



GOD LOVES US FIRST

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - FEBRUARY 15, 2026

In the Gospel of today's liturgy, Jesus says: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them" (Mt 5:17). To fulfil : this is a key word to understand Jesus and his message. But what does this fulfilment mean? To explain this, the Lord begins by saying what fulfilment is not. The Scripture says, "Do not kill", but for Jesus this is not enough if brothers and sisters are then hurt by words; the Scripture says, "Do not commit adultery", but this is not enough if one then lives a love tainted by duplicity and falsehood; the Scripture says, "Do not bear false witness", but it is not enough to take a solemn oath if one then acts with hypocrisy (cf. Mt 5:21-37). This is not fulfilment.

To give us a concrete example, Jesus concentrates on the "rite of the offertory". By making an offering to God, one reciprocated the gratuity of his gifts. It was a very important rite — making an offering to reciprocate symbolically, let's say, the gratuitousness of his gifts — so important that to interrupt it was forbidden other than for serious reasons. But Jesus states that it must be interrupted if a brother has something against us, in order to go and be reconciled with him first (cf. vv. 23-24): only in this way is the rite fulfilled. The message is clear: God loves us first, freely, taking the first step towards us, without us deserving it; and so we cannot celebrate his love without in turn taking the first step towards reconciliation with those who have hurt us. In this way there is fulfilment in God's eyes; otherwise, external, purely ritualistic observance is pointless, it becomes a pretence. In other words, Jesus makes us understand that religious rules are necessary, they are good, but they are only the beginning: to fulfil them, it is necessary to go beyond the letter and live their meaning. The commandments that God gave us should not be locked up in the airless vaults of formal observance; otherwise, we are limited to an exterior, detached religiosity, servants of "God the master" rather than children of "God the Father". Jesus wants this: not to have the idea of serving a God who is master, but Father; and this is why it is necessary to go beyond the letter.

Brothers and sisters, this problem was present not only in Jesus' time; it is there today too. At times, for example, we hear some say, "Father, I have not killed, I have not stolen, I have not harmed anyone...", as if to say, "I am fine". This is formal observance, which is satisfied with the bare minimum, whereas Jesus invites us to aspire to the maximum possible. That is: God does not reason with calculations and tables; he loves us as one who is enamoured: not to the minimum, but to the maximum! He does not say, "I love you up to a certain point". No, true love is never up to a certain point, and is never satisfied; love always goes beyond, it cannot do otherwise. The Lord showed us this by giving his life on the cross and forgiving his murderers (cf. Lk 23:34). And he entrusted to us the commandment most dear to him: that we love one another like he loved us (cf. Jn 15:12). This is the love that gives fulfilment to the Law, to faith, to true life!

So, brothers and sisters, we can ask ourselves: how do I live faith? Is it a matter of calculations, formalism, or a love story with God? Am I content merely with not doing harm, keeping the "façade" in good order, or do I try to grow in love for God and others? And every now and then, do I check myself on Jesus' great commandment, do I ask myself if I love my neighbour as He loves me? Because perhaps we are inflexible in judging others and forget to be merciful, as God is with us.

May Mary, who observed the Word of God perfectly, help us to give fulfilment to our faith and our charity.

POPE FRANCIS — February 12, 2023

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

there will be the Distribution of Ashes at the 11am English Mass, 12pm Spanish Mass, Liturgy of the Word at 6pm in English and 7pm in Spanish.

MIÉRCOLES DE CENIZA, 18 DE FEBRERO:

Se impondrá la Ceniza en la Misa en inglés de **11am**, en la Misa en español de **12pm**, y en la Liturgia de la Palabra en inglés a las **6pm** y en español a las **7pm**.

ENGLISH MASS SCHEDULE

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, February 14 5:00 PM
+Gerard Hennessey +Darren Mahon

Sunday, February 15 9:00 AM
For All Parishioners Living & Deceased

Tuesday, February 17 11:00 AM

Ash Wednesday - February 18

Daily Mass 11:00 AM
Liturgy of the Word 6:00 PM

Thursday, February 19 11:00 AM

Friday, February 20 11:00 AM

First Sunday of Lent

Saturday, February 21 5:00 PM
+Donna Duquette

Sunday, February 22 9:00 AM
For All Parishioners Living & Deceased

MISAS EN ESPAÑOL

VI Domingo Ordinario

Sabado 14 de Febrero 7:00 PM
+Pedro Antonio Molina

Domingo 15 de Febrero 11:00 AM & 1:00 PM
Por la Comunidad Parroquial

Martes 17 de Febrero 12:00 PM
+Donato Kuan

Miercoles de Ceniza - 18 de febrero

Celebración de la Misa 12:00 PM
Liturgia de la Palabra 7:00 PM

Jueves 19 de Febrero 12:00 PM

Viernes 20 de Febrero 12:00 PM

I Domingo de Cuaresma

Sabado 21 de Febrero 7:00 PM

Domingo 22 de Febrero 11:00 AM & 1:00 PM
Por la Comunidad Parroquial

SEASON OF LENT: Lent has two major purposes: 1. *It recalls or prepares for baptism*, and 2. *emphasizes a spirit of penance*. Through forty days of closer attention to God's word and of more fervent prayer, believers are prepared to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. Lenten instructions should stress these baptismal and penitential themes.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 20TH) will be prayed at 10:30am in English and 11:30am in Spanish each Friday during Lent, beginning this week.

EL VIACRUCIS se rezará en español los viernes de Cuaresma a las 10:30am en inglés y a las 11:30am **comenzando este viernes 20 de febrero**.

SOUP SOCIAL - St. John's Catholic Women's League invites you to a Soup Social taking place after the 5pm Mass on February 28 and after the 9am Mass on Sunday, March 1st in the parish hall. For a freewill offering, come and enjoy a bowl of delicious homemade soup. Proceeds will go to support Development and Peace.

St. Vincent de Paul— Thank You Note! We, the members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul, St John the Baptist Conference, are sending out a big THANK YOU to all the parishioners/visitors of St John's and Our Lady of Guadalupe for their generous support of the Christmas Angel Tree. To date we have collected \$4,602. Your generosity enabled us to provide Christmas gift cards from Metro (Food Basics) to individuals and families living in the St John's neighbourhood of Kitchener. Together you shared the Christmas spirit of giving to the less fortunate among us. God bless you for helping to spread peace and joy to others during the Christmas season and your continued support during 2025. Throughout the year we continue to provide food and support to your neighbours and students at St John's elementary school. We couldn't do this without YOU.