

To Love God is to Love Others: A Homily Reflection by Bishop Romie-Jun Peñalosa
31st Sunday of Ordinary Time- November 3, 2024

And while he was in Israel, he was invited to a home of a Jew.
Inimbita siya ng isang hudyo na pamilya.
And so when he went to that house, he noticed that in the door frame,
pagpasok mo sa bahay ng isang hudyo,
meron silang nakalagay dyan on the right side of the post.
Ito yung pinto.
On the right side, meron nakadikit dyan na tinatawag nilang mezusa.
Okay? Mezusa.
And that mezusa is a small thing, parang box, na nakadikit sa pinto nila.
Ano-ano, sa door frame.
And inside that is the shema.
Or it's a prayer of Israel, shema.
Alam niyo yung shema?
That is the prayer of the Jew when he wakes up in the morning.
That's the first thing he say.
And bago siya matulog, yun din ang huli niyang sasabihin.
The shema, we say that here in church.
Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.
Okay? Nakasulat yan dyan.
Shema, Israel, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Ekhod.
And that's part of what is said.
And bago sila pumasok, hinahawakan nilang mezusa na yan.
They will touch that mezusa, which contains the shema prayer of Israel.
They would touch that, and they will touch their forehead and their heart.
Anong ibig sabihin yan?
Sana, Lord, itong utos na to ay palaging nasa isip ko.
At ito ay palagi nasa puso ko.
Remind my mind to think of your commandment.
And incline my heart to always obey that commandment.
So lahat yan, sa mga kwarto nila, sa door frame ng kwarto, may mezusa yan.
Maliban lang sa banyo.
Pag pumasok ka sa banyo, walang mezusa doon.
But all the rooms, all the doors of the house, the door frame, they have that
mezusa.
And why am I sharing this with you?
Because the shema is central, the very foundation of Jewish theology.
Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.
Or in Hebrew, this is actually what it translates.
Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is the only one.
Wala siyang katulad, wala siyang kapantay, walang kagaya niya.
There is none like the Lord our God.
And they proclaim that.
Okay?
While Jesus, in our gospel today, the Pharisees and the religious leaders at
that time were arguing with Jesus.
Alam niyo ba, sa sampung utos ng Diyos, sa panahon ni Jesus, naging 613 na yung
utos na yan.
Pinadami nila.
Okay?
The Jewish nation have 613 laws and commandments that they need to follow.
Okay?
At nagtatalo silang lahat.
Anong pinaka-importanting law? Anong pinaka-importanting commandment?
What are the authorities?
They're arguing.
They're fighting.
They're trying to argue with Christ.
We're not supposed to argue with God.
We're supposed to listen to God.
But many times, imbis na makinig tayo sa Diyos, nakikipagtalo tayo.
Kasi minsan, mas marunong tayo kaysa Diyos.

Yun ang palagay natin.

So they were arguing with Jesus until a scribe, a very intelligent scribe, equivalent ng isang scribe sa panahon ni Jesus, sa panahon natin, isang lawyer, isang abogado.

He came to Christ with a question.

Gustong-gusto ni Lord yan pag nagtatanong tayo.

Ibig sabihin, yung taong nagtatanong ay nag-iisip.

Kasi minsan, minsan, tayo ng gawa, hindi tayo nag-iisip.

That's why when we begin to ask questions, that is important because it shows that you're thinking.

At gustong-gusto ng Diyos pag tayo ay nagtatanong.

And this is what He asked the Lord.

Of all the commandments, 613 commandments, which one is the greatest?

Which one is the most important?

And the Lord, and the Lord Jesus quoted our first reading, Deuteronomy 6.

This is what He said,

Hear, O Israel.

The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

with all your soul,

with all your mind,

and with all your strength.

And the second, the second commandment is just like the first in importance.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength,

and you love your neighbor as you love yourself.

Okay?

Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

Sana man makikita yung love your neighbor.

That is in Leviticus 19.18.

Dalawang utos pinag-isa ng Diyos.

Kasi parehong importante at parehong magkasama.

Dapat hindi magkahiwalay yung dalawang utos na yan.

Kaya isang utos lang yan.

Let us look at the first reading today.

