THE SOLEMNITY of ALL SAINTS &
THIRTY-FIRST WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME – A
November 1 – 7, 2026

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Sun Nov. 1 — **SOLEMNITY of ALL SAINTS**

FOLLOWING CHRIST

From the writing of St. Gertrud the Great

Mon. 2 — **COMMEMORATION of ALL the FAITHFUL DEPARTED**

ALL SOULS' DAY

From a homily by Fr. Karl Rahner

Tues 3 — **Tuesday of the 31st Week of Ordinary Time**

GOD'S BANQUET IS ALWAYS FREE

From the Morning Meditation of Pope Francis, 7 November 2017

Wed. 4 — **Memorial of St. Charles Borromeo, Bishop**

HOW DO YOU GIVE YOUR LIFE TO GOD?

A Reflection from Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

Thurs 5 — **Thursday of the 31st Week of Ordinary Time**

GOD IS MERCIFUL LOVE

From the Angelus Message of Pope Benedict XVI, 16 September 2007

MONASTIC DESERT DAY

Fri. 6 — **Friday of the 31st Week of Ordinary Time**

WHO UNDERSTANDS THE STEWARDSHIP OF LOVE?

A Reflection from a Text by Fr. Karl Rahner, SJ

Sat. 7 — **Memorial of Our Lady**

MARY & THE CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY

A Reflection from Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

Sunday

FOLLOWING CHRIST

From the writing of St. Gertrud the Great

O consuming fire, my God… Devouring me, a speck of dust, in the fiery vigor of your love, consume me utterly and absorb me into yourself. Behold, I am approaching you… Let your face light up over me so that my darkness may become like noonday in your presence… Make me… to be listed and numbered in the generation of those who know you, God of Israel; among the generation of those who seek your face, God of Jacob; in the generation of those who cherish you, God of hosts.

Holy Trinity, one God: grant that my heart may fear you, cherish you, follow you because you are my true love. Holy Mary, paradise of holiness, lily of purity, be the guide and guardian of my chastity, for in you is all the grace of life and truth… Saint John the Baptist, obtain for me enlightenment through that true light to whom you came to bear witness… Saint Peter, first of the apostles, by your authority deliver me from the bonds of all my sins. Saint Paul, chosen vessel, obtain for me that gift of true cherishing-love… Saint Mary Magdalene, most fervent lover of Jesus Christ, obtain for me the most diligent observance of holy religion. All saints and chosen ones of God, obtain for me such observance of holy religion that thereby I may come with you to that homeland of eternal life which knows nothing but joys, where God is all in all.

My beloved Jesus Christ, I desire to enter with you into a beloved rule so that I may renew and remake my life in you… Place my life in the guardianship of your Holy Spirit so that I may keep your commandments at all times… Flood my senses with the light of your love so that you alone may teach and guide me, and convert me within. Sink my spirit so firmly into your Spirit – quickly down into its ground – that I may be truly buried in you. And let me be so fully transported out of myself into union with you that nobody may know of my grave in you except your living love alone, which may place its seal on it.

Therefore, by the cooperation of your grace and through the spotless law of your love, turn my soul from the frailty of the human condition toward you in such a way that I may untiringly run the way of your commandments and cling to you. Be with me, my Lord, aiding me always and making me strong in the work that I have taken up for the love of your love… And grant me then to see you, to have you, to enjoy you eternally in the greatest happiness, for my soul has yearned for you, O Jesus, dearest of all dear ones.

Monday

ALL SOULS' DAY

From a homily by Fr. Karl Rahner

All Souls' Day is the day of everyone who has died and gone home into the eternal love of God. Today, then, we want to remember before God our dead, all those who once belonged to us and who have departed from us. In true love no one can replace the beloved, for true love loves the beloved in those depths where each is uniquely and irreplaceably oneself. That is why each one of those who has passed away has taken a part of our heart away: they may be said even to have taken the heart with them, if death has trodden through our lives from beginning to end.

