Jesus said,

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

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
The whole law and the prophets depend
on these two commandments."

Matthew 22:37, 39

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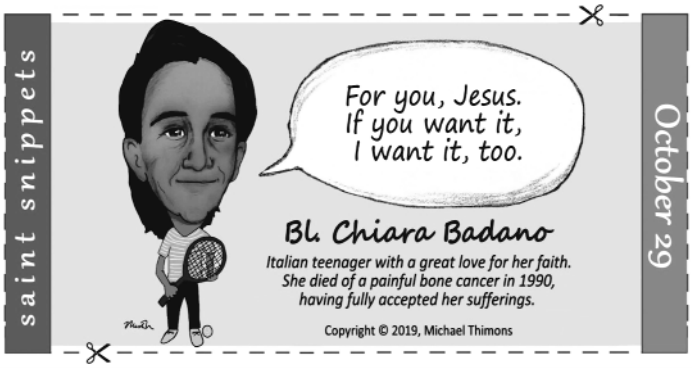
October 25, 2020 • Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles

October 28

Saint Jude, apostle and . . . Hollywood success story? Indeed! Beyond Simon's being a " Zealot" for Israel's liberation and Jude's question about Jesus revealing himself (John 14:22), no historic facts are known about either saint. But Saint Jude's well-known patronage of lost causes and hopeless cases is largely due to a desperate vow made just before World War II by a struggling entertainer, the son of Arab-American immigrants, Danny Thomas. Unemployed, his wife about to give birth, Danny, attending Mass, impulsively donated his last seven dollars to the collection, promising: "Saint Jude, if you help me find my way in life, I will build a shrine in your honor!" Older Americans remember well Danny's long, successful movie and television career. Grateful parents worldwide know the miracles that have taken place for fifty years at his Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital, where needy children are cared for regardless of race, religion, or financial resources, and monumental advances continue in healing and preventing pediatric cancers and catastrophic childhood diseases. A living, life-giving partnership is this "Communion of Saints": Simon, Jude, Danny Thomas—us!

—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



Living Justly

"You give that back right now!" How many of us have heard that line, probably more than once, as we were growing up? We come home with the trophy of what we thought was a really sweet deal, only to have our parents undo our profits by making us return the spoils. They had a different idea of what constituted a "fair trade agreement." Justice in our dealings with others continues to be an important measure of our character, and like a good parent, God cares very much about how we treat each other and about how others treat us. God hears the cry of the poor, and answers the call of the oppressed. God's beloved children are not to behave like bullies.

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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Eph 4:32 — 5:8; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 13:10-17
Tuesday:	Eph 5:21-33; Ps 128:1-5; Lk 13:18-21
Wednesday:	Eph 2:19-22; Ps 19:2-5; Lk 6:12-16
Thursday:	Eph 6:10-20; Ps 144:1b, 2, 9-10; Lk 13:31-35
Friday:	Phil 1:1-11; Ps 111:1-6; Lk 14:1-6
Saturday:	Phil 1:18b-26; Ps 42:2, 3, 5cdef; Lk 14:1, 7-11
Sunday:	Rv 7:2-4, 9-14; Ps 24:1-6; 1 Jn 3:1-3; Mt 5:1-12a

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Wednesday:	Ss. Simon and Jude
Saturday:	Blessed Virgin Mary; Halloween

Born to Love

We were born to love, we live to love, and we will die to love still more.

—Joseph Cafasso

Character

Character is much easier kept than recovered.

—Thomas Paine

Halloween

Bring forth the raisins and the nuts—
Tonight All-Hallows' spectre struts
Along the moonlit way.

—John Kendrick Bangs

Today's Readings

First Reading — You shall not oppress an alien, for you yourselves were once aliens in Egypt (Exodus 22:20-26).
Psalm — I love you, Lord, my strength (Psalm 18).
Second Reading — You became imitators of the Lord, so that you became a model for all believers (1 Thessalonians 1:5c-10).
Gospel — You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:34-40).

