

A scribe comes to Jesus today and asks the most important question any human being can ask: **“Which commandment is the first of all?”**

And Jesus answers immediately: **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.”**

In other words: put God first. Not second. Not somewhere in the background.

First.

And perhaps that sounds simple, but it is the great struggle of every human life.

Because so many things try to take God’s place.

Worry.

Fear.

Money.

Family troubles.

Illness.

Loneliness.

Regrets about the past.

And especially as people grow older,
there can be a temptation to become weighed down by burdens.

But today Our Lord calls us back to what matters most.

Love God. Stay close to Him. Because everything else passes away.

And many people here know that from experience.

You have seen how quickly life moves.

Children grow up.

People we love die.

Strength fades.

The world changes around us.

Things once thought permanent disappear.

And perhaps that is why older age can sometimes bring a deeper wisdom.

You begin to see more clearly what truly matters.

Not status.

Not appearances.

Not worldly success.

But whether we know God.

Whether we have loved Him.

Whether we are ready to meet Him.

Then Jesus says: **“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”**

And often the holiest people are not those who did dramatic things,
but those who quietly loved others faithfully for many years.

A mother caring for children.

A husband or wife remaining faithful through hardship.

Someone visiting the sick.

Someone praying for their family every day.

Someone carrying suffering patiently.

The world barely notices these things.

But heaven notices.

Then St Paul says: **“Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead.”**

What beautiful words for us to hear.

Remember Jesus Christ.

Especially when life becomes difficult.

Especially in illness.

Especially in grief.

Especially in loneliness.

Remember: Christ is risen.

Death is not the end.

And for faithful Catholics, old age is not simply decline.

It is preparation. Preparation to meet the Lord face to face.

St Paul writes these words while suffering himself.

He is chained in prison.

And yet there is extraordinary peace in him.

Because he knows Christ has conquered death.

That changes everything.

The body may weaken.

The soul may become tired.

But Christ is alive.

And those who belong to Him are travelling toward eternal life.

And perhaps one of the dangers in later years is discouragement.

Looking back with regrets.

Thinking:

“I should have done better.”

“I wasted years.”

“I have failed in many ways.”

But the saints teach us something beautiful:

so long as we are alive,

grace is still at work.

A soul that keeps turning back to God grows beautiful before Him.

That is why prayer matters so much.

Even a quiet Rosary prayed faithfully.

Even simple prayers whispered during the day.

Even sitting silently before the Blessed Sacrament.

These things matter enormously.

And perhaps today's Gospel asks us something simple:

What has first place in my heart now?

Because at the end of life,
only one thing matters fully:

whether we belong to Jesus Christ.

And the beautiful thing is this:

God does not ask us to save ourselves through greatness.

He asks for love.

Faithfulness.

Trust.

A soul quietly surrendered to God becomes radiant in His sight.

Many of the saints never preached to crowds or changed history publicly.

But they loved God with all their heart.

And that is enough.

Because in heaven,
the smallest hidden acts of love will shine more brightly than worldly success.

So today Our Lord reminds us gently but clearly:

Love God first.

Pray faithfully.

Stay close to the sacraments.

Do not lose heart.

And remember Jesus Christ,
risen from the dead.

Because for those who remain faithful to Him,
the end of earthly life is not darkness—

but going home.