

By Pat Haggerty

It seems that every family has a month that is particularly loaded with birthdays and anniversaries. That holds true for us, and the month is October. There is my grand-daughter's birthday, my daughter and son-in-law's anniversary, my husband's birthday, my son-in-law's birthday---and so it goes.

Like birthday celebrations, feast days are days of importance in the Church. Looking at a liturgical calendar, it is interesting to note when certain saints are celebrated. It is even more interesting to read a vignette of the saint's life. October is of particular interest, as many well-known saints have their feast days during this month. Among them are Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower, on October 1; Francis of Assisi, founder of the first Friars Minor, on October 4; Teresa of Avila, the great saint of Carmel, on October 15; Luke, physician and evangelist, on October 18; and John Paul II, a saint of our times, on October 22.

These saints lived at different times in history, and they each faced different challenges as they sought to find the Lord. The one thing they had in common was their love of the Lord and their adherence to God's word. In particular, is their adherence to the gospel message that we find on the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time. It is the gospel that tells of a scholar who poses a question to Jesus: "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" Jesus' response holds the key to what is most central to all of the saints and should be to each of us: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."(Matthew 22: 36-40)

Jesus couldn't have been more forthright and clear! Why is it, then, that we are constantly searching for ways to follow Jesus? Why are we always looking for new inspiration? For new insight?

I will admit that I am a Facebook follower. I've noticed recently that people post lots of quotes and videos as sources of inspiration and food for thought. There is nothing wrong with those posts. In fact, some of them are quite moving and thought-provoking. However, we need not rely on quotes alone to show us the way. We should go to the source---God's word.

As we approach that wonderful feast of All Saints, let us consider the lives of those who gave themselves completely to the Lord. Let us reflect on the love they had for Jesus and how they exemplified it living out their lives. Let us reflect on the two great commandments. Let us each live out our lives by adhering to those two great commandments!