward the earthly. One has to have time for raising oneself up. Scripture even suggests we do this continually: "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be ever in my mouth" it says. But we can also do it during a portion of each day, "Seven times a day I give you praise" Scripture says. In the same way, many find it necessary to have a fixed day for worship. Thus the Sabbath is not set aside for games but to pray and praise the Lord. St. Augustine even says that it is a lesser evil to plow on the Sabbath than to play on this day.

We are commanded to keep the Sabbath holy as a time to exercise acts and works of kindliness, especially to those we govern or hire. Some are cruel to themselves and force themselves to labor continually and ceaselessly. We must have mercy and be kind to ourselves so we can be such to others.

But remember that God did not simply say "keep" the Sabbath but "keep it holy". 'Holy' signifies pure and also consecrated. In these two ways, we celebrate feasts by purifying and giving ourselves to divine service, whether in avoiding or doing certain things.

Thus we are not to do "servile" work, usually considered bodily labor, but mental work can also be done in a servile way. However, such labors can be done on the Sabbath if necessary due to charity, if in service of the Gospel, if for the good of neighbor and if commanded by God, as in baptizing. What we must avoid above all is sin. It may seem paradoxical that idleness is to be avoided on the Sabbath and because it goes with evil doing. Always do some good work lest the Devil find you unoccupied.

We should do all that makes us holy on the Sabbath. We should offer sacrifice by offering ourselves to God and by praising God. This includes the giving of alms. We should hear the word of God and contemplate the divine realities, learning to rest in this and so avoiding sin. In all these ways we rest in God and make the Sabbath a delight. This is truly a foreshadowing of eternal life and delight when we shall dwell with God always.

Saturday

THE LORD IS WITH US!

A Reflection developed from a sermon by St. Bernard

"*Hail, filled with grace! The Lord is with you*!" (Lk.1:28) Notice that the angel doesn't say "the Lord is in you" but "the Lord is with you". God by reason of the simplicity of the Divine Essence is equally and entirely present everywhere. Yet by reason of his working and influence in rational creatures God is present to them in a special way. And God's presence in the good is different than God's presence in the wicked. God is present in all creatures, yet not all can, so to speak, embrace God. That is why God is in a special way present with us humans. Because God has given us a special ability we can embrace our God.

Only those who are good embrace God in love. That means that only for the good is God is present in such a way as not only to be in but with them. This expresses the harmony of their will with God's will. You can so conform your will to God's—for example, by one's willing justice—that it won't be unworthy of God to will what you will. This is concord between God's will and a human will, and that means you are united with God in the special way I have described.

This is the case for everyone whom we can call holy. Yet it is particularly true of Mary. She was so closely united to God that not only her will but her flesh was united to God. From God's own substance and the substance of the Virgin God fashioned one Christ. Better, God became the one Christ who was neither wholly from God nor wholly from the Virgin yet belonged wholly to God and wholly to her. There aren't two sons but one. One and the same Christ is the son of both God and Mary.

You can see why the angel said, "*Hail, filled with grace, the Lord is with you*!" O Mary, God is with you—and not the son alone, whom you clothed with your flesh, but likewise the Holy Spirit, by whom you conceived, and the Heavenly Father, by whom from eternity your child is begotten. The Heavenly Father is with you and has given you the Son to be yours too. The Son is with you. The Son in a marvelous way has entered your womb without your losing your virginity. The Holy Spirit is with you and is with the Heavenly Father and the Son in preparing your virginal body to be the dwelling place of your Lord and God's Word. Indeed, the Lord is "with" you!

What is more, you will do all this with all your heart and mind and strength and do this in love. That is what you call us to do with you, so that the Lord may be with us too as with you. Pray that we may indeed receive this grace, today and every day until we are made one with God, and so with you, in God's Kingdom. Pray that we may be with the Lord even as the Lord is with you—in one will and love.