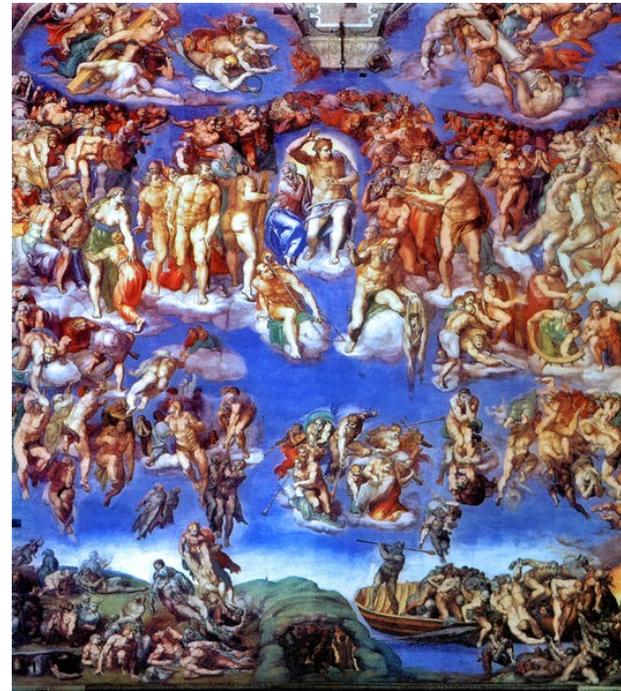


Link to Liturgy



You did it to Me 34th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lessons and Discussions

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“he will sit upon his glorious throne”

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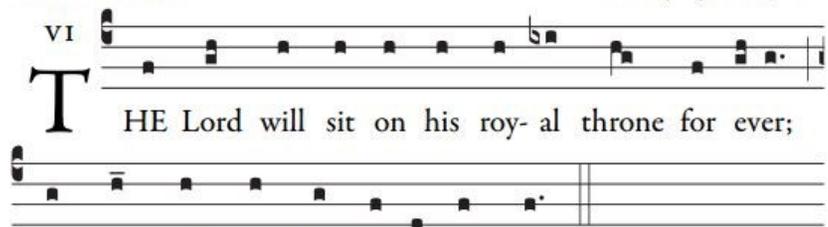
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Communion Antiphon (Ps 28:10-11) – Roman Missal

This should be chanted three times so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. The chant leader could chant the first time and then all can join the second and third. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme; this should not be the norm.

Sedebit Dominus *Ps 29 (28): 10b, 11b*



VI

T HE Lord will sit on his roy- al throne for ever;

the Lord will bless his people in peace.

Source: <http://www.ccwatershed.org>

Alternate options:Hymns

At the Name of Jesus

Crown Him with Many Crowns

O Worship the King

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King

Remnant

Alive in You

Preface of Christ the King – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

For you anointed your Only Begotten Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ, with the oil of gladness
as eternal Priest and King of all creation,
so that, by offering himself on the altar of the Cross
as a spotless sacrifice to bring us peace,
he might accomplish the mysteries of human redemption
and, making all created things subject to his rule,
he might present to the immensity of your majesty
an eternal and universal kingdom
a kingdom of truth and life,

a kingdom of holiness and grace,
a kingdom of justice, love and peace.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Gospel Reading – Matthew 25:31-46 – Daily Roman

NOTE: *In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is read on Monday after First Sunday of Lent*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
- Glory to you O Lord

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’

Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’

Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of

these least ones, you did not do for me.’ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From a discourse on the Psalms by Saint Augustine

*He will judge the world with equity and the peoples in his truth. What are equity and truth? He will gather together with him for the judgment of his chosen ones, but the others he will set apart; for he will place some on his right, others on his left. What is more equitable, what more true than that they should not themselves expect mercy from the judge, who themselves were unwilling to show mercy before the judge’s coming. Those, however, who were willing to show mercy, will be judged with mercy. For it will be said to those placed on his right: *Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom, which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* And he reckons to their account their works of mercy: *For I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me drink.**

What is imputed to those placed on his left side? They refused to show mercy. And where will they go? *Depart into the everlasting fire.* The hearing of this condemnation will cause much wailing. But what has another psalm said? *The just man will be held in everlasting remembrance; he will not fear the evil report.* What is the evil report? *Depart into the everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.* Whoever rejoices to hear the good report will not fear the bad. This is equity, this is truth.

