

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time June 14, 2026

I am not typically one of those priests who, in the confessional, says, “That's not a sin. That's not a sin. That's not a sin.” But sometimes when someone comes in and confesses that they have been judging, I feel prompted to offer a little bit of clarification, because not all judgment is sinful. The ability to assess and to make judgments is a gift given to us from God. We should be able to tell the difference between right and wrong, for example. Good to make that judgment, right? We're making judgments all the time, all the time, every day. Whether it's ‘Do I have enough time to get through that yellow light?’ Or, you know, ‘Do I have enough gas in the lawnmower to mow the grass today?’ Or if I'm sitting at table, ‘Have I had enough to eat already?’ You know, we make judgments all the time. We can rightfully judge words and actions. I think you could argue that judgment is the basis of maintaining order in society. What would the court system be like if we couldn't make judgments on behavior? And yet, we cannot rightly judge persons.

We cannot judge the heart of another because we don't have the perspective to see the heart. We don't know the interiority of the other person. We don't know what's motivated. We don't know what's going on inside of them. So, we can judge words and actions as right or wrong, but we cannot judge persons. And yet, we do. We do. We might look at someone and ask ourselves the question, “Is that person worth my time? Is that person worth my attention? Is that person worthy of my help?” And sadly, we may answer those questions with a ‘no’ at times making a judgment of the person and not finding them worthy of our care. That's a glimpse into the human heart.

But what about the heart of God? What about the heart of God? We turn to the readings today. This mention of Moses in the first reading - we know that God did not choose Moses for this great task because Moses was particularly qualified. Moses himself knew his faults, his struggles. He didn't see himself as in any way qualified for what God was asking him to do, and yet God chose him. There wasn't someone else that God wanted for that work. It was Moses. God, knowing Moses, chose him and sent him.

Or look at if the Apostles in the Gospel reading. They are all named there. Jesus didn't call them because he had seen their performance and was impressed by them. He knew them. He knew them more than just as casual acquaintances. He knew their hearts. He saw to the depth of their souls. He knew the brokenness and poverty that was there. He knew Judas's character and what Judas would do. And he chose him. He chose him, called him, loved him, sent him. Not to mention all of the weaknesses and problems of all the other eleven. Jesus knew them. The one who can assess and judge all things did not look upon them and say, "Not worth my time. Not worth my help. Not worth my attention." He loved them. Isn't that how we are called also to love?

St. Paul, in his Letter to the Romans, points out that we might be able to muster up the courage to die for a really good person. A just person. You might die for your spouse. You probably would be willing to give up your life for your kids, or your grandkids in a heartbeat. Would you? What about that jerk across the street? Well, we make judgments of people. We make judgments. But St. Paul says, "*God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners.*" Not good, not just, not virtuous, not righteous. "*While we were still sinners.*

Christ died for us.” He looked at us in our poverty and brokenness - he looks at us in our poverty, currently, and our brokenness, and our sinfulness. And he says, *“I die for you. I would die for you.”* He says, *“I did die for you.”* And that's the call for us, right? To love like that, not to make the judgment of a person and say, “I don't want anything to do with them.” But to look at the other and to say, “I would die for you; I would lay down my life for you, not because I find you particularly pleasing or capable or successful. Not because I'm trying to accomplish some gain for myself. But because I want to love like God loves.” There are a lot of saints in heaven who laid down their lives, not just for a spouse, or for children or grandchildren, but for complete strangers. I was thinking about all of our military personnel who have died throughout the years for completely strangers. This is the call - to love as Jesus loves. And in looking at the other, whether it's family, or friend, or a stranger, to see someone who's worth dying for. And you know, when we begin to love like that, amazing things are going to start to happen.

Yes, Jesus said, *“Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons.”* Maybe we're called to do extraordinary things like that, but maybe there are also other extraordinary things that will come about in your life when you love like Jesus loves, when you can look at any person on the face of the earth and say, “I would die for you.” When you approach life in this world with that perspective, with that kind of love, there are going to be miracles that happen. There will be.

So, we ask God for the grace, first of all, to be able to receive from him this kind of love. To realize that when God looks at us, he sees not just what we see in ourselves, and what we know is there, he

sees everything. He knows the whole story. He knows the good and the bad, all of it. And he elects us. He calls and chooses freely. We need to hear him when he says “I will die for you. I love you that much.” Then we're also asking God for the grace to love others like that. And it's such good practice for us to look at Jesus. Whether that's at Adoration or the celebration of the Mass or is pondering the mystery of God, reading his word, whatever it is. It's in looking at him that we learn how to look at other people. It's in seeing him looking at us we learn what it means to look at another with love. That kind of love that's really even to die. That's a big grace to ask for. But guess what? Today's our lucky day because Jesus is pouring out everything for us on the altar. He's not holding back any grace today. So, we open our hearts to receive it.