If one has really loved, and continues to love, then even before one's own death our life is changed into a life with the dead. Could the lover forget his dead? If one has really loved, then one's forgetting, and the fact that one has ceased weeping, are not signs that nothing has really changed, that one is just the same as before. They are, rather, signs that a part of one's own heart has really died with the loved ones, and is now living with the dead. That is why one can no longer mourn. We live, then, with the dead, with those who have gone before us into the dark night of death…

Today, when we stand by the graves, or when our heart must seek distant graves, where perhaps not even a cross stands over them any longer; when we pray, "*Lord, grant them eternal rest, and may perpetual light shine upon them*;" when we quietly look up towards the eternal homeland of all the saints and -- from afar and yet so near -- greet God's light and God's love, our eternal homeland; then all our memories and all our prayers are only the echo of the words of love that the holy living, in the silence of their eternity, softly and gently speak into our heart. Hidden in the peace of the eternal God, filled with God's own bliss, redeemed for eternity, permeated with love for us that can never cease, then, on their feast, utter the prayer of their love for us: "Lord, grant eternal rest to them whom we love - as never before - in your love. Grant it to them who still walk the hard road of pilgrimage, which is nonetheless the road that leads to us and to your eternal light. We, although silent, are now closer to them than ever before, closer than when we were sojourning and struggling along with them on earth. Grant to them, too, Lord, eternal rest, and may your perpetual light shine on them as on us. May it shine upon them now as the light of faith, and then in eternity, as the light of blessed life."… And there will be one, single, eternal feast of all the saints.

Tuesday

GOD'S BANQUET IS ALWAYS FREE

From the Morning Meditation of Pope Francis, 7 November 2017

We meditate on the image of the banquet from the Gospel of Luke [14:15-24]. The Lord goes to the house of a Pharisee for a meal, and there he is reproached for not observing the ablutions. Later, one of the fellow diners said to Jesus: 'Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!' The Lord, without explanation, responded to him with a parable of this man who held a great banquet and invited many. However, the first ones to be invited did not want to go to the dinner; they did not care about the meal or the people who were there, or the Lord who invited them; they were interested in other things. In fact, one after the other they began to make excuses. They each had their own interests which were greater to them than the invitation. The fact is that they clung to their interests, asking themselves, 'What could I gain?' For this reason, their response to the freely given invitation was 'I do not care; perhaps another day; I am so busy; I cannot go'. These people are attached to interests to the point in which they fall into slavery of the spirit, and they are incapable of understanding the gratuity of the invitation. Indeed, if one does not understand the gratuity of God's invitation, then one understands nothing.

In order to go to God's banquet, what should one pay? God's invitation is always free. The entrance ticket is to be sick, to be poor, to be a sinner; that is, we must be in need, both in body and in soul, and by neediness, the need of care, healing, and love. Here one sees two attitudes. The first, that of God, is always free: in order to save, God does not charge anything. God's freely given love is universal, for the gratuity of God has no limits. He receives everyone. Indeed, in the scripture passage, the master gets angry, saying to his servant, go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame, just anyone he could find. And in Matthew's version of the parable, the master even says to bring the "good and bad".

The Lord does not ask for anything in exchange, only love and faithfulness, for He is love and He is faithful. Indeed, salvation is not bought; one simply enters the banquet. This is salvation. We ask ourselves: what do they who rejected the invitation feel, the ones who are indisposed to come to this banquet? They feel safe, they feel secure, they feel saved in their own way, outside of the banquet, for they have lost the meaning of gratuity; they have lost the meaning of love, and they have lost a greater and more beautiful thing: the capacity to feel themselves loved, which leaves no hope; when you no longer feel loved, you have lost everything. Thus, the second attitude is this: that the faithful turn their gaze towards the master of the house who wants his house filled; he is so full of love that in his gratuity he wants to fill his home, and therefore, we implore the Lord to save us from losing the capacity to feel loved.

Wednesday

HOW DO YOU GIVE YOUR LIFE TO GOD?

A Reflection from Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

What did St. Charles Borromeo do? He took risks. When he did that, he gave his life to God. For example, at one time, a plague was devouring the people of his city. He threw himself at this scourge, not isolating himself from the plague-stricken like a hired hand, but like a good shepherd; he remained with his flock without fear of death.

This is a sample of a thousand other things that Charles Borromeo did as signs of his tireless gift of self to his people. Charles left no autobiography, no spiritual writings telling us his "secret". He had no secret; his inner life and his prayer were visible to all in his gift of self.

