

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The Garment of Charity

1962 Roman Missal · Homily

4 October 2026

The feast is ready. That is where today's Gospel begins. Before the guests have answered, before anyone has taken a place, the king has prepared the wedding feast for his son. The invitation asks them to receive a gift. They have not bought the food or earned the celebration. They are being called to share the king's joy.

Yet some have other things to do. A farm needs attention. Business calls. Others go further and attack the messengers. The king judges the murderers, but their refusal does not defeat his purpose. He sends his servants out again, into the roads, to gather everyone they find. At last the hall is full. Good and bad have come together.

Then the king enters, and our attention falls on one guest. He is already inside. He has answered the invitation. But he has no wedding garment, and he is cast out. The ending is severe. Jesus brings us from the joy of being invited to the seriousness of how we receive the invitation. Being in the room does not finish the question.

What, then, is this garment? Saint Augustine and Saint Gregory the Great answer: charity. The love of God and the love of our neighbour. Gregory explains why that garment belongs to this wedding. Christ came in love to unite the Church to himself. To celebrate his union while refusing his love is to refuse the very good we have come to celebrate.

The question reaches our own hearts. We can be present among Christ's people, know the words of faith, and value the Church's worship, while keeping some part of our life closed to charity. Augustine asks whether possessing great religious gifts is enough. His answer is searching: the gifts are good, but we must let them bear fruit in us. Coming to the feast calls us to love the Bridegroom and the people he gathers.

This love reaches the ordinary places where we spend our days. Today's Epistle begins with the renewal of the mind and ends with hands that have

something to give. Between those two points, Saint Paul speaks about truth, anger and work. He gives charity a voice and a pair of hands.

First, truth. We are members of one another. Someone else has to live with the consequences of what we say. Saint John Chrysostom makes this plain through the image of a body. If the eye sees danger and hides it from the foot, the whole body suffers. In the same way, a lie damages the common life to which the liar belongs. Truthfulness serves the person who must depend on our word.

Then anger. Paul places the setting sun beside our resentment. Chrysostom notices how anger can grow in the quiet of the night. An injury is rehearsed, an accusation repeated inwardly, until everything the other person does seems to confirm the charge. The heart becomes more willing to believe a slander because it already wants the neighbour condemned.

There is something here we can begin to do today. A wrong may still need correcting. Its consequences may take time to repair. But we can stop giving resentment another meal. We can refuse to repeat the accusation for the pleasure of repeating it. We can seek peace without pretending that the injury never happened. Charity begins to change what we do with the injury.

Finally, work. Paul tells the former thief to stop stealing and to labour at what is good, so that someone in need can receive help. The person once harmed a neighbour by taking; now he can help a neighbour by giving. The appointed reading ends with that other person's need. Our work and our possessions have a purpose beyond ourselves. Charity asks whose need can be met by what we have.

This does not measure anyone's worth by strength or earnings. The person who needs help is the person Paul tells us to serve. Poverty and weakness do not cancel the invitation. The question concerns what we can give and what we choose to withhold.

Even the gift itself asks something of the heart: do we seek the neighbour's good, or chiefly the satisfaction of being admired?

Now the Gospel's garment is very close to us. It touches the next truthful answer, the resentment we stop nursing, the help we can actually give. And it reaches the neighbour who is hardest to love.

Augustine asks us to desire an enemy's healing. We can oppose the evil someone does and still desire that the person be freed from it. Love seeks his conversion rather than taking delight in his ruin.

That is a demanding love. Its pattern is Christ himself, the Bridegroom who gave himself for us. Augustine directs our attention to Christ upon the cross, praying for his enemies. The garment's meaning becomes clearest there. The Lord does not ask us for a love that he has withheld from us. He draws us into his own self-giving.

Where can such love grow in people as weak as we are? Listen to the prayers of this Mass. The Collect asks God to remove what obstructs us, so that body and mind may serve him freely. We ask for the freedom to answer him. Our conversion begins within his mercy, and every real step forward still needs his help.

The prayer over the gifts asks that the offering bring saving fruit to those who share in it. We bring our need before God even as we offer. Christ's gift is real; our hearts still need to receive it fruitfully. The Gospel's question follows us to the altar: will the love we receive become the life we live?

