



# WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



## 30<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, CYCLE A

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*You shall love the Lord, your God... You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matt 22:40*

In today's readings Jesus is unequivocal in His teaching on the central point of all of Scripture: 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. All scripture, and by extension, all *mystagogical* catechesis depends on these two commandments.

I add the word "*mystagogical*" to catechesis because it means, "*breaking open the mystery.*" We are reminded that *mystery* is a synonym for *sacrament*, which is conferred when free will embraces the indwelling power of grace literally becoming enfleshed within us. When Saint Paul speaks of the "*Body of Christ*" this is not just hyperbole, but literally, a person who freely and whole-heartedly embraces the sacraments. That person's heart miraculously and mercifully becomes Christ's sacred heart. This is the only path to bringing Christ into our world. This is the living power of the love of Christ, to give us His Sacrament of the Church and Community, through His passion, death and resurrection.

Jesus Christ, and by extension us, His Church, calls us to a deeper lived wisdom than just simply knowledge of the law. Love is the core of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and His mercy. Love, as expressed here in our readings this Sunday is not humanly possible without taking on the very essence of His Sacred Heart, through transformation, which is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit to stir a desire for change of heart within us, a change of heart that Saint Paul calls "*metanoia*," the change of mind, heart and soul brought about in repentance. Repentance is a rejecting of our sinful mortal nature, which Saint Augustine calls, "*cupidity*," the obsession for earthly things that will some day pass, versus the willful desire to turn towards God's love which is mercy and charity. This is our destiny -- to seek this change that converts our inclination away from disordered thoughts and deeds which lead to sin, and towards His Sacred Heart, where we are bound to His Mystical Body.

This week, reflect on this passage through the lens of repentance, conversion and *metanoia* (i.e. a rebuilding and healing of the soul; a profound, spiritual, transformation through conversion.) It is a good practice at the end of the day to reflect on the EXAMEN prayer by St. Ignatius of Loyola, a method of reviewing your day in the presence of God.

Here are the five steps to the EXAMEN:

1. **Ask God for Light:** Look at the day through the eyes of Jesus.
2. **Express Gratitude:** Find God in all things as a gift, welling up with profound gratitude.
3. **Review Your Day:** Seeking the counsel of the Holy Spirit, did you with humility take on the compassion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as you look back on the day.
4. **Admit Your Shortcomings:** Take a few moments for an examination of conscience to recall those moments where cupidity, pride or lust got the better of you.
5. **Look with Joy to the Day to Come:** Journey to the place God calls you to where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.

Almighty God, increase our faith, draw us to your Sacred Heart so that we might merit what you promise in your Holy Gospel.

*"May our hearts seek the Lord, turn to the Lord, and constantly seek His face." See Psalm 105:3-4*

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew**

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees,  
they gathered together, and one of them,  
a scholar of the law tested him by asking,  
"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"

He said to him,

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

This is the greatest and the first commandment.

The second is like it:

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

***The Gospel of the Lord***