As a witness to the intensity of his prayer, we have only a few pictures showing him in ecstasy or in tears while he venerated the crucifix. Apart from these, his swiftness in grasping the meaning of the Madonna's tears he saw at the Shrine of Rho confirms the faith he lived by.

St. Charles moved in an atmosphere of intense awareness, not only of disasters like the plague but of all the wounds in the living flesh of his city, and saw them as the same as the wound on the side of Christ. He was intensely aware of Christ's suffering and Christ's sorrows. God isn't recognized as God or loved by people who are lazy as Christians and deaf to God's Word.

If St. Charles lived his inner life in an inexhaustible capacity for praise and for sharing suffering, he was only living what the Psalmist says are the two basic aspects of human praying. It was probably his capacity for sharing suffering that primarily manifested itself exteriorly.

St. Charles was a person of prayer, of tears, and of penance. He understood this last not as something heroic but as a mysterious and even impassioned sharing in the sufferings of Christ himself. He saw this as a path by which Christ enters into the depths of the world's sin and finds there the absurdity of refusing God. Christ lived this until his heart almost broke, and his soul was torn open.

Today we celebrate one of the great witnesses who has penetrated to the very depths of the mystery of divine sharing in human suffering. Christ drank the last drops of this bitter cup and so was capable of understanding his age and ours very lucidly. This was also true of Charles. He understood the deep meaning of the events and history of his times, as we are called to do in our times. He understood, and he loved. This is our call as well.

Thursday

GOD IS MERCIFUL LOVE

From the Angelus Message of Pope Benedict XVI, 16 September 2007

The liturgy today once again presents for our meditation Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel, one of the loftiest and most moving passages of all Sacred Scripture. It is beautiful to think that on this day throughout the world, wherever the Christian community gathers to celebrate the Sunday Eucharist, the Good News of truth and salvation rings out: God is merciful love.

The Evangelist Luke has gathered in this Chapter three parables on divine mercy: the two shortest ones which he has in common with Matthew and Mark are the Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin; the third, lengthy, articulate, and proper to him alone, is the famous parable of the merciful Father, commonly known as the parable of the "Prodigal Son".

In this Gospel passage, we almost seem to hear Jesus' voice revealing to us the Face of his Father and our Father. Basically, this was the reason he came into the world: to speak to us of the Father; to make him known to us, his lost children, and to revive in our hearts the joy of belonging to him, the hope of being forgiven and restored to our full dignity, the desire to dwell forever in his house which is also our house.

Jesus recounted the ... parables of mercy because the Scribes and Pharisees were muttering bad things about him since they had noticed he permitted sinners to approach him and even eat with him (cf. Lk 15: 1-3). He then explained in his typical language that God does not want even one of his children to be lost and that his soul overflows with joy whenever a sinner is converted.

True religion thus consists in being attuned to this Heart, "rich in mercy", which asks us to love everyone, even those who are distant and our enemies, imitating the Heavenly Father who respects the freedom of each one and draws everyone to himself with the invincible power of his faithfulness.

This is the road Jesus points out to all who want to be his disciples: "Judge not... condemn not... forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you.... Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6: 36-38). In these words, we find very practical instructions for our daily conduct as believers.

In our time, humanity needs a strong proclamation and witness of God's mercy. Beloved John Paul II, a great apostle of Divine Mercy, prophetically intuited this urgent pastoral need. He dedicated his Second Encyclical to it and throughout his Pontificate made himself a missionary of God's love to all peoples.

After the tragic events of 11 September 2001, which darkened the dawn of the third millennium, he invited Christians and people of goodwill to believe that God's Mercy is stronger than all evil, and that only in the Cross of Christ is the world's salvation found.

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, whom we contemplated yesterday as Our Lady of Sorrows at the foot of the Cross, obtain for us the gift of always trusting in God's love and help us to be merciful as our Father in Heaven is merciful.

Friday

WHO UNDERSTANDS THE STEWARDSHIP OF LOVE?