What does the first reading teach us in Deuteronomy 6?

The first reading teaches us that we need to hear God.

And how can we hear God if we don't listen?

Amen?

The purpose of listening,

bakit nandito kayo at nakikinig kayo sa akin,

the purpose of listening is not so we can be entertained.

Maraming nagsisimba ngayon.

Dati naalala ko dalawa yung misa.

Tinatanong ko, bat nagsimba na kayo kanina?

Bat nagsisimba kayo?

Wala kaming magawa, Father.

So dito kami magsisimba pa rin.

Wala kaming magawa.

Ginawa niya akong libangan.

Sabi ko, lugi ako.

Isang bayad lang kayo.

Dalawang sinim, pinanood niyo.

Okay?

We listen so we can hear God.

That's the purpose of listening.

If you're listening because of something else,

then you better stop it.

Because the first thing that God commandment

because the first thing that God commandment

is not to love him first.

The first commandment is listen.

Makinig mo na.

Hear, O Israel,

the Lord our God,
the Lord is Lord alone.
Wala siyang kasama.
Wala siyang katulad.
Wala siyang kapantay.
In other words,
God is the highest good.
All religion,
Islam, Buddhism,
all religion,
lahat ng mga reliyon sa mundo,
they're trying to achieve and reach out
to the ultimate and highest good
which we call God.
Amen?
Amen?
But Israel is declaring
there is nothing else
and there is no one else
like the Lord our God.
Kasi kung sa ibang kultura makikita mo
marami silang Diyos.
May Diyos sa...
There is a God for prosperity.
There is a God for this.
There is a God for...
Kaya kung anong gusto mo sa buhay,
eh dun ka sa Diyos na yan, sumunod.
But what Israel is saying,
no, we don't have many other gods.
We have just one God
and everything
that you are trying to do in your life
should be reaching out to this God alone.
Nandyan sa kanyang lahat
na hinahanap mo sa buhay mo.
The Lord our God,
the Lord alone.
No one else.
And I'm sinasabi.
Then because there is nothing else,
there is no highest good
higher than God,
therefore, how do you live your life?
You should live your life
by loving this God.
Amen?
Ano bang mahal mo?
Mahal ko kasi yung negosyo ko.
Bakit?
Maraming pera sa negosyo, eh.
Ayun, yun.
That's your highest good.
Pera.
Pera yung highest good mo.
Then you will love that.
If money is your highest good,
you will pursue money
and you will love money.
Where your treasure is,
that is where your heart will be.
And Israel is saying,
no, no, no.
Yes, I may need money.

I may need a job.
I may have a family.
I may have a community.
But the highest good
that I'm trying to reach
is God.

Amen?

Siya.

And there is no one else.
Therefore, if the highest good
that I'm trying to reach out in my life
is God,
then you should love God
more than anything else.

Amen?

Kung may yaman ka,
okay, enjoy mo yan.
Pero wag mong kalimutan,
bigay ng Diyos yan.
Mahalin mo yung nagbigay.
Hindi yung binigay niya.

Amen?

If you have good health,
thank God for good health.
Kasi ngayon makikita natin
kahit na may pera ka
at you can afford the best doctors in the world,
if you get sick, you really get sick.

Amen?

May sakit talaga na hindi kaya ng doktor.

If you have good health,
thank God for good health.

But never forget,
good health is not your highest goal.
Good health is not your highest good.
It is God who gives good health.
Therefore, God is your highest good.

Siya.

You pursue Him.

That's why the scripture says
you should love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your mind,
and with all your strengths.
Our first reading,
itong utos na to,
which Moses commanded in the Old Testament.

Bakit sinusunod ng Israel ito?

Why do they follow?

Why do they obey this commandment?

You know why?

Because there are three promises of God
in that command.

If you listen
and you obey this,
number one, sabi niya,
you will have long life.
Your life will be prolonged.

Hahaba ang buhay mo.

The second,

the second is that
you will grow.

Lalago ang buhay mo.

