

How to love God

One of the scribes asked Jesus, "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied, "The first is this: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31)

We all like to think that we love God, but how do we know that we really love Him? Is it enough to say, "I feel that I love God?" When we love someone, it is always important to show that we love them, because love is more than just feelings, love is an intimate bond that grows and strengthens over time through actions of caring, commitment, respect and trust. Therefore, when we say that we love God even if we hardly spend any time in prayer or think about God during the course of the day, we know that we are merely saying empty words.

Some might say, I pray every day, so that is how I love God, or I obey God's commandments, that should be enough to show that I love God! Others might say, I serve God in the church or in some charitable organization, that is how I love God! It is good to pray every day, to obey God's commandments, to serve in the church or in some charitable organization, but let us try to look into other ways of loving God which may not be so obvious.



We have all heard of putting God first, making God a priority in life, but what does that mean? Is it measured by how much time we spend on God? I think that making God a priority in life is best demonstrated when we are faced with a choice: Do I do something that I know God doesn't want me to do or should I avoid it? On the other hand, should I do something that I know God wants me to do or should I just be lazy and let this opportunity pass by? Obviously, putting God first means staying away from things that we know God doesn't want us to do and to jump on the opportunities presented to us, to do the things that we know God wants us to do. Whenever we get an inspiration to do a good deed or to think a good thought, we should pay attention to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and embrace it as a gift from God; we shouldn't put it off for later or ignore it altogether.

Loving God also has a lot to do with discerning God's will and living it out. Some people believe that they can never know what God's will is for them, so they give up and not even think about it. Scripture tells us that Mary, who said, "May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38), pondered many things in her heart (cf. Luke 2:19, 51). Quite possibly, she pondered God's will and what her role would be in it. I reckon that God desires that we discern what He wills for us, so that we can live it out. God gives us grace, knowledge and understanding to discern His will, and He gives us wisdom, prudence and fortitude to live it out.

Loving God also has to do with making the effort to become the kind of person that God wants us to be. Usually, that means to change certain kinds of behavior that we know is not pleasing to God. St. Paul gives us plenty of examples: (1) to refrain from immorality (1The 4:3), (2) to put away falsehood and to speak the truth (Eph 4:25), (3) to be kind, compassionate and forgiving to one another (Eph 4:32), (4) to be responsible for one another: For as in one body we have many parts, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another (cf. Rom 12:4-5). The decisions we make that we may think are our own private business have social consequences. There is no such thing as a sin that does not harm anyone else. St. Paul exhorts us: May there be no division in the body, that the parts may have the same concern for one

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another. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy (cf. 1Cor 12:25-26).

With all the things that we have to do and change, it may seem that loving God is a heavy burden that is placed upon our shoulders. However, let us not forget the graces and consolations, the joys and favors, and most of all, the loving kindness and mercy that God always bestows upon us. I think this is what Jesus meant for us to understand when He said, “My yoke is easy and my burden light.” (Matthew 11:30)

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

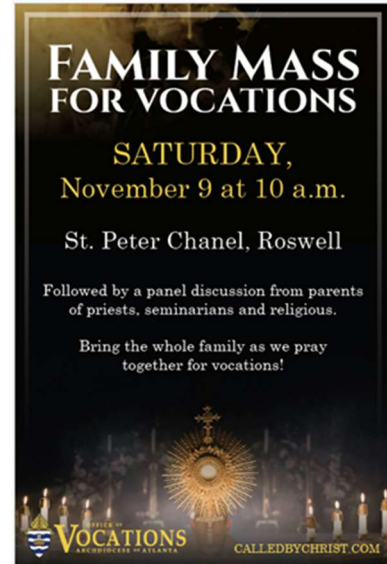
Daylight Saving Time ended today, November 3, 2024. If you have clocks that do not automatically adjust to Daylight Saving Time, please remember to set it one hour back.

Attention children and parents: We will have Sunday School this Sunday, November 3, 2024. Parents are welcome to sit in the Sunday School classes.

We will have our monthly faith workshop in the Conference Room immediately after Mass this morning. The topic will be the “Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and the Last Rites.” At the same time, Fr. Bill will administer the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the Sanctuary. Those who would like to receive the Anointing of the Sick, please come to the front of the Sanctuary right after Mass.



On November 10 after the 10:30 am Mass, Margaret Wu will once again lead us in contemplative prayer in the social hall and sharing: What is prayer? How to pray? Why can't I feel God's presence when I pray? All interested parties are welcome to participate.



Reserve the date: Fr. Bill encourages all parishioners to make plans to participate in the Eucharistic Congress in Atlanta next year on June 20-21, 2025. Our church will host the first-ever Chinese Track in the Eucharistic Congress. We have invited the Most Reverend John Lee Juo-wang, Bishop Emeritus of the diocese of Tainan, Taiwan and Fr. Francis Ching of the Companions of the Cross based in Toronto, Canada as guest speakers. We have also invited a Chinese band led by Mr. Jianren Zhu from Los Angeles.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		Eucharistic Adoration
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	Anointing of the Sick	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		