Or do you, because you are unjust, expect the judge not to be just? Or because you are a liar, will the truthful one not be true? Rather, if you wish to receive mercy, be merciful before he comes; forgive whatever has been done against you; give of your abundance. Of whose possessions do you give, if not from his? If you were to give of your own, it would be largess; but since you give of his, it is restitution. *For what do you have, that you have not received?* These are the sacrifices most pleasing to God: mercy, humility, praise, peace, charity. Such as these, then, let us bring and, free from fear, we shall await the coming of the

“The End” Notes

- [1] cf. Pius XI, Encyclical, Quas primas, 11 December 1925
- [2] In Conversation with God 5, 91.1
- [3] CCC 670
- [4] CCC 674
- [5] CCC 675
- [6] CCC 677
- [7] CCC 331
- [8] cf. The Navarre Bible, note to 1 Cor. 15:23-28
- [9] In Conversation with God 5, 91.2
- [10] CCC 997
- [11] CCC 1000
- [12] CCC 999
- [13] CCC 682
- [14] CCC 679
- [15] CCC 679
- [16] Fr. John A. Hardon S.J.; *Basic Catholic Catechism Course*; 7th Article of the Creed
- [17] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 300
- [18] Fr. Francis Fernandez; *In Conversation with God*; Vol. 5; 73:3
- [19] The Order of the Mass; Eucharistic Prayer I (Roman Canon)
- [20] In Conversation with God 5, 91.2
- [21] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 133
- [22] Cf. CCC 1373
- [23] CCC 2444
- [24] CCC 2447
- [25] CCC 2443
- [26] CCC 1829
- [27] Pope Paul VI, Day of Peace, 1 January 1972
- [28] Modern Catholic Dictionary pages 509-510
- [29] cf. CCC 1929
- [30] The Catholic Catechism pg. 386
- [31] Sollicitudo Rei Socialis 41.1
- [32] CCC 1943
- [33] CCC 2448
- [34] Saint John Paul II; *Redemptor Hominis*; 16:8-10
- [35] Saint John Paul II; *Centesimus Annus*; 57.1
- [36] Saint John Paul II; *Centesimus Annus*; 58
- [37] Saint John Paul II; *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*; 13:2
- [38] In Conversation with God 5, 79.3
- [39] CCC; 1351
- [40] Saint John Paul II; *Evangelium Vitae*; 87.2-3

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.
R. Ut digni efficamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus. Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui gloriosae Virginis Matris Mariae corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante, praeparasti, da, ut cuius commemoratione laetamur; eius pia intercessione, ab instantibus malis et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Slave Regina (English Translation)

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, Who by the working of the Holy Spirit didst prepare both body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother, Mary, that she might deserve to be made a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, grant that we who rejoice in her memory, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from present evils and from lasting death, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

judge *who will judge the world in equity and the peoples in his truth.*

Responsory – Office of Readings – 34th Sunday of Ordinary Time

The Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels.

– Then he will reward each according to his deeds.

He will judge the world with justice and the peoples with truth.

– Then he will reward each according to his deeds.

Christ the King/Final Judgment - Lesson and Discussion *“he will sit upon his glorious throne”*

This Sunday, the thirty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time is also the close of the liturgical year. We now turn to this weekend and celebrate the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King. “The feasts of the Epiphany, Easter and the Ascension also relate to Christ as King and Lord of the Universe, but the Church has wanted to have this feast as a special remembrance to modern man, who seems somewhat indifferent to his supernatural destiny.[1]”[2]

When will Jesus come again? Jesus is truly present with us already. He reigns through the Church. It is through His Church that “all the nations will be assembled before him.” (Mt. 25:32) “Since the Ascension of our Lord, God’s plan has entered into its fulfillment. We are already at ‘the last hour’ (1 Jn 2:18)...Christ’s kingdom already manifests its presence through the miraculous signs that attend its proclamation by the Church.”[3]

However, even though Jesus is present in the Church, his final reign has not yet come as Jesus said in the Gospel reading, and as we know because there is still sin in the world. We do not know the exact hour or day when Jesus will come.

What is keeping Christ from coming again? God wants to bring all before Him. “The glorious Messiah’s coming is suspended at every moment of history until his recognition by ‘all Israel,’ for ‘a hardening has come upon part of Israel’ in their ‘unbelief’ toward Jesus. (Rom. 11:20; cf. Mt. 23:39)”[4] Jesus came not just for the Jews nor just for the Gentiles, but for all of mankind: “Thus the Gentiles will be judged on their response to it. But the phrase all the nations includes the Jews also, for at

the judgment “the Son of Man... will repay everyone according to his conduct”. (NAB footnotes Mt. 25:32)

What is going to happen at the Second Coming of Jesus? As the Catechism teaches, “Before Christ’s second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. (Cf. Lk 18:8; Mt. 24:12). There will be a falsehood and persecution to the Church so great that an apparent solution will come that will have many abandon their faith. “The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist”. **Who is the Antichrist?** “A pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of is Messiah come in the flesh.”[5]