And the third promise,
you know,
iba sa inyo pa nakatingin sa akin,
nandyan ba yan?
Tingnan niyo mamaya sa Deuteronomy 6.
He commanded us to love Him with all our heart
but He promised that if you do,
kung gagawin mo,
you will have long life.
Kung gagawin mo,
you will have long life.
You will grow.
And third,
what did He promise?
You will prosper.
Amen?
Hahaba ang buhay mo.
Lalago ka.
At magiging masagana
ang buhay mo.
Now, tatanungin ko kayong lahat.
Sino dito sa inyo
ayaw
umaman?
Okay?
Wala, diba?
Sino sa inyo dito
ayaw niyong lumago ang buhay niyo?
Ayaw ko lumago.
Wala rin.
Okay?
O, eto.
Eto.
Kailangan subutin niyo, ha?
Sino sa inyo
ayaw niyong
mahaba ang buhay niyo?
Okay?
Wala rin.
Kasi itong tatlong promesa ng Diyos,
gusto natin yan.
We like that.
We want it.
We need it.
That's why we obey God.
That's the reason why the Israelites,
they will try,
they try and try
to really obey this
because that commandment
comes with a blessing
with God.
Amen?
What is the second reading teaching us?
We have been listening
to the second reading.
The second reading reminds us
that Jesus is the King
who serves.
And one day,
He will judge.
Okay?
Jesus is the King who serves.
Then later on,

He is the King who will judge.
The second thing,
that Jesus is the prophet.
As a prophet, He teaches.
Kaya sa mga teachers dito,
sa mga nagtuturo,
sa children,
sa outreach,
every time you teach,
you are entering into
a prophetic ministry.
Amen?
A prophetic ministry.
When you teach the Word of God,
you are moving
in a prophetic ministry.
Jesus is the prophet who teaches.
And number three,
Jesus,
Jesus is also the priest
who blesses.
Anong trabaho ng pare?
Ang pare ang nagbi-bless.
Yan ang trabaho ng pare.
To bless.
To bless the altar,
to bless the people,
to bless the bread,
to bless the bread and the wine.
That's the work of the priest.
So, Jesus Christ
is the priest who blesses.
And this should remind us
that the only way
to be blessed
in the things we do in life
is to do
the right thing.
And not only the right thing,
but to do it
for the right reason.
If you want your life to be blessed,
do the right thing.
Do the right thing.
And do it
for the right
right
reason.
I wrote it in Tagalog
for us to understand.
To be blessed,
to have the blessing of God in your life,
you have to do the right thing
for the right reason.
And this, I will
remind everyone.
Let's always remember this.
Not everyone does good.
Good is the reason.
Remember that.
Not everyone who do right
do it for the right reason.
What is the right reason?
Because it's not only important to God

what we do.
It's not only the right thing we do.
God is also looking
that the right thing you do,
you do it for the right reason.
One time,
I was with someone
in a place
where we gave him some food.
We gave him juice,
biscuits,
and sandwiches.
We fed him.
But that day,
I didn't know
that a politician was also going there.
He was given a Jollibee.
That's why I gave it to him.
The kid didn't notice
the biscuit I gave him
because he can buy it in the store.
But what the politician gave him
was richer.
He gave him a Jollibee.
People were happy.
And the politician told me,
Father,
I just want to bless the people.
I just want to serve the Lord.
My eyebrows really went up.
You know?
Because after giving,
after he gave his burgers,
this is what he said,
don't forget.
Okay?
In the election,
don't forget.
Was he doing the right thing?
Yes, of course.
Is he doing it for the right reason?
No.
Because the right reason,
every time we do something,
when we take care of our family,
when we help someone,
whatever we do,
we have to do it,
not only the right thing,
but we should do it with the right reason.
And what is the right reason?
Why do we do good things?
Why do we do things for other people?
We do it for the right reason,
and that right reason is love.
We love each other.
Amen?
That is what we should not forget.
If we are going to do good things,
and you are going to do the right thing in your life,
do it for the right reason.
And the right reason is always to love.
And to love means to love others,
to love God,

not yourself.
That is narcissistic.
You will not love others
for what you can get from them.
You have to love others
for
what you can give to them
and what Christ has given to them.
That is what you should always think about.
Giving of someone.
That is why sometimes when you give,
when you help,
don't let anyone know about it.
Because you are not promoting yourself,
you are promoting Christ.
The person you helped,
don't let anyone know about it.
Because the person you helped,
knows that there is God
because of what you did for them.
There is God.
And that is important. That is it.
Amen?

