

28TH WEEK IN ORD TIME – YEAR A

MONDAY 28TH WEEK YEAR A - LUKE 11:29-32

While still more people gathered in the crowd, Jesus said to them, "This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation." Luke 11:29-30

The people gathering around Jesus wanted a sign. They had heard His teaching and witnessed what He was doing, yet many still wanted something more before they would believe. Jesus recognized what was happening. Their request was not simply a desire to understand. They were looking for further proof before deciding whether He was worthy of their trust.

It is easy to think we would have responded differently. If Jesus were standing before us, surely we would recognize Him. Yet we can fall into the same pattern in our own relationship with God. We ask Him to show us what to do, but when an answer begins to take shape, we ask for another confirmation. We pray about a decision, receive good reasons to move in one direction, and still hesitate because we want certainty. We may even tell ourselves, "If this happens, then I will know God wants me to do it." When it happens, another condition takes its place.

There is nothing wrong with asking God for guidance. We should bring our decisions, doubts, and questions to Him. The problem begins when our search for guidance becomes a way of postponing trust. At some point, we may already have enough to act. The next step is not another sign. It is faith.

Jesus points to Jonah. Jonah went to Nineveh and proclaimed God's message, and the people responded. They did not demand a series of miracles before changing their lives. They heard the warning and took it seriously. Yet Jesus tells the crowd that something far greater than Jonah is before them. The Son of Man Himself is among them, and still they want more evidence.

We can do something similar when we overlook what God has already placed before us. We may pray for Him to repair a relationship while refusing to make the first call. We may ask for direction while ignoring a responsibility we already know needs attention. We may pray for a change in our spiritual life while repeatedly postponing prayer, Scripture, forgiveness, or a habit we know needs to end. We keep waiting for God to make the path unmistakable when He may already be asking us to take an ordinary, practical step.

Sometimes the sign we are waiting for will never come in the form we expect. There may be no dramatic moment, sudden certainty, or perfect answer. Faith often asks us to move while questions remain. That does not mean acting recklessly or treating every thought as a message from God. It means paying attention to what Christ has already taught us and allowing His words to shape what we do next.

This Gospel also invites us to look at why we keep asking for signs. Sometimes we genuinely do not know what to do. At other times, we know but do not like the answer. Forgiving someone is difficult. Letting go of resentment is difficult. Admitting we were wrong is difficult. Changing a comfortable habit is difficult. Serving when we would rather stay uninvolved is difficult. Another sign can become an excuse to wait.

Jesus does not ask us to understand everything before following Him. He asks us to recognize who stands before us. The people in the crowd wanted something spectacular. Jesus pointed them back to what mattered: God had already spoken, and the question was whether they would respond.

Is there something you have been asking God to confirm again and again, even though you already have enough direction to take the next step? Are you waiting for a sign because you truly need guidance, or because the answer you sense requires something difficult from you? What is one practical step you can take today instead of waiting for more certainty?

Lord Jesus, help us recognize the ways You are already guiding us. When we keep asking for signs because we are afraid to act, give us the faith to trust You. Help us listen to Your Word, accept what You ask of us, and take the next step even when we cannot see the whole path ahead. Amen.

TUESDAY 28TH WEEK YEAR A - [Luke 11:37-41](#)

After Jesus had spoken, a Pharisee invited him to dine at his home. He entered and reclined at table to eat. The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not observe the prescribed washing before the meal. Luke 11:37-38

The Pharisee invites Jesus into his home for a meal. It sounds like an ordinary act of hospitality, but almost immediately his attention turns to something Jesus has not done. Jesus did not perform the customary washing before eating. The Pharisee is amazed. He knows the religious practices expected of a faithful Jew, and Jesus has ignored one of them.

The washing itself was not necessarily wrong. Religious practices can help us remember God, discipline ourselves, and express our faith. The problem begins when the practice becomes more important than what it is meant to lead us toward. The Pharisee notices Jesus' unwashed hands, but he fails to consider what Jesus has been teaching and doing. He sees the missing ritual before he sees the person sitting at his table.

We can fall into the same habit. It is easy to focus on what can be seen. We may pay attention to how someone prays, how often they attend church, what they wear, how they speak, or whether they follow practices we consider important. We may even compare another person's

faith to our own expectations. Yet none of these observations tells us everything about a person's relationship with God.

The danger also applies to how we look at ourselves. We can become satisfied because we attend Mass, say our prayers, read Scripture, serve in church, or follow certain devotions. These are good things, but Jesus invites us to look further. Are our prayers changing how we treat people? Are we becoming more patient at home? Are we willing to forgive? Do we speak kindly when no one is watching? Are we generous when there is nothing to gain from it? A religious practice has value when it draws us closer to God and begins to shape the way we live.

This connects closely to what Jesus had just said earlier in Luke's Gospel: "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it." Hearing God's Word is only the beginning. The Word needs to enter our decisions, relationships, habits, and reactions. We can know Scripture well and still resist what God is asking of us. We can perform every visible act correctly while allowing resentment, pride, jealousy, or selfishness to remain untouched.

Jesus does not reject religious devotion. He challenges a faith that becomes focused on appearances while neglecting what is happening inside. That distinction matters because outward behaviour is easier to manage. We can make ourselves appear faithful before other people. The heart is harder to hide from God.

There is also something personal in the Pharisee's reaction. He invited Jesus into his home, yet he was already judging Him at the table. We can invite Jesus into our lives and still resist Him when He does not fit our expectations. We may pray for guidance, then become uncomfortable when His teaching challenges something we would rather keep unchanged. We may ask Him to lead us, yet still want Him to approve the direction we have already chosen.

Jesus asks for more than an appearance of faith. He asks for a life that is being changed from within. The question is not simply whether we are doing the right religious things. It is whether our relationship with God is shaping the person we are becoming.

Is there an area of your faith where you have become more concerned about outward practice than what is happening in your heart? Is there an attitude, habit, resentment, or judgment that Jesus may be asking you to examine more closely today?

Lord Jesus, help us to see beyond appearances and to examine our own hearts before judging others. May our prayers and religious practices lead us closer to You and change the way we live. Show us what needs to change within us, and give us the courage to follow Your Word in our daily lives. Amen.

WEDNESDAY 28TH WEEK YEAR A – [Luke 11:42-46](#)

Then one of the scholars of the law said to him in reply, "Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too." And he said, "Woe also to you scholars of the law! You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them." Luke 11:45-46

The scholar of the law is offended by what Jesus has been saying. He tells Jesus plainly, "Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too." Instead of softening His words, Jesus turns directly to the scholars of the law. His criticism is specific. They know the law, teach it, and tell people what is required, yet they do little to help people carry what they have placed upon them.

Jesus is not saying that expectations are always wrong. God's commandments matter. There are responsibilities we cannot simply ignore because they are difficult. The problem comes when we become very good at telling another person what he or she should do while remaining distant from the struggle involved. It is easy to give instructions from the outside. It is harder to enter someone's difficulty and offer practical help.

We can fall into this habit without noticing it. We may tell someone to be patient when we have not had to endure what that person is facing. We may expect a family member to change but give little encouragement when change takes time. We may criticize someone for making a poor decision without knowing how limited the choices were. Even in matters of faith, we can expect people to pray more, attend Mass, forgive, trust God, or overcome a weakness, yet never ask what is making these things difficult for them.

Jesus asks for something more from us. If we see someone carrying a burden, our first response should not always be another instruction. Sometimes the better question is, "How can we help?" A person struggling to forgive may need someone who will listen before offering advice. Someone returning to God after years away may need encouragement rather than a list of everything that needs fixing. A person who has failed may already know what went wrong. What may help most is someone willing to stay beside them as they begin again.

This Gospel also asks us to examine how we use what we know. Knowledge can make us helpful, but it can also make us demanding. The scholars knew the law well, yet Jesus saw that their knowledge had become disconnected from compassion. They could identify what others were doing wrong, but they were not lifting "one finger" to make the journey easier. Their knowledge gave them authority, but Jesus expected that authority to lead to service.

The same principle applies to our homes, workplaces, churches, and friendships. If we have more experience, perhaps our role is not simply to point out mistakes but to guide. If we have more resources, perhaps we can share them. If we understand something another person does not, we can explain rather than belittle. If someone is carrying more than we are, we can resist adding another demand.

There is another side to this Gospel too. Sometimes we are hardest on people closest to us. We know their weaknesses and expect them to improve. We can become frustrated when they repeat the same mistakes. Yet Jesus asks us to look at what we are contributing. Are we helping them move forward, or are we simply reminding them of where they fall short?

Following Jesus changes how we respond to another person's burden. We do not need to solve every problem. Often, we cannot. But we can choose not to make the load heavier. We can listen, encourage, offer practical help, pray, forgive, or simply remain present. Sometimes lifting one finger is exactly where love begins.

Is there someone in your life whom you have been expecting to change, improve, or do more? As you think about that person today, ask yourself: Have you been adding to the burden through criticism or expectations, or is there something practical you can do to help carry part of the load?

Lord Jesus, help us notice the burdens other people are carrying. Keep us from being quick to criticize or place demands on others while offering little help. Teach us to use what we know to serve, encourage, and support. Show us where we can lift even a small part of another person's burden today. Amen.

THURSDAY 28TH WEEK YEAR A – Luke 11:47-54

"Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter and you stopped those trying to enter." When Jesus left, the scribes and Pharisees began to act with hostility toward him and to interrogate him about many things, for they were plotting to catch him at something he might say. Luke 11:52-54

Jesus speaks harshly to the scholars of the law because they had been given something valuable. They knew Scripture. They understood religious teaching. People looked to them for guidance. Yet Jesus says they had taken away the "key of knowledge." Instead of helping people understand God and come closer to Him, they had made the way more difficult. Rules, interpretations, expectations, and their own authority had become barriers. Even worse, Jesus says they themselves did not enter. They possessed knowledge about God, but that knowledge had not led them into the life God wanted for them.

There is an important difference between knowing about God and allowing what we know to change how we live. We can read Scripture every day, attend Mass, listen to homilies, follow Catholic teachings, and still miss what God is asking of us personally. Knowledge has value, but it is meant to lead somewhere. It should lead us toward greater love for God, greater honesty about ourselves, and a greater willingness to live according to His Word. If our knowledge only makes us feel more religious or more certain that we are right, we may have

learned many things without allowing them to reach our hearts.

Jesus also points to the effect the scholars had on other people. They were not only responsible for their own response to God. Their example and teaching influenced people who were searching for Him. That part of the Gospel deserves our attention because our faith never exists entirely in private. Even when we are not teaching anyone, people can see something of our faith through the way we speak, react, forgive, judge, serve, and treat them.

Someone may be trying to return to church after years away. Another person may be struggling to pray or wondering whether God still cares about them. Someone else may know almost nothing about Christianity but has begun asking questions. What they encounter in us can matter. If they meet impatience, judgment, superiority, or endless criticism, they may begin to associate these things with Christianity itself. We may never intend to push anyone away from God, yet our behaviour can still make the door seem harder to enter.

The opposite is also true. A person who listens without immediately judging can help someone take another step toward God. A sincere answer to a difficult question can help. So can admitting that we do not know everything. Sometimes it is as simple as treating another person kindly when they expect condemnation. None of this means hiding the truth or changing our beliefs to make everything easier. Jesus never avoided difficult truths. But truth in His hands was meant to bring people back to God, not to become a weapon for proving who was better.

The reaction of the scribes and Pharisees after Jesus confronted them is revealing. Instead of considering His words, they became hostile and tried to catch Him saying something they could use against Him. Their attention moved away from the truth of what Jesus had said and toward defending themselves. We can fall into the same pattern. When Scripture challenges us, our first instinct can be to explain why it applies to someone else. We notice another person's pride, hypocrisy, anger, or lack of faith much faster than our own.

Today's Gospel asks us to do something harder. Before looking at anyone else, we can ask whether our own life makes it easier for people to encounter Christ. We do not need to be theologians or teachers to influence someone's understanding of God. Sometimes a single conversation, reaction, or act of kindness says more about our faith than a long explanation ever could. The "key" we have received is not something to keep for ourselves. What we have learned about Christ should help us enter more deeply into life in Him and, through the way we live, leave the door open for others to enter too.

Does the way you live your faith help another person see Christ more clearly, or could something in your words, attitudes, or actions be making Him harder to approach? Is there someone in your life who may need you to listen, encourage, forgive, or simply show them a better example of what following Jesus looks like?

Lord Jesus, help us not only to know Your Word, but to live it. Show us where pride, judgment, or stubbornness has entered our faith. May our words and actions help people come closer to

You rather than turn away. Teach us to receive Your truth ourselves before expecting it from anyone else, and let our lives point people toward You. Amen.

OCTOBER 15

SAINT TERESA OF JESUS, VIRGIN AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Romans 8:22–27; Luke 13:18–21 (optional liturgical readings)

Today, we celebrate Saint Teresa of Jesus, also known as Saint Teresa of Ávila, a great Carmelite nun, mystic, reformer, and Doctor of the Church. Her life teaches us an important lesson: prayer is not simply talking to God; it is building a loving relationship with Him.

Saint Teresa lived in sixteenth-century Spain. She faced many challenges in reforming the Carmelite religious life. Some people opposed her, and her work was not always easy. Yet she did not give up. She trusted in God and continued her mission with courage, humility, and deep faith.

One of her most famous teachings is that prayer is a loving conversation with the One who loves us. She understood that prayer is not only about asking God for favors. It is about spending time with Him, listening to Him, and allowing Him to change our hearts.

Think about our daily lives. We spend time talking with family and friends. We check our phones, watch television, and worry about work, money, and the future. But how much time do we spend quietly with God? Sometimes we say, “I am too busy to pray.” Saint Teresa reminds us that prayer is not a burden; it is an opportunity to be with the One who gives meaning to our lives.

Saint Teresa also teaches us that holiness does not mean having a life without problems. Holiness means trusting God even when life becomes difficult. She experienced sickness, opposition, and uncertainty, but she continued to believe that God was guiding her.

Her message is especially important for families today. When there is misunderstanding, pray together. When there is anger, ask God for patience. When there is fear, turn to Him with confidence. Even a few minutes of sincere prayer can begin to transform a heart and a home.

Saint Teresa once expressed her spirituality in these memorable words: “Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you; all things are passing; God never changes.”

Dear friends, the world around us may change. Our health, our jobs, our relationships, and our circumstances may change. But God's love remains constant.

Let us ask Saint Teresa of Jesus to help us become people of prayer, courage, and trust. May we not simply speak about God, but truly make room for Him in our hearts.

Prayer: Saint Teresa of Jesus, teach us to pray with sincerity, love God with all our hearts, and remain faithful to Him in every situation. May our lives become a living witness to God's love. Amen.

FRIDAY 28TH WEEK YEAR A – Luke 12:1-7

"I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but after that can do no more. I shall show you whom to fear. Be afraid of the one who after killing has the power to cast into Gehenna; yes, I tell you, be afraid of that one." Luke 12:4-5

Fear can influence more of our decisions than we realise. We may avoid saying what is right because we do not want to upset someone. We may hide our faith because we are worried about how others will react. We may go along with something we know is wrong because refusing would make us stand out. Sometimes the fear is not about physical harm at all. It is the fear of rejection, criticism, embarrassment, losing a friendship, or being misunderstood. These fears can feel powerful because the opinions of other people affect us immediately. Their reactions are visible. God's judgment can feel distant by comparison.

Jesus speaks directly to this struggle. His words in today's Gospel are strong: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but after that can do no more." He is speaking to His disciples as people who will face real opposition because they follow Him. Yet His message also reaches into the smaller fears we encounter in everyday life. Human beings have limits. Someone may criticise us, reject us, mock our faith, or make life difficult for us, but their authority over our lives is never absolute. God alone sees the whole of our life and knows what lies within our heart.

When Jesus tells us whom to fear, He is not asking us to live terrified of God. The fear of God in Scripture points us toward recognising who God is and giving Him the place He deserves. His word carries greater weight than public opinion. His judgment matters more than popularity. His truth does not change according to what happens to be acceptable around us. When we understand this, our priorities begin to change. Instead of asking, "What will people think of me?" we begin asking, "Am I being faithful to God?"

That question can be uncomfortable because there are moments when following Christ costs us something. We may need to refuse something others accept. We may need to admit that we were wrong when pride tells us to defend ourselves. We may need to speak honestly when remaining silent would be easier. We may need to forgive someone even when friends tell us that person does not deserve it. Faith is not only about believing certain truths. It becomes visible through the choices we make when obedience is inconvenient.

Jesus Himself lived this way. He did not change His message to gain the approval of religious leaders, political authorities, or crowds. At times people praised Him, and at other times they wanted Him gone. Neither reaction determined what He said or did. His life was directed

toward the Father. The disciples would eventually have to learn the same lesson. If they allowed fear of people to control them, they would never have carried the Gospel beyond the safety of familiar places.

Most of us will not face the same dangers the first disciples faced, but we still make choices between faithfulness and approval. These moments can appear at work, among friends, within our families, or even in private decisions nobody else sees. Each one reveals whose voice carries the greatest weight in our lives.

Jesus invites us to put human opinion back into its proper place. People can misunderstand us. They can disagree. They can walk away. None of this changes who God is or what He asks of us. We do not need to become confrontational or careless about other people's feelings. We simply cannot allow fear of their reaction to become more important than obedience to God.

Where has fear of another person's opinion affected your choices recently? Is there something you know God is asking of you, but you have hesitated because you are worried about how someone might react?

Lord Jesus, help us recognise the fears that keep us from following You fully. Give us courage when obedience is difficult and strength when we worry about what others may think. Teach us to value Your word above approval, popularity, and acceptance. May our choices show that You come first in our lives. Amen.

SATURDAY 28TH WEEK YEAR A - [Luke 12:8-12](#)

Jesus said to his disciples: "I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God. But whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God. Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven." Luke 12:8-10

Jesus speaks plainly in today's Gospel about acknowledging Him before others. His words can sound severe at first, especially when He speaks about denying Him and about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Yet at the heart of this passage is a question every Christian eventually faces: Do we belong to Jesus only when faith is easy and private, or are we prepared to remain faithful when following Him costs us something?

Acknowledging Jesus does not always mean making a public declaration or speaking about our faith at every opportunity. Most of us will never stand before a hostile crowd and be asked whether we believe in Christ. Our moments of decision are usually much smaller. They happen in conversations, workplaces, families, friendships, and the choices nobody else notices. We acknowledge Jesus when His teaching influences how we treat someone who has hurt us. We acknowledge Him when we refuse to join in gossip even though everyone else is doing it. We

acknowledge Him when we choose honesty even when dishonesty would make life easier. Sometimes it can be as simple as not hiding the fact that we pray, attend Mass, or depend upon God.

There can be a temptation to keep faith safely separated from the rest of life. We may believe sincerely, pray regularly, and still hesitate when our faith becomes visible to other people. We might worry about appearing overly religious, being misunderstood, or making someone uncomfortable. There is nothing wrong in being thoughtful about how we express our beliefs. Jesus never asks us to force faith upon anyone. But there is a difference between respecting another person's beliefs and becoming embarrassed about our own.

Peter gives us one of the clearest examples of this struggle. He loved Jesus and had already declared that Jesus was the Messiah. Yet when fear took over in the courtyard, Peter denied even knowing Him. Three times he was given the opportunity to acknowledge Jesus, and three times he stepped away. His failure was serious, but it was not the end of his story. Jesus later restored Peter, and the same man who once denied Him would eventually speak openly about Christ.

That helps us understand another important part of today's Gospel. Jesus speaks about forgiveness, then gives a serious warning concerning rejection of the Holy Spirit. This should not lead us into constant fear that one wrong sentence or one moment of doubt has placed us beyond God's mercy. The Holy Spirit continually draws us toward repentance, truth, and God. The danger comes when a person persistently shuts out that invitation and refuses the mercy God offers. Forgiveness can be received only when we are willing to receive it.

This matters because we will not always acknowledge Jesus perfectly. There may have been moments when we stayed silent because we were afraid. Perhaps we compromised because we wanted to fit in. Perhaps our behaviour gave little indication that Christ mattered to us at all. Peter's story reminds us that failure does not have to become our final answer. We can return. We can begin again. The next opportunity to live according to our faith can become a different response.

Jesus is not asking us to become louder. He is asking us not to be ashamed of belonging to Him. Faith does not need to dominate every conversation, but it should shape the person we are becoming. When Christ matters to us, something of Him should eventually become visible in our choices, our priorities, our treatment of others, and our willingness to stand by what we believe.

Are there situations where you find yourself hiding or downplaying your faith because you are afraid of how others might respond? What is one simple way you can acknowledge Jesus through your choices today?

Lord Jesus, give us courage to belong to You openly and sincerely. Forgive us for the times fear has made us hide our faith or act against what we believe. Help us listen to the Holy Spirit and

respond when You call us back to You. May our words, choices, and actions show that we are not ashamed to be Yours. Amen.

OCTOBER 17

MEMORIAL OF SAINT IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, BISHOP AND MARTYR

Today, we celebrate the feast of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr, one of the great leaders of the early Church. His life teaches us a powerful lesson: when we truly love Jesus Christ, we remain faithful to Him even in the face of suffering and death.

Saint Ignatius lived in the first and second centuries and served as the Bishop of Antioch. He was a courageous shepherd who cared deeply for his Christian community. During the persecution of Christians under the Roman Emperor Trajan, Ignatius was arrested and taken to Rome, where he was condemned to die.

On his journey to Rome, he wrote letters to several Christian communities. These letters reveal his deep faith, his love for the Church, and his desire to remain united with Christ. Even while facing death, he encouraged other Christians to remain strong in their faith and united in love.

Saint Ignatius understood that being a Christian is not simply about attending church or knowing prayers. It means following Jesus with our whole hearts, even when doing so requires sacrifice.

He famously expressed his longing for Christ by saying, "I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread of Christ." These words show the depth of his faith and his willingness to give everything for Jesus.

Dear friends, we may not be called to die as martyrs, but we are all called to witness to Christ in our daily lives. Sometimes, our martyrdom is small and hidden. It means telling the truth when lying would be easier, forgiving someone who has hurt us, standing up for a person who is being treated unfairly, and remaining faithful to God when our faith is challenged.

Saint Ignatius also emphasized unity in the Church. He knew that a divided Christian community weakens its witness to the Gospel. Today, families, parishes, and communities need this same spirit of unity. We may have different opinions and backgrounds, but Christ calls us to love one another and work together for the good of all.

Let us ask ourselves today: Am I willing to stand for Christ when it is difficult? Does my life show others the love, courage, and faithfulness of Jesus?

Conclusion

Brothers and sisters, Saint Ignatius of Antioch reminds us that a life centered on Christ is never wasted. His earthly journey ended in martyrdom, but his witness continues to inspire the Church even today.

Through his intercession, may we receive the courage to remain faithful to Jesus, the grace to live in unity, and the strength to love God above everything else.

Saint Ignatius of Antioch, pray for us. Amen.

FR. STANI - REF.: REFLECTIONS

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