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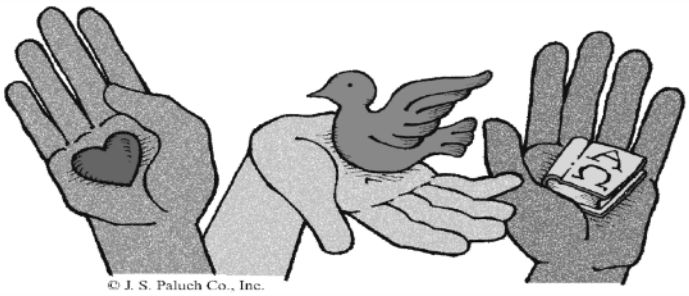

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
October 25, 2020

"You shall love the Lord, your God,
With all your heart,
With all your soul,
And with all your mind."
—Matthew 22:37

Treasures From Our Tradition

There is a show on public television in which people search their attics for heirlooms, dust them off, and trek them downtown for ruthless evaluation by teams of antique experts. Occasionally the owners are surprised to learn they have been harboring priceless artifacts: a Tiffany bowl used to catch the car keys, a Van Gogh in the downstairs bathroom. What they lugged downtown in a paper bag, they carry home in bubble wrap and receiving blankets.
It's the same way with treasures in Church life. Lots of things were lugged up into the attic years ago, and it was inevitable that some treasures ended up in the trash. Many Catholics tucked the sacrament of penance away in a dusty corner. We know it's there if we need it, but it is not the weekly routine it once was, like the Saturday bath "whether I need it or not." Today, especially in Lent and Advent or as part of personal preparation for marriage, ordination, or other life transitions, the sacrament of penance is a treasure of the Christian life waiting to be discovered. What's in your attic?
—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

The secret to our Sunday readings lies in today's Gospel Acclamation: "Whoever loves me will keep my word, says the Lord, and my Father will love him and we will come to him" (John 14:23). That single line from John's Gospel gets right to the heart of today's readings, reminding us of the intimate relationship between the law ("keeping God's word") and God's love. While human nature tends to resist burdensome rules, our readings show us the wisdom of God's plan that guides us with the rule of law. In Exodus, the law boldly prevents injustice, protecting the most vulnerable members of society. In Thessalonians, the law elevates our behavior and saves us from "the coming wrath." In Matthew's Gospel, the law swaddles us in God's compassion. In loving God, neighbor, and self, we imitate God and bring blessing to a fractured world.

The Rule Of Law

Anyone who has read the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) from beginning to end appreciates the massive influence of the law on our ancestors in faith. In fact, what Christians call the Pentateuch (Greek for "five books"), Jewish tradition calls the Torah ("teaching" or "law"). In the first five books of the Bible, there is no escaping the law, its meticulous detail and relentless regulations, decrees, and pronouncements from God to Moses and Aaron. Also common in these books, alas, are stories of God's chosen people going astray. The predominance of the law reminds us that we are creatures with a tendency to sin; God provides the law to us beloved children to regulate our behavior and help us live more peacefully on earth.

Imitating God

Laws would be entirely unnecessary if we lived perfect lives. As we know all too well, however, we often fall short of the good intentions that we cherish in our hearts. Perhaps the law would even be unnecessary if we lived alone, isolated from other people. After all, what hermit in a cave actually needs a commandment to charge no interest on a loan? But God's design for humanity includes togetherness. And when we live together, we tend to step on each other's toes. Thank God for laws that help us to live in community with justice and compassion. Underlying every one of God's laws is an eternal longing for fairness and fullness. What's more, God's own self—a vibrant community of Father, Son, and Spirit—reveals the deep joy of living in peace with self and neighbor. The Trinitarian nature of God—three persons in one God—astonishes us with its commitment to fruitful love. Love is gratuitous and lavish, constantly producing and giving of itself. The more generously we love God, self, and neighbor, the more we will know that, as Saint Paul says, "love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10).

Today's Readings: Ex 22:20–26; Ps 18:2–3, 3–4, 47, 51; 1 Thes 1:5c–10; Mt 22:34–40

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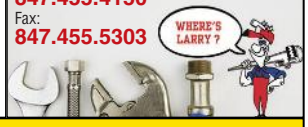

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