Sunday, Oct 25, 2026

The greatest of these is love

They asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment of all the commandments of God. In answer, he quoted them a line from one of the most well-known Jewish prayers, the Shema: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." Jews say the Shema in the morning and evening, before reading the Torah on Sabbaths and festivals, and at the end of the holiest day of Yom Kippur. Jesus added another commandment: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." To do God's will is to love God and one another with everything you have. It's really as simple as that.

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Exodus 22:20-26; 1 Thessalonians 1:5c-10; Matthew 22:34-40 (148). *"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"*

Monday, Oct 26, 2026

Love works weekends

Jesus was a bit of a scofflaw and it made the leaders of the synagogue crazy. Like the ultimate bureaucrat who says, "Sorry, but this isn't the right day" or, "Too bad, you filled out the wrong form—no help for you today," rule keepers do not like rule breakers. But Jesus shows that God wants to relieve us of our burdens, not add to them. Jesus was forever pointing out that laws were made for humankind, and not humankind for the laws. Love is the rule that trumps all else. How might you extend love and service to another this week?

Ephesians 4:32-5:8; Luke 13:10-17 (479). *"Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ."*

Tuesday, Oct 27, 2026

Time to do an image search

The creative process can be maddening, as writer's block attests. But evidently Jesus didn't have this problem. Day after day he came up with rich images for the reign of God: seeds and weeds, dragnets and householders. The daily work of fishers, farmers, and women in the kitchen remind him of the Kingdom. Surely Jesus had the mother lode of examples right before his eyes, watching the woman who made his early home what it was. Pope John Paul II added a "kingdom of God"—or luminous mystery—to the Rosary to remind us that we don't have to go far to see God's reign in action. Look around your own household or place of work: Where do you see God's reign being revealed?

Ephesians 5:21-33; Luke 13:18-21 (480). *"To what shall I compare the Kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of wheat flour."*

Wednesday, Oct 28, 2026

Ten—no, make it twelve

OK, say you're Jesus. (For most of us, this is a big stretch.) And say it's your task to choose the friends who are going to be with you for the rest of your life, literally, right up to the last meal. You're going to share a common purse, work and play and pray together. You'll get to share a joke with this bunch, too, not to mention the struggles and the tears. How do you make such a momentous decision? Jesus chose prayer as his method of discernment. When faced with serious choices, prayer is the key. As Padre Pio said, "Prayer is the best weapon we have; it is the key to God's heart."

FEAST OF SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES

Ephesians 2:19-22; Luke 6:12-16 (666). *"He spent the night in prayer to God. When day came, he called his disciples to himself, and from them he chose Twelve."*

Thursday, Oct 29, 2026

A mother's love

Most of us are used to calling God our Father, as Jesus did. But others have written about the mothering nature of God as well. Julian of Norwich, a 15th-century English mystic, developed images of God functioning as both father and mother of creation. She also called Jesus our Mother, for he feeds us out of his body as a mother does her offspring. Isaiah may have been first to consider how God resembles the mother eagle who encourages her nestlings to independent flight. Jesus himself spoke of the urge to protect the unwitting people of Jerusalem as a hen gathers her chicks. Become aware of the motherly embrace of God in your life. Then offer that nurturing grace to others.

Ephesians 6:10-20; Luke 13:31-35 (482). *"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."*

Friday, Oct 30, 2026

All in good time

"How sour sweet music is / When time is broke and no proportion kept / So is it in the music of men's lives." In this passage from Richard II, William Shakespeare was commenting on the critical ingredient of time in our lives: the necessary pauses and silences that keep everything from happening at once. Sometimes the most critical ingredient in a venture—whether it's a new career, a cake in the oven, or our own spiritual journey—is time. Today is a day to practice patience with ourselves for being wherever we are right now, and for not yet having arrived where we want to be.

Philippians 1:1-11; Luke 14:1-6 (483). *"I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus."*

Saturday, Oct 31, 2026

Sitting in the humble seat

Humility is an often-misunderstood virtue. Some might think it's the opposite of pride. But author Nilton Bonder wisely points out that humility is the "equilibrium point" between pride and a total lack of self-esteem, both of which involve self-absorption. Humility is simply learning to "get out of the way" and allow God to act in and through us. As an old proverb has it, humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less. Begin by doing something thoughtful for someone else today. Then humbly pray for an increase of humility.

Philippians 1:18b-26; Luke 14:1, 7-11 (484). *"When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, ... go and take the lowest place."*

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