Now, what is love?

What is love?

If we are going to do things,
the right things for the right reason,
we have to do it for love.

What is love?

Love means the ordering
of your life for the good
of others.

You are organizing your life
not just for yourself.

You are organizing your life
so that it will become
good for others.

We always say,
we are blessed to be
a blessing.

Why do we want to be blessed?

Why do we want?

Why do you want to get rich?

Why do you want your life to prosper?

Why do you want your life to prosper?

Because you want to
give it to your fellowmen.

What is the meaning
of your life

prospering just for yourself?

What good is it

that your life will be lost
if you will not share it with others
just for yourself?

What is the value
of prospering?

You will get rich

but you will not give it to your fellowmen.

It's all useless.

Yes.

The reason why
we obey the commandments,
the reason why we want to prosper,
why we want to grow

in the Lord, why we want to have
long life in the Lord,
is so we could be
a blessing to others.
That is what the commandment says.
True love,
brothers and sisters,
is not a feeling.
True love,
true love,
true love
has
thought.
That's why you should love the Lord your God
with all your mind.
True love
has thought.
True love
has thought.
True love
has thought.
It's not a feeling.
It's your thought.
True love
has heart.
True love
and love
has life.
Bishop, that's not in the Bible.
Well, the Bible said,
Love God with all your soul.
What does that mean?
Love God with all your soul.
Remember, the soul
is the vital principle of life.
A person without a soul
has no life.
Because the vital principle of life
is the soul. That's why if you're going to
love God with all your soul,
your love for God
should be alive, not dead.
Amen?
True love
has thought.
You're thinking about it.
A man
told me
a story.
A man
with his friend,
they were drinking.
He was singing.
This is the story of my friend.
When he was singing, he said,
When I love you,
I'm just drunk.
His wife came in
and slapped him.
She slapped him
with a whip.
He was wounded.
He was stabbed.
She slapped him with a whip.

He sang,
When I love you, I'm just drunk.
Because true love has thought.
Amen?
You think.
If you're going to love,
then you think about it.
It's not like you're just drunk
and then you got married.
You didn't think about it.
It's thought.
True love
has thought.
There's a will.
It's not a feeling.
True love is a decision.
Amen?
A woman came to me
one time. She was crying.
She said, Father,
I'm going to confess.
I said, Why?
I'm tired of taking care
of my mother.
I said, Why?
What happened to your mother?
She has Alzheimer's.
So whenever her mother
comes out,
her mother's back,
she lies down on the bed.
Her mother lies down on the bed
and then goes home.
She said, I'm getting angry, Father.
I'm crying
while I'm taking care of my mother.
I said, How old is your mother?
She said,
80 plus.
How many years have you been taking care of her?
I said, Father,
it's been 30 years since I got married.
I'm crying.
She said, I'm going to confess.
I said, What are you going to confess?
Father, I'm confessing
that I'm tired.
I said,
It's not her fault that you're tired.
You have been taking care
of your mother
for 40 years.
All your life, you took care of your mother.
Whenever she gets dirty,
you wash her.
Whenever she gets dirty,
you wash her.
Even if you don't remember
your mother,
she's so stubborn.
She doesn't raise her voice
to her mother.
You know, I told her,
You know,

what I call it is not a sin.
I call that love.
That's love.
That's loving
your parents.
You're crying.
You're tired.
But you don't stop
taking care
of your parents.
Because that is
love.
Love is a decision.
It has a meaning.
Amen? Did you get it?
Why are you so quiet?
Okay, I think you're in a hurry.
Okay, let's finish.
Okay?
And so, these are the
things we need
to love God with all our heart.
That's why,
all that we do in life,
we should
root it in
the love of God.
Okay? Always
root
the things that you're doing.
Put it in the foundation
of God's love, always.
Because you're not doing
the right thing, only you're doing it
for the right reason.
That's why, when we're feeding,
I say, if you're just bringing food,
there's no love. Don't
feed. Just give it to the DSWD.
Because if we're going to go out on mission
and we're going to feed the world,
the only difference
between an organization
and DSW
with the Church,
go out with the love of Christ
in our hearts.
We do that because
we love God first.
And secondly,
He said, if you love God,
automatically,
you will love your fellow man.
I cannot measure
your love for God. I really cannot measure it.
I will be
meeting with the children,
with the teachers.
After the mass, I will be meeting
with the teachers because
for the
life formation of the children,
there are four pillars
that we should really establish

in the lives of the children.
Number one,
is community.
And in community,
with the family, your children
need
to relate
with family
and community.
Amen?
That's number one.
Secondly, ministry.
The children
should be inclined to serve
God by serving
others.
And the third pillar
for the life formation
of everyone, not only the children,
is spiritual.
They need to pray.
They need to cultivate the relationship
with God. And third, third,
academics.
Amen?
The children are studying
and learning.
I cannot measure
the community. I cannot measure
because there are
children, there are people who are so good
in the church, right? They are so kind
in the church.
And they are in the church all day.
I said, you are still here,
why don't you go home?
They said, I don't want to go home.
Why don't you want to go home?
Go home.
The church is closed. Go home.
The child said, Father,
don't let mom go home.
If she goes home, it will be cheap.
Huh?
You have been
walking for a long time
with Christ.
You are still cheap in the house.
Okay?
That's why,
when you are cheap
and you are fighting people in the house,
it seems like
there is something wrong
with what you are saying.
There is something wrong
with the truth of your life.
There is something wrong
with the truth about your life.
Okay? I cannot measure
your community life.
I cannot measure
your spiritual life.
It is hard to measure your spiritual life.

Because sometimes, I see
in the church, the eyes are closed.
The hands are like that.
Closed.
So you think you are praying.
Go back for an hour,
the eyes are still closed.
Like that.
So sometimes, I ask, what is that?
What is the problem? Why are the eyes closed?
Maybe the Holy Spirit slayed you.
And then, when you hold it,
it will be like that.
For example, you are praying,
but you are sleeping.
I cannot measure
how much God loves you.
I cannot measure how you are growing your spiritual life.
But the only way,
the only way I will know
that you are growing in this area
is how you love
your neighbor.
How you love your family.
That is what I am looking at.
No matter how good you are
in the Bible,
no matter how well you memorize the Bible,
I will look at your family.
How you relate to your family.
How you love your family.
You understand what I am saying?
This is very important.
The basis of our love for God,
we do not know how we really love God.
But if you love God,
if you love God,
you will love your neighbor as well.
You are leaning towards your neighbor.
And when I say
that you are leaning towards your neighbor,
where does it start?
It starts at home.
Amen.
Sometimes, we are kind to our church members,
but when it comes to our home,
we are mean.
It should not be like that.
Amen.
Where we are
and where God puts us,
that is where we practice His love.
Ordering your life
for the good of others.
Not yourself.
That is narcissistic.
You order your life for the good of others.
And finally,
God left us.
When God said,
Love the Lord your God,
the scribe said to him,
That is the great commandment.
And this is what Jesus said to him.

You know,
you are not far from the kingdom of God.
You are not far
from the kingdom of God.
Or,
let's change it.
Sometimes, you don't understand when I say kingdom.
What God is saying to him is,
you are not far from heaven.
Amen.
You are already at the door of heaven,
but you are not yet inside.
But you are already at the door of heaven.
Because you know
these things.
You understand these things.
You are already close.
You are already at the door of heaven.
But take note,
many people are already at the door of heaven
but they are not yet inside.
It is different when you are already at the door
and you are already inside.
Amen.
Why are you not yet inside?
Why?
Because
knowledge is not enough.
It is not enough that you know
if
this is not
one in life.
Do you understand what I'm saying?
That's why when Jesus said,
Love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, love your neighbor as yourself.
The Jews already know that.
But when Jesus said that,
they stopped arguing.
They stopped arguing.
When the Lord said that, why?
Because it is seen in His life.
Amen. It is seen in His life.
No one can defeat Him.
It is the same with us.
Amen.
We know these things.
We know this.
But as long as we are not yet
in this life,
we are already at the door of heaven
and we will not enter.
Amen.
Thank you for watching!
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