The Communion chant places God's command beside a longing for our own ways to be directed toward obedience. Augustine hears that longing as prayer. Knowing what is right does not give us all the strength to do it. We ask for help because we

want to walk the way God shows us. Dependence on grace can become the beginning of action: the truthful word spoken, the revenge refused, the gift placed in another's hands.

After Communion, the Church asks for healing. God's medicine is to free us from our perversity and keep us faithful to his commands. The prayer reaches beneath an isolated act to the desire from which it comes. We need to be healed where we prefer the lie, enjoy the grievance, or hold back what another person needs. The Eucharist brings us to Christ, whose grace can change that inward life and sustain it.

Gregory gives a word of hope to the person who hears this and sees how much remains unfinished. To have charity imperfectly is different from having none at all. Weak love needs growth. The struggle to love more faithfully is not a reason to despair of God's mercy. The question is whether we will receive his healing and let our love grow.

So take one concrete act of charity into the day ahead. Tell the truth where someone is relying on you. Interrupt the grievance you have been feeding. Give help that meets a real need. Choose the act that answers the place where you are resisting love. Ask for God's help, and begin. Such a beginning does not buy the invitation. It answers the love that has already called you.

The king's judgment remains serious. We cannot postpone our answer for ever. But the feast remains the feast of his Son, and its promise is greater than our present weakness. Christ calls his people toward the joy in which charity is perfected, where love no longer struggles against the evil that divides us. The feast is ready. Receive the invitation with gratitude. Let the Bridegroom's love take hold of your heart, and let that love become a life.

Source and Delivery Note

This homily addresses an adult parish assembly for the Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost in the 1962 Roman Missal, general-calendar occurrence 4 October 2026. Its governing reading is “The Invited People Clothed in Charity” in the expansive study, *The Feast and the New Person*. The compatible account of truthful speech, restrained anger and generous work comes from “The Renewal of Hands, Words, and Desires.” The concise study, *Charity and the Renewed Life*, develops their comparison. The connection across the propers is editorial synthesis; individual patristic arguments retain their named authors.

The spoken body contains **1,301 words**, excluding the title and all terminal apparatus. At 115–125 words per minute it takes approximately 10.4–11.3 minutes before additional pauses: an estimated 10–12-minute delivery. A silent editorial read-through checked sense, transitions and sentence length; no audible rehearsal or timed human delivery is claimed. The examples are exhortations, not reports of personal experience. The speech explains the Mass’s prayers without supplying a new recited prayer or a substitute liturgical translation. This is AI-assisted preaching prose, not an ecclesiastical approval or an official liturgical text.

References

Appointed Scripture and prayers

Missale Romanum, Vatican editio typica, 1962, pp. 411–412, nn. 1680–1681, 1684, 1686–1688: Collect, Eph 4:23–28, Matt 22:1–14, Secret, Communion (Ps 118[119]:4–5) and Postcommunion. <https://media.churchmusicassociation.org/pdf/missale62.pdf>. The canonical study’s collated texts retain the Pustet 1862 Latin antecedent, pp. 351–352; historical English is Douay–Rheims–Challoner, Gutenberg eBook 1581, and Cummiskey’s *Roman Missal Translated into the English Language for the Use of the Laity* (1861), “Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost,” pp. 445–448. The homily gives exposition, not an inventory of those texts.

Augustine

Sermon 90.4–6, 9–10, on the garment, growing charity and love of enemies; NPNF I.6, English Sermon XL, Benedictine XC. *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 118, opening Aleph exposition, §§4–5, on command and petition; NPNF I.8, English heading Psalm 119. <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf106.html>; <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf108.html>.

Gregory the Great and John Chrysostom

Gregory, *Homiliae in Evangelia* II.38.9–12, charity, the Bridegroom and imperfect love; historical Latin transcription, https://la.wikisource.org/wiki/Homiliarum_in_Evangelia. Chrysostom, *Homilies on Ephesians* XIV, on 4:25–28, truthful members, anger and labour for sharing; NPNF I.13, <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf113.html>. Both are used in paraphrase.

Blessed Ildefonso Schuster

The Sacramentary, English edition, Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1927, vol. III, “Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost,” pp. 171–174, especially the Collect, Secret and Postcommunion: freedom for service, fruitful participation and healing grace. Historical English inspected through the retained OCR; paraