

- Seemingly tough words Jesus has for us in our Gospel today.
- *“If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.”* What happened to that *“Honor thy father and thy mother”* thing?
- Well...remember that a Jewish teaching mode of the time was hyperbole—exaggeration—in order to stress various points...just as Jesus also says that we should pluck out our eyes if they cause us to sin.
- So Jesus isn't saying that you should literally hate father and mother; on the contrary, we are, by His Commandment, to love and respect our parents.
- What Jesus is saying here is that God and His teaching must always take precedence in our lives...and, if necessary, we must choose God before even father and mother and brother and sister or anyone else if they lead us away from Him...just as one keeps away from someone who would lead toward infidelity in one's marriage.
- And this just makes sense...because God gives us all the good things of our lives—our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters...wife, husband, children...our intellect, abilities, gifts, etc.
- St. John reminds us that God IS love...and thus the source of all love...and so to love one anyone else/ more than the source of that love/ would be like loving the faucet more than the well from which the water flows.
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- And, of course, because God creates both body and the soul...He is the goal to which we are all moving and striving.

- Where will be our brother, sister, mother, father be in 100 years? Dead and buried, like all of us here...
- ...but our time in eternity—whether in joy, or in pain and sorrow, will have just commenced. As the hymn Amazing Grace goes in speaking about Heaven:
 - *When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
than when we first begun.*
- But simply knowing that God has given us love of our friends and relatives, how foolish we would be to disregard its very source!
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- This is also what Jesus means when he advises us to not “count the cost”, for the pearl of great price is worth any sacrifice whatever.
- This is what the martyrs knew (know) and died (die) for...because “...*what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his [eternal] life?*” (Mark 8:36 RSV)
- It is wrong to presume that I will be “saved” simply because I exist and am in some way “owed” Heaven.
- Even St. Paul in all his work did not presume salvation, but tells us to work out our salvation “with fear and trembling”—not that God is vindictive, but He does require things from us—thanks for His gifts--most of all through reciprocity of His munificence in our observance of His good and moral laws, and by charity to those around us.
- For who can give to God even the smallest thing...because everything that we have was given TO us in the first place.

- Reminding us of St. Paul again: *“What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?”* (1 Cor 4:7 RSV)
- And yet by our fidelity, we affirm that we truly believe, and we demonstrate our faith and our love for God.
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- But we must be wary of calling ourselves disciples without actually being one in practice.
- A great teacher was asked about a young man who had attended his class.
 - *“So-and-so tells me that he was a student of yours.”*
 - But the teacher replied: *“He attended my lectures, but he was no student of mine.”*
- Likewise...do we attend the “lectures” of Jesus—listen to the Gospels and the scriptures and the teaching of the Church—without learning from them or putting them into practice? Do we just absently hear His words without actually transforming our lives?
- Do we call Jesus our Lord and Savior without actually observing with what He teaches us?...and at times even what He commands us?
- It is a poor knight...a poor servant...a poor disciple...who ignores his Lord.
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- It is a Christian’s principal duty to know what it takes to follow Christ ...and to do it...not counting the cost.
- And the cost of following Jesus is...what?
- *“...this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.”* (1Jo 5:3)... to love our

neighbor as ourselves...and to *forgive*, without which we will not be forgiven. Read Matthew chapters 6 and 18.

- But this requires determination, for the Christian life is one of moderation of desires, which goes against the actions of the world—omnipresent hedonism and sensualism in all ages.
- Jesus warns us of this...and thus we should expect resistance and challenge...as we read of in the book of Wisdom about the worldly person saying: “...*Let none of us fail to share in our revelry...Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions...He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord. He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his manner of life is unlike that of others, and his ways are strange.*” (Wisdom 2:5-15)
- That’s why He prays to the Father for His disciples: “*I have given them thy word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*” (John 17:14) This is part of the cross we are called to carry.
- But we also are strengthened by the remembering that He also prays: “*I do not pray for these [the apostles] only, but also for those who believe in me through their word...*” (John 17:20-21 RSV)
- And for the faithful who follow Jesus with whole heart—remember psalm 15: “*O LORD, who shall sojourn in thy tent? Who shall dwell on thy holy hill? He who walks blamelessly, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart...*” (Psalm 15:1-2)

Reading 1

[Wis 9:13-18b](#)

Who can know God's counsel,
or who can conceive what the LORD intends?
For the deliberations of mortals are timid,
and unsure are our plans.
For the corruptible body burdens the soul
and the earthen shelter weighs down the mind that has many concerns.
And scarce do we guess the things on earth,
and what is within our grasp we find with difficulty;
but when things are in heaven, who can search them out?
Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had given wisdom
and sent your holy spirit from on high?
And thus were the paths of those on earth made straight.

[Ps 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14-17](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (1) In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

You turn man back to dust,
saying, "Return, O children of men."

For a thousand years in your sight
are as yesterday, now that it is past,
or as a watch of the night.

R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

You make an end of them in their sleep;
the next morning they are like the changing grass,
Which at dawn springs up anew,
but by evening wilts and fades.

R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Teach us to number our days aright,
that we may gain wisdom of heart.

Return, O LORD! How long?

Have pity on your servants!

R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Fill us at daybreak with your kindness,
that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.
And may the gracious care of the LORD our God be ours;
prosper the work of our hands for us!

Prosper the work of our hands!

R. In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

[Phmn 9-10, 12-17](#)

Reading 2

I, Paul, an old man,
and now also a prisoner for Christ Jesus,
urge you on behalf of my child Onesimus,
whose father I have become in my imprisonment;
I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you.
I should have liked to retain him for myself,
so that he might serve me on your behalf
in my imprisonment for the gospel,
but I did not want to do anything without your consent,
so that the good you do might not be forced but voluntary.
Perhaps this is why he was away from you for a while,
that you might have him back forever,
no longer as a slave
but more than a slave, a brother,
beloved especially to me, but even more so to you,
as a man and in the Lord.
So if you regard me as a partner, welcome him as you would me.

[Lk 14:25-33](#)

Gospel

Great crowds were traveling with Jesus,
and he turned and addressed them,
"If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother,
wife and children, brothers and sisters,
and even his own life,
he cannot be my disciple.
Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me
cannot be my disciple.
Which of you wishing to construct a tower
does not first sit down and calculate the cost
to see if there is enough for its completion?
Otherwise, after laying the foundation
and finding himself unable to finish the work
the onlookers should laugh at him and say,
'This one began to build but did not have the resources to finish.'
Or what king marching into battle would not first sit down
and decide whether with ten thousand troops
he can successfully oppose another king
advancing upon him with twenty thousand troops?
But if not, while he is still far away,
he will send a delegation to ask for peace terms.
In the same way,
anyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions
cannot be my disciple."