The final judgment will come only when the Church follows the Lord in His death and Resurrection. “The kingdom will be fulfilled, then, not by a historic triumph of the Church through a progressive ascendancy, but only by God’s victory over the final unleashing of evil, which will cause his Bride to come down from heaven. God’s triumph over the revolt of evil will take the form of the Last Judgment after the final cosmic upheaval of the passing world.”[6]

Who is Jesus coming with when He comes again? Jesus is coming with the angels, His angels. This is important because just as a king has his servants, who prepare the way for the king, so does Jesus with His angels. The angels belong to Christ because they were created through Him and for Him. As we read in from St. Paul, “for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him.” (Col. 1:16) The angels belong to Jesus also because He made them His messengers of His saving plan: “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?” (Heb. 1:14) Jesus is not only the center of our world, but the angelic world too.[7]

When Jesus comes again what happens to us? “Christ will present all Creation to him as an offering. Then all things will be subjected to his rule. His Second Coming will establish a *new heaven and a new earth*. (Rev. 21:1-2) He will thereupon vanquish the devil, sin, pain and death.[8]”[9] If we have died before the second coming of Christ, our souls have separated from our bodies. At the final coming, through the power of God,

Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina

V
S Alve Re-gí-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ, Vi-ta, dul-
 cé-do, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamámus, éxsu-
 les, fí-li- i Hevæ. Ad te suspi-rámus, geméntes et flen-
 tes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advo-cá-ta
 nostra, illos tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ó-cu-los ad nos con-
 vér-te. Et Je-sum, be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu- i,
 no-bis post hoc exsí-li-um osténde. O cle-mens:
 O pi- a: O dulcis Virgo Ma-rí- a.

St. Joseph was able to die with Mary and Jesus by his side. Since we are part of the mystical body of Christ we call upon St. Joseph to assist us in our passing so that we may see his foster son, our Lord Jesus Christ and may have everlasting life.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

"O, Blessed St. Joseph, you give forth your last breath in the loving embrace of Jesus and Mary. When the seal of death shall close my life, come with Jesus and Mary to help me. Obtain for me this solace for that hour; to die with their holy arms around me. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph I commend my soul living and dying into your arms. Amen."

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

our soul is united with our bodies again, but this time it is incorruptible and perfect.[10] **Who will receive these bodies?** Everyone will. "Those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." (Jn. 5:29; cf. Dan. 12:2) **How is this possible?** "This 'how' exceeds our imagination and understanding; it is accessible only to faith." [11] It is through Christ, who has already shown the glorified body in Himself. It is through Him "all of them will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear," but Christ "will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body," into a "spiritual body".[12]

What will we be judged on? "When he comes at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, the glorious Christ will reveal the secret disposition of hearts and will render to each man according to his works and according to his acceptance or refusal of grace." [13] In the gospel it speaks of serving "the least". **Who is "the least"?** We do not know if it means everyone in the world who goes hungry, thirsty, etc. or if it a specific group of people. This has been debated and still continues. It could also be viewed the sufferers are Christians, especially missionaries who suffer because they bring the gospel to parts of the world. (NAB footnotes Mt. 25:31-46) This can be seen in the first reading when the Lord goes out and seeks the lost, bind up the injured, and heal the sick. (Ez. 34:15-17) He is able to do this today through his followers. In any case, Jesus makes it very clear that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39), and by doing this we will show love, compassion, mercy, and acts of charity towards them.

Why is Jesus the King Who gets to judge who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell? First, Jesus did not come to judge, but to save and to give the life He has in Himself.[14] Secondly, it is by our actions in which one is already judged. "By rejecting grace in this life, one already judges oneself, receives according to one's works, and can even condemn oneself for all eternity by rejecting the Spirit of love." [15] Jesus obtained the full right to pass definitive judgment on the works and hearts of men by His cross, and because the Father has given all judgment to Him.

What happens to the soul at death? It is judged. There are two judgments, a particular judgment at the end of our own life and a general judgment at the end of the world.

What is the particular judgment? “Immediately after death we shall be judged about our service of God and our moral conduct during life. This is called the particular judgment and is promptly carried into effect. We are told in Scripture that ‘men only die once and after than comes judgment’ (Hebrews 9:27). A person is judged on the moral good and evil that he has done. ‘Each will duly be paid according to his share in the work’ (1 Corinthians 3:8).”[16] Saint John Henry Newman said, “When we arrive in the presence of God, He will ask us two questions: are we members of the Church and have we labored for the Church? Everything else is of little value, whether we have been rich or poor, famous or unknown, highly thought of or disgraced, whether we have been sick or healthy, whether we have a good or bad name.”

