



# Sunday is THE DAY THAT BELONGS TO GOD

## From Sacred Scripture

*Exodus 20:8-10a*

*Remember the sabbath day—keep it holy. Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God.*

## From the Mass, Source and Summit of Life

The Sacred Scriptures are the word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit. At Mass during the Liturgy of the Word, God speaks to us through the readings and the Gospel. The Responsorial Psalm helps us to meditate on God's word.

"You are indeed Holy, O Lord, and all you have created rightly gives you praise, for through your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, by the power and working of the Holy Spirit, you give life to all things and make them holy, and you never cease to gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name" (Eucharistic Prayer III).

## From the Riches of Our Faith

As Christians, we believe that God is at the very center of our lives. Our spiritual journey on earth is one of deepening our relationship with God, and that includes listening intently to His word. The deepest expression of that listening is hearing the communal proclamation of Sacred Scripture in the Liturgy of the Word. We listen to God speak so that we might internalize His message and put it into practice.

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* starts its reflection on the Third Commandment with the scriptural meaning of the Sabbath. Exodus 20:8-11 states that the Sabbath was the seventh day on which the Lord rested after the work of the previous six days. Deuteronomy 5:12 adds that the Sabbath is a day of our renewing the covenant with God. The Sabbath is connected to creation and covenant. Second-century writers such as Justin Martyr attest to the widespread practice of Sunday worship (*First Apology*, chapter 67), and by 361 AD it had become a mandated weekly occurrence.

"The celebration of Sunday observes the moral commandment inscribed by nature in the human heart to render to God an outward, visible, and regular worship 'as a sign of his universal beneficence to all' [St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, 122,4]. Sunday worship fulfills the moral command of the Old Covenant, taking up its rhythm and spirit in the weekly celebration of the Creator and Redeemer of his people" (CCC, 2176). We are naturally driven to make Sundays special. Our active participation in the Lord's Day shows the world that we belong to God. Each Sunday, at Mass, God pours out His richest blessings upon us.

For Christians, Sunday is the day to come together to worship. Early Christians met together on Sunday to break bread and for preaching (Acts 20:7). Revelation 1:10 also refers to the Lord's Day. We receive God in the preached Word and through the Lord's Supper. At Mass, the Lord gives us what we most need. Sunday makes Monday right. Let us find time to be with Him.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, God made the Sabbath for man, providing the model of rest and refreshment it should embody (Cf. CCC, 2172, Matthew 2:27-28). Sunday specially belongs to God as it commemorates His saving deeds, from Creation through the Exodus to the great Paschal Mystery which is recalled each Sunday.



## Live It!

- Strive to put God at the center of your day. Arrive to Mass early, review the week and offer to God the good and ask forgiveness for the failures. Offer up the gifts and challenges of your past week and upcoming week along with the bread and wine as they are brought to the altar to be transformed.
- In the Book of Genesis God uses the Sabbath Rest to ponder the grandeur of Creation. After Mass consider a walk down a hiking trail, a ride down a bike path, a stroll along the lakeshore, or a climb up on the hills and give praise to God for “How Good” it is.
- Begin and end each day of the week by making the Sign of the Cross prayerfully recognizing we are loved by God.

### Sacred Scripture throughout the Week

1. Genesis 1:1-2:3 God created the heavens and the earth.
2. Psalm 34:9 Taste and see that the Lord is good.
3. Matthew 12:1-8 The Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath.
4. Matthew 22:36-40 You shall love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind.
5. Luke 24:30-35 Jesus was made known in the breaking of the bread.
6. Acts 20:7 Gathering on the first day of the week to break bread.

*Remember, Sunday is the Day that Belongs to God.*