

FAITH IN 5
Ordinary Time W.6

1. Read Matthew 5: 17-37. **What is the law that Jesus is referring to?** Jesus is saying he didn't come to abolish the law, which are the Ten Commandments, given to Moses in the Old Testament. **How can our righteousness surpass that of the pharisees?** The Pharisees KNOW all the commandments but they have no love, only pride. They follow the commandments literally only. Our obedience to the commandments, the laws of God, must be born out of love. **How can we uphold the commandment *You shall not kill*?** While most of us do not find it difficult to keep from killing, we must also avoid harboring anger!

2. **Who is St. Valentine?** St. Valentine was a priest and a bishop. He was born in Rome and became the Bishop in Terini, Italy. The emperor of Rome, Claudius, wanted to end Christianity. He made it illegal to be a Christian! Claudius also wanted to make Rome a larger empire. He was having a lot of trouble recruiting soldiers because they didn't want to leave their wives. So then Claudius outlawed marriage! Not only did St. Valentine persevere in spreading the Gospel during this time, he also would secretly perform the sacraments, especially the sacrament of marriage to Christian couples. **Was St. Valentine ever caught?** Yes, eventually St. Valentine was arrested and put in jail. The emperor Claudius demanded St. Valentine to denounce his faith but St. Valentine would not, even when beat with clubs. Finally he was killed on February 14, 269. **Are there any famous legends about St. Valentine?** St. Valentine befriended his jailer's daughter while he was in prison. He actually healed her of her blindness and her whole family became Christians! Legend says that he sent her a note signed "your, Valentine" and that is why we exchange Valentines in his honor. St. Valentine, pray for us!

3. **What liturgical season will we be celebrating next?** Next week we will enter the season of Lent. Lent is a season of repentance and preparation. We spend 40 days of prayer, fasting and almsgiving as we journey through Christ's suffering and passion. Lent ends with Jesus' glorious resurrection on Easter Day. **Why should we think about Lent now when it is not until next week?!** It is helpful to make a plan, through prayer, for how you will spend Lent. Take time to ask God what He is calling you to fast from or how you can enrich your prayer life. It may seem easy to say "I'll give up chocolate" or "No TV" during Lent. It IS fruitful to give up something you enjoy for mortification, but it is also very powerful if you ask God-what thing or behavior is separating you from him, or keeping you from spending time with him, or often leads you to sin. Fast from those things! What kind of things could you take on during Lent? You can take on practices that will lead you closer to God. Periods of silence, a prayer devotion like the rosary or Divine Mercy Chaplet, saying the Angelus at lunch time, or stations of the cross.

4. We learned last week about the part of the mass called the Offertory. The offertory occurs during the second half of mass. **Do you know what that second half of mass is called?** It is called the Liturgy of Eucharist or the Mass of the Faithful. The priest will begin a prayer called the Eucharistic Prayer. This part of mass is so sacred and important that the first part of the Eucharistic prayer is the Preface. It acts as a preparation and welcome for the miracle to come. **How can we recognize this part of mass?** The priest calls us to Lift up our hearts, to give thanks to God. We respond to the priest and he honors God with the preface prayer. Then bells ring as we fall to our knees to proclaim the Hosanna. *Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts! The Heavens and earth are full of Thy glory! Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!"*

5. **What is the Anointing of the Sick?** Anointing of the Sick is the sacrament which gives health and strength to the soul and sometimes to the body when we are in at least probable danger of death. **Do you remember what happened when Jesus was suffering, sweating blood, in the garden of Gethsemani?** His Father God sent an angel to strengthen him. In the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, Jesus Himself comes to strengthen the sick person. He knows that when we are suffering, it is hard to accept the will of His Father. He gives us strength to do so through the sacrament. (Baltimore Catechism, lesson 34)

REVIEW QUESTION: **Did you know there are two types of contrition?** There is perfect and imperfect contrition. Imperfect contrition is when we are sorry for our sins because they are hateful and we fear God's punishment. It is a mix of love of God and selfishness. What is perfect contrition? We have perfect contrition when we are sorry for our sins because sin offends God, whom we love above all things for his own sake. Perfect contrition comes from a deep love of God.

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