What is the general judgment? General Judgment is “The universal judgment of the human race at the final resurrection of the dead...This will be a social judgment because it will manifest to the world God’s justice in condemning sinners, and his mercy in those who are saved. It will also be a total judgment by revealing not only people’s moral conduct but all the accumulated blessings or injuries that resulted from each person’s good or evil deeds.”[17]

What is the difference between the initial judgment when we die (i.e. Particular Judgment) and the final judgment (i.e. General Judgment)? The differences are the first is an individual judgment, while the second is showing the world what each person did to show God’s justice and mercy. He will also show the effects of our fruits, of our sins or our good deeds. Since it is a reality that we will die and that we will be judged, it is a good practice to begin to see in ourselves what God and what one-day at the general judgment the whole world will see in us. “The ‘name of the game’ is examination of conscience. You will gain a great deal of knowledge of yourself and of your character and your life. You will teach yourself to love God and to pin down your desires to make good use of your days by making clear, effective resolutions...Friend, take up the book of your life and turn its pages every day, so that you won’t be surprised when it is read on the day of your particular judgment, and won’t be ashamed when it is published on the day of the universal [general] judgment.”[18]

MUSIC – Unwritten by Natasha Bedingfield – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:57

is “the greatest” destroyer of peace.’

In this idea of bias or discrimination we have to understand that it is not our personal choice of which we get to show charity too, rather it is God’s calling. We answer the call based on the need. Needs change based on war, immigration, etc., but charity remains constant. **What are the gravest evils, the greatest and most immediate areas of need in our community?**

Among the prayers of the faithful a common prayer is, “Let us pray for a respect for life from the moment of conception to natural death.” This prayer is in accord with the words of the Holy Father that human life is sacred and inviolable at every stage and in every situation, specifically regarding the unborn (abortion) and the elderly (euthanasia), but every stage in between.

NEWS – Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: Respect life from conception to natural death

– POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:55

<http://youtu.be/nxyyveO8C7>

Why does the Church show a preference or “special favor” for the poor? This is the call of Christ to show this favor and go out of our way to help the needy. We have to remember that we are needy as well and could be just as needy. We also show preference to the poor because others can manage by themselves but the poor have no one except Christ and we are the Body of Christ to them.

Who are the poorest, most alone and most in need? We can answer this in a general fashion. Maybe the poorest are those in the slums of a third world country. Maybe the loneliest are the elderly. Maybe the most in need are the unborn. We can also answer this question specifically to our life.

Who is poor in our life? Who is most alone? Who is most in need and what are they in need of? There could be someone in your school or family that is very alone. There are many needs both physically and spiritually that we are capable of helping with now.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – St. Joseph prayer for a happy death

nakedness.' Where life is involved, the service of charity must be profoundly consistent. It cannot tolerate bias and discrimination, for human life is sacred and inviolable at every stage and in every situation and inviolable at every stage and in every situation; it is an indivisible good. We need then to 'show care' for all life and for the life of everyone. Indeed, at an even deeper level, we need to go to the very roots of life and love." [40]

Does one stage or situation have more preference over another? Does one group of needy have more preference over another? Saint John Paul II says there is no "bias and discrimination". There is no doubt that every stage and every situation is important. We can however ask a few questions in regard to the needy.

One, how grave or serious is the need?

Two, how immediate is the need?

Three, how much can the needy take care of themselves or existing institutions?

This is the same approach that an Emergency Room would take as they show preference or favor toward one patient over the other. A good way to remember these criteria's is "G.I.L.": Grave, Immediate and Last Resort. This criterion is also used in the Church's teaching on just war. This is why the Church shows such a favor or preference to the unborn engendered of being aborted because the need of the unborn is great and they are going to die. The need is immediate because they have no voice and cannot save themselves; this is why the Church has to be the voice of the unborn.

VIDEO – Blessed Mother Teresa's Nobel Peace Prize (1979) Speech – POP CULTURE CONNECTION

<http://youtu.be/FMtgeIMgWI> - Actual footage

<http://youtu.be/mPeVjHh07G> - speech read by a 5th grader

There is no greater example in modern times of service to the poorest than Blessed Mother Teresa. Blessed Mother Teresa served the poorest of the poor in Calcutta and all over the world. For this service she won the Nobel Peace Prize. During her speech, when she literally had the world as her audience, she took the opportunity speak about the "unborn" who are among the poorest and most often forgotten. Mother Teresa says that the poorest in India and Africa are noticed and people are willing to help, but that the unborn so often go unnoticed. She also expressed a great necessity and immediacy saying that 'Abortion

<http://youtu.be/TtGY4G7II6>

Our life as it is today is in edit mode, we are writing and editing. When we receive absolution through the sacrament of Reconciliation, the pages of our past that are sinful and shameful are erased. The blank page in front of us tomorrow is waiting to be written. We should then research, write and edit our pages of life with the knowledge that Jesus will read this book. Once we die the book is finished, and no further changes can be made. **Would we want our book to be read and published today?**

Can we be saved from our particular judgment when we die?