A Reflection from a Text by Fr. Karl Rahner, SJ

"*Jesus said to his disciples, A rich person had a steward who was denounced to him for misusing his property*." Our life is a series of ups and downs. Now we are happy and then unhappy; first we are satisfied and then disappointed; now grateful and then wounded that we haven't all we want. But are we prudent? The steward in the Gospel this Sunday was dishonest but very prudent. Indeed, maybe our ups and downs are like those of that steward. But do we have the faith and the stout heart, the humble and docile mind to see in the most contrasting fortunes and misfortunes a chance to bring forth fruit for eternity by showing our love for God?

Before we know what to expect, God changes our fortune or circumstances. Are we both patient and courageous and prepared to perceive God's call and work for us in the new situations he sends us into? We need loving and uninhibited prudence! What we need to do is accept each new thing as God's will and bend all our will to get on with God's work. If you are not as prudent as the steward in the parable of Jesus, then you should be! If your heart is really kept open and ready for God, anything that may happen can be accepted as a grace and a blessing.

Of course, this means we need humble hearts, listen well, and know how to obey even if the directions are not clear and definite. We are not slaves, Jesus has told us, so we know what our Lord is about. We know he is about loving. So why not ask God for the gifts we need to be good stewards? Can't we pray instead of complaining? Perhaps the problem is that somewhere in every person's life there is an unhealed wound. It is because of this that we do not have heavenly prudence. Look a bit more closely at your life. We can be healed of the wounds we find only if we are prudent enough concerning God's grace to acknowledge our wounds and let God heal them.

God has told us: Be loving and courageous and compassionate. If you can't, now and again, you need healing. Begin to pray for it today. Begin by looking more closely at your lives, their situations in the past, the relationships that have shaped us, the burdens we have had to carry, and all that we have had to cope with. These too are actually words of grace from God. They were given us as opportunities to love as God loves. They are lessons in love. We are called to be stewards of divine love. We begin by learning how to be stewards of God's love in our own regard. We were first called to love others as we love ourselves. We were then called to love ourselves as Jesus has loved us. That is what we are to show forth in our living and doing.

Saturday

MARY & THE CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY

A Reflection from Journeying with the Lord by Carlo Cardinal Martini

The Second Vatican Council teaches as follows: "In celebrating the annual cycle of Christ's mysteries, the holy Church honors with special love the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. She is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son. In her, the Church holds up and admires the most excellent fruit of the redemption and joyfully contemplates it in a faultless model." (SC 103)

This statement contains three key affirmations. The first teaches that all Marian feasts are a part of our celebration of Christ's mysteries. This is actually the only cycle that the Church celebrates in its liturgy. Mary is strictly bound to Jesus' redemptive action because she is the most wonderful fruit of his salvific work. We pray this every time we pray the "Hail Mary". She is joined to Jesus inseparably because she received everything from Him.

Second, the Church affirms that Mary opened herself and her heart to receive the fullness of God's gift, Jesus Christ. In this way, she is the model for every Christian. This is our duty to God. We must let ourselves be loved by God! "The Almighty has done great things for me!" Mary recognizes that everything about her and in her is a gift from God. She knows herself as fully loved by God in Christ.

The Church praises God for the gift God has given in Mary. It uses the same words with which she praised the work of the Lord: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my savior". We celebrate the lived identification between Mary and the Church, and we, as Church, know ourselves as understood by and represented by Our Lady.

The third affirmation is even more explicit than the others. The Church "joyfully contemplates" all that Mary is by God's gift. She herself seeks and longs to be nothing but God's. That is what she hoped to be and what God gave her. In other words, the Church, and each of us, looks beyond self and beyond the events that fill our days, and we look to Mary as she is in God's glory. Mary is the concrete image of all that the Church longs to be, of all that we ourselves long to be. She is what we hope to be.

Mary is totally dedicated to the Lord. Mary is totally attentive to the work of Christ. Mary is totally caught up in God's great mysteries. Mary represents our hope in all these ways, but in her, it is already realized. Mary, glorified in body and soul, is with the Father in Heaven. In her, our body is transfigured and so is our daily historicity. She shows us God's goal for all humanity and for each of us. All are called to share in the fullness of the glory that God has given her. She shows us how we come to that glory in the seemingly simple deeds of each day – like today.