

# Dear Padre,

**Previously you wrote that the Church is the bride of Christ, and we should remain faithful to that bond. Is there another reason to remain in the Catholic Church?**

**T**he Church is also the body of Christ. When Jesus ascended into heaven, he left his disciples with the mission he had received from the Father: instruct everyone in Jesus' teachings and baptize them into his divine life (Matthew 28:19-20). Through the Church, Jesus would remain present in the world.

Some take offense because the Church claims the authority of Jesus himself to teach. It teaches that marriage is between one man and one woman, that



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contraception and abortion are immoral, that capital punishment is a sin. Jesus himself may not have expressly addressed these issues, but he said to his apostles, "Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me" (Luke 10:16). And to Peter he said, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19).

It's true that since the time of the apostles some members, and even Church leaders, have caused scandal. The Lord asks that they, like Peter, repent and live a life of obedience and service to the Lord.

That's why it's important that we examine

our own actions. Someone who abandons the Church due to scandals within its ranks should realize that encouraging others to abandon the bride of Christ and the body of Christ is a scandalous act itself.

*Fr. Gary Lauenstein, CSSR  
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## Calendar

**Monday**  
FEBRUARY 21  
Weekday  
Jas 3:13-18  
Mk 9:14-29

**Tuesday**  
FEBRUARY 22  
*The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle*  
1 Pt 5:1-4  
Mt 16:13-19

**Wednesday**  
FEBRUARY 23  
*St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr*  
Jas 4:13-17  
Mk 9:38-40

**Thursday**  
FEBRUARY 24  
Weekday  
Jas 5:1-6  
Mk 9:41-50

**Friday**  
FEBRUARY 25  
Weekday  
Jas 5:9-12  
Mk 10:1-12

**Saturday**  
FEBRUARY 26  
Weekday  
Jas 5:13-20  
Mk 10:13-16

**Sunday**  
FEBRUARY 27  
*Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Sir 27:4-7  
1 Cor 15:54-58  
Lk 6:39-45

**Do you have a question for the Padre?**  
Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about Dear Padre.

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

February 20, 2022

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

1 Sm 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

1 Cor 15:45-49

Lk 6:27-38

## Love Your Enemies

**P**erhaps one of the most difficult mandates that Jesus directed of his followers is love of enemies. He was not talking about people whom we do not particularly like or who do not belong to your families, ethnic or political groups. He was very clear about this. Jesus was talking about those who actually hate us, cause us physical harm, or who take from us what we need to live. This kind of love is not only difficult but seems contrary to a specific kind of justice. This justice is called *retributive justice* and it maintains that evil deeds should be punished. This kind of justice is often accomplished by requiring time in jail or some form of fine.

However, another kind of justice is called *restorative justice*. It maintains that a violation of someone's rights not only harms the victim, but it also fractures

society. Therefore, it is not enough for the perpetrator to be punished; society must be restored as well. This might require restoring the victim's sense of personal value or security. At times some form of community service is required. It has been said that the best way to get rid of enemies is to make them friends. That seems to be what Jesus is advocating in today's Gospel. If someone has hurt you, overwhelm that person with your kindness, just as God has overwhelmed you with kindness and mercy.

*Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA*

### FOR Reflection

- ★ Think of how often you have been made new by the forgiveness of others.
- ★ Who in your life might be made new by your forgiveness?



M. ADEN ZIMKOWICZ / SHUTTERSTOCK

*[Jesus said,] "Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing."*

LUKE 6:38



### A WORD FROM Pope Francis

*We need to stop seeing the reform of the Church as putting a patch on an old garment, or simply drafting a new Apostolic Constitution...It cannot be a matter of putting a patch here or there, for the Church is not just an item of Christ's clothing, but rather his body.*

ADDRESS TO THE ROMAN CURIA, DECEMBER 21, 2020