No. Once we have been judged the sentence is final. **Why?** It is because we are judged on what we do or failed to do while we alive on earth. When Christ comes again we have already done everything we could do.

What happens to those who are set on Jesus' left, "the goats"? Jesus is very clear here. "Depart from me you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels...And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." (Mt. 25:41, 46) Those that are sent to hell will not only feel the pain in their soul from the complete separation from God, but will also feel physical pains of hell with their bodies now.

Mystical Body of Christ - Lesson and Discussion

"what you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me"

The Gospel speaks of whatever is done to the least, the poor, and the outcast is done to Jesus. Jesus is teaching on the mystical body of Christ.

What is the mystical body of Christ? The mystical body of Christ is all of us, the Church. Jesus is the head and we are the parts of the body. Just like our bodies, when one part of the body is hurt or strengthened, the rest of the body feels it. When Peter called on all to come together into the Church so that we all may be one, this strengthened our Church, our body. However, there were those who wanted to destroy the Church, the body. By doing this, they were killing Christ.

Since we are one body in Christ, this means we are all in this together. We are not separated from a one-on-one personal

relationship with God, rather this means that through our personal relationship with Jesus, we are in relationship with all Christians. This bond that we share can be seen in Scripture, “For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.” (Rom. 12:4-5) Jesus prayed at the last supper, “May [they] be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one.” (Jn. 17:22-23) Even after we die we are not separated as the body of Christ. This is why we pray in our Creed, “For the Communion of Saints.” Paul wrote, “What will separate us from the love of Christ? ... I am convinced that neither death, nor life...will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 8:35-39) Jesus destroyed the barrier of death and life; our relationship with Christ will last for all eternity along with our brothers and sisters who have died in the state of Grace.

We declare our belief in the Communion of Saints at every Mass in the Eucharistic Prayer. “In communion with those whose memory we venerate, especially the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ, † and blessed Joseph, her Spouse, your blessed Apostles and Martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, (James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude; Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian) and all your Saints; we ask that through their merits and prayers, in all things we may be defended by your protecting help. (Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)”[19] At the Mass we have the “whole Christ” present, both the head (Jesus) and the body (us). Jesus Christ is present in the person of the priest; the priest is *in persona Christi* and most perfectly in the Blessed Sacrament. We also have us, the bride of Christ, present in the pews. This bride includes not only the Church Militant on earth, but also the bride being perfected in purgatory and the spotless bride in triumph, those in heaven. This heavenly bride includes those mentioned in the prayer, Mary and all the Saints. It is by this unity that occurs at Mass that we are strengthened to go out to others and show charity.

Finally, we see it in our charity to others. St. Paul, at the time of his conversion was persecuting and even killing Christians. He had never seen Jesus. However, when Jesus knocked Paul to the ground, He identified Himself with His Church, “Why do you persecute *me*?” (Acts 9:4) And again He says, “I am Jesus, whom

wondrous spectacle of our fraternal charity. Then they will say to us what was said in earlier times: ‘See how they love one another!’”[38]

One of the precepts of the Church is to provide for the needs of the Church. “From the very beginning Christians have brought, along with the bread and wine for the Eucharist, gifts to share with those in need. This custom of the *collection*, ever appropriate, is inspired by the example of Christ who became poor to make us rich: Those who are well off, and who are also willing, give as each chooses. What is gathered is given to him who presides to assist orphans and widows, those whom illness or any other cause has deprived of resources, prisoners, immigrants and, in a word, all who are in need.”[39]

Why do we give to the poor? It is not out of obligation, because Jesus told us, but out of charity. We love Jesus and so we do what He commands, but we also love the other, love the poor. In each act of charity “we have the opportunity to serve Jesus”.

Saint John Paul II and Matthew 25 [Part II] - Lesson and Discussion

“special favor to those who are poorest”

This lesson is part two and covers theme 6 of 6. For the first five themes please see Saint John Paul II and Matthew 25 [Part I]

Theme Six: The Church’s special favor to those who are poorest

“In our service of charity, we must be inspired and distinguished by a specific attitude: we must care for the other as a person for whom God has made us responsible. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to become neighbors to everyone (Lk. 10:29-37), and to show special favor to those who are poorest, most alone and most in need. In helping the hungry, the thirsty, the foreigner, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned – as well as the child in the womb and the old person who is suffering of near death – we have the opportunity to serve Jesus. He himself said: “As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40). Hence we cannot feel called to account and judged by the ever relevant words of Saint John Chrysostom: ‘Do you wish to honor the body of Christ? Do not neglect it when you find it naked? Do not do it homage here in the church with silk fabrics only to neglect it outside where it suffers cold and

Charity is the measure of our unity to God, for God is love. Charity is our measure in the imitation of Christ, who is the Word made Flesh, love incarnate. Charity is also the measure of our fraternal unity with our neighbor. Jesus says, “I give you a new commandment: love, one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

The commandment to love is not a commandment to love only those we know or those within our “group”; it is to love as Christ loved. There is an immediate need to love and to love without bias. “...It is sufficient to face squarely the reality of an innumerable multitude of people – children, adults and the elderly – in other words, real and unique human persons, who are suffering under intolerable burden of poverty. There are many millions who are deprived of hope due to the fact that, in many parts of the world, their situation has noticeable worsened. Before there tragedies of total indigence and need, in which so many of our brothers and sisters are living, it is the Lord Jesus himself who comes to question us (Mt. 25:31-46)”[37] Christ loved all and so we love all. Christ loved those most in need and loved to the point of sacrifice and death.

VIDEO – They Will Know We Are Christians by our Love – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:12

<http://youtu.be/7CobNWUXb1>

CORRECTION – At the 0:35 mark in the video, we read that there are 400,000 Churches in the United States. There is actually only one church, the Catholic Church, but thousands of communities of believers. The focus of this video is to show the common bond of charity held between all Christians. Although Christians are united in charity, we are yet to be united in our doctrine, worship, Sacraments and apostolic succession.

“Jesus has set the standard which the Christian of every age must strive to follow. This is how Christians will be distinguishable from those who have still not entered the Church. What a shame if we were not to live up to that standard! We would thereby confuse everyone, and at the same time would lose the honor of being known as children of God. It is in these very sad circumstances that we foolishly neglect divine assistance, that aid which is so necessary if we are to give witness to a paganized and indifferent environment. Let us rather do our best that the world may be amazed at the

you are persecuting.” (Acts 9:5) Jesus does not say, “Why do you persecute my followers?” Jesus is fully present with all of His followers as we also hear mentioned in today’s Gospel reading. Years later, while writing to Timothy, Paul admitted that he had persecuted Jesus by persecuting His Church. He expressed gratitude for Christ appointing him an apostle, “though I formerly blasphemed and persecuted and insulted Him.” (1 Tim. 1:13)

When looking at the Gospel reading, we see when we neglect the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the sick, the naked, the imprisoned, and the dead we neglect Jesus. **Discuss real tangible ways we can help the mystical body of Christ in our state of life.**

What does the mystical body of Christ have to do with

Christ’s Kingdom? The Gospel Reading and the feast celebrated today are in great anticipation of the return of Christ. When the Second Coming happens, we will be even closer and one with Christ. However, we cannot sit on the sidelines and simply wait for Christ’s coming if we know that there are still people in the world who do not know or love Christ. They must be brought into the kingdom, to be one with Jesus again through His Church. “We collaborate in the expansion of this kingdom whenever we make our ordinary world more human and more divine.”[20] As St. Paul wrote to Timothy, “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.” (2 Tim. 4:1-5)

Corporal Works of Mercy - Lesson and Discussion

“a stranger and you welcomed me”

Jesus in the Gospel reading clearly lays out the seven corporal works of mercy and how they affect our fate.

What are the seven corporal works of mercy? “The seven practices of charity, based on Christ’s prediction of the Last Judgment (Matthew 5:3-10) that will determine each person’s final destiny. They are: 1. To feed the hungry; 2. To give drink to the thirsty; 3. To clothe the naked; 4. To shelter the homeless; 5. To visit the sick; 6. To visit those in prison; and 7. To bury the dead.”[21]

Why should we do corporal works of mercy? If we are not acting with charity then we are not showing mercy. We can have the greatest faith in Jesus Christ of anyone, but “faith apart from works is dead.” (James 2:26) We also know there will be times in our lives when we will be asked to do one of these seven works of mercy and whether we choose to do it or not, we are doing it to Christ.

How are we helping or hurting Jesus? As the previous lesson [mystical body of Christ] had mentioned, what is done to the least is done to Him. Jesus Christ is present in many ways to the Church; He told us “where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” (Mt. 18:20) He is also present in the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned as we hear in the gospel reading today.[22]

What are we to do? We are called as Christians to be generous and self-giving. For example, in the Our Father we pray, “give us this day our daily bread”. In the world today, there are millions who are starving and forced to go with little to no food. As Christians we are called to help those who do not have daily bread on earth, and as we read today God is there when we give food to those that are hungry.

How does the Church love the poor? “The Church’s love for the poor...is a part of her constant tradition.’ Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to ‘be able to give to those in need’. It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty.”[23] When looking at the poorest places in the world, there is the Catholic Church. The Church understands that giving alms to the poor is “one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.”[24]

Why should I give to the poor? Because “God blesses those who come to the aid of the poor and rebukes those who turn away from them...It is by what they have done for the poor that

Mother Teresa finally received permission to begin the Missionaries of Charity she said, “May I go to the slums now?” The social message of the Gospel was not a theory for Mother Teresa but a reality to act without hesitation.

“As far as the Church is concerned, the social message of the Gospel must not be considered a theory, but above all else a basis and a motivation for action. Inspired by this message, some of the first Christians distributed their goods to the poor, bearing witness to the fact that, despite different social origins, it was possible for people to live together in peace and harmony. Through the power of the Gospel, down the centuries monks tilled the land, men and women Religious founded hospitals and shelters for the poor, Confraternities as well as individual men and women of all states of life devoted themselves to the needy and to those on the margins of society, convinced as they were that Christ’s words ‘as you did it to me’ (Mt 25:40) were not intended to remain a pious wish, but were meant to become a concrete life commitment.”[35]

What are the concrete life commitments that people, institutions and especially the Church has made in your community in service of the poor?

What are some concrete life commitments that we can make?

Theme Four: Justice is elevated by Grace

In our service to the needy, we are practicing the cardinal virtue of justice and the theological virtue of charity. Justice is fulfilled in charity. Anyone whether they are baptized or not, can show justice. Justice is a natural virtue given to all. Justice is when we give others what they are due, what is rightly theirs. Charity is justice elevated by grace. In Charity we see justice, but justice done for the sake of God and for the sake of other. “Love for others, and in the first place love for the poor, in whom the Church sees Christ himself, is made concrete in the promotion of justice. Justice will never be fully attained unless people see in the poor person, who is asking for help in order to survive, not an annoyance or a burden, but an opportunity for showing kindness and a chance for greater enrichment.”[36]

Theme Five: Charity is the measure of unity

speaks about the misuse of giving and the responsibility to channel money in the right direction. **What are some examples of misuse of money given to the needy?** The purchase of weapons rather than food is one example. Another example is groups that raise money to feed the hungry and then use that money to sterilize women, stealing from them their fertility. Our works of mercy must not contradict each other, we want to feed the hungry but we don't support the use of sterilization or birth control, which threatens life itself. Some believe that the answer is to decrease the population. In other words, if needy people don't have children, there will be fewer children to feed. First, Christ tells us there will always be poor and needy people, "You always have the poor with you..." (John 12:8) Second, the Church upholds the fact that all life is sacred and that life should never be destroyed. Life is first and foremost both in the womb and out.

To give what is needed also entails that we care for both the body and the soul. This is why the Catholic Church teaches the spiritual (soul) and corporal (body) works of mercy. We care for both body and soul. The Missionaries of Charity first invite volunteers to "pay a visit" to Jesus as they bring volunteers to their chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament is. The Missionaries of Charity are also adamant about making sure they take care of their own spiritual needs. There is a phrase, "You can't give, what you don't have." Many times at noon, in time for mid-day prayer, the MCs will stop serving, so that they can give service (worship and prayer) to God in their chapels. It is this care of both body and soul that brings conversion in the needy. The needy and those serving in the needy understand that we are both body and soul and that both are in need. The beatitude "Blessed are the poor in spirit" is the realization that our souls are needy.

Theme Three: Moral responsibility is not a theory, but rather a reality

Five words of Jesus, "You did it to me" have literally changed the world. The Catholic Church has taken these words literally. These words are not a theory. Theories are often removed from reality; they consist of meetings, planning and many times hesitation toward action. These words of Christ are as real today as they were for Jesus and as they will be real for all times. Jesus said the poor you will always have with you. (Matthew 26:11) When something is a reality, there is no hesitation. When

Jesus Christ will recognize his chosen ones."[25] When we act in love and charity we obtain the fruits of Charity.

MUSIC – Dark Horses by Switchfoot – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 4:00

http://youtu.be/5_5oE0ijhK

This song was written and dedicated to the homeless youth in San Diego and those who help them. A "dark horse" is usually someone we know very little of and that they are potential for success is great. At the end of the song Jon Foreman is saying, "stand up for the dark horses". We must stand for those who are in need. By doing works of mercy, we help bring the greatness of God into this world.

What are the fruits of Charity? "The *fruits* of charity are joy, peace, and mercy...it fosters reciprocity and remains disinterested and generous; it is friendship and communion."[26] A famous saying is "If you want peace, work for justice."[27] When working for justice with charity it can bring about social justice.

What is Social Justice? "The virtue that inclines one to cooperate with others in order to help make the institutions of society better serve the common good. While the obligation of social justice falls upon the individual, that person cannot fulfill the obligation alone, but must work in concert with others, through organized bodies, as member of a group whose purpose is to identify the needs of society, and, by the use of appropriate means, to meet these needs locally, regionally, nationally, and even globally. Implicit in the virtue of social justice is an awareness that the world has entered on a new phase of social existence, with potential for great good or great harm vested in those who control the media and the structures of modern society. Christians, therefore, are expected to respond to the new obligations created by the extraordinary means of promoting the common good not only of small groups but literally of all humanity."[28]

We must first see that social justice is at its core, the respect of the dignity of every human person.[29] This means respecting their rights of that person themselves and their property as prescribed by the seventh commandment, "Thou shall not steal". From the beginning, the Church has always stood up for the rights to ownership, but it has also insisted on the rights of society and decried selfish greed as morally wrong. It is our duty

and obligation to look after the needs of man and society as a whole.[30]

Is it not the government's job to protect our property and others? Pope Saint John Paul II said, "For the Church does not propose economic and political systems or programs, nor does she show preference for one or the other, provided that human dignity is properly respected and promoted, and provided she herself is allowed the room she needs to exercise her ministry in the world."[31] Yes, the government should look after the defense of their citizens and property, but it is the "Society (that ensures social justice by providing the conditions that allow associations and individuals to obtain their due."[32]

We must look at the motives of the Church with social justice and works of mercy as compared with the government's motives. There are potential dangers of working for justice through the government. First, what the government might define as justice could, in actuality, be in opposition to or a perversion of true social justice. In addition, when we look to the government alone, it can become a God to us, an idol to which we look to find our truth instead of looking to God. We must never take the dignity or image of God out of each individual.

VIEDO – Welcome to the Catholic Church - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:02

<http://youtu.be/9gu3UOoLco>

The Church's motives for social justice have been clear "since her origin and in spite of the failings of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere."[33] Wherever there has been a need in society, whether in education, science, healthcare, etc. the Church and organizations within the Church have answered the call. We are all called to live out today's Gospel by working for Charity and peace.

Saint John Paul II and Matthew 25 [Part I] - Lesson and Discussion

"the sense of moral responsibility"

This lesson is a survey of four papal encyclicals (*Redemptor Hominis, Centesimus Annus, Evangelium Vitae, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*) written by Saint John Paul II. The survey reveals key teachings of the Church regarding the words of Jesus in

Matthew 25.

LINK – Catholicism Series – Fr. Robert Barron.

Lesson 2: Section V – Mother Teresa "You did it to me"

Lesson 8: Section IV – Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (about 25min)

Theme One: Moral Responsibility

"...it is necessary to establish, accept and deepen the sense of moral responsibility, which man must undertake. Again and always man. This responsibility becomes especially evident for us Christians when we recall – and we should always recall it – the scene of the last judgment according to the words of Christ related in Matthew's Gospel. This eschatological scene must always be 'applied' to man's history; it must always be made the 'measure' for human acts as an essential outline for an examination of conscience by each and every one: 'I was hungry and you gave me no food...naked and you did not clothe me...in prison and you did not visit me.' These words become charged with even stronger warning, when we think that, instead of bread and cultural aid, the new States of nations awakening to independent life are being offered, sometimes in abundance, modern weapons and means of destruction placed at the service of armed conflicts and wars that are not so much a requirement for defending their rights and their sovereignty but rather a form of chauvinism, imperialism, and neocolonialism of one kind or another. We all know well that the areas of misery and hunger on our globe could have been made fertile in a short time, if the gigantic investments for armaments at the service of war and destruction had been changed into investments for food at the service of life."[34]

Each individual will be judged. We cannot assume that someone else will take care of the needs of the poor. We cannot assume that someone will care for both the body and soul (works of mercy) of others. This is our responsibility and we will be judged based on the responsibility we have been given.

Theme Two: We must give what is needed, Care of Body and Soul

NEWS – Ethiopian charity scam – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:56

http://youtu.be/OzAl0px_6s

We must give the needy, what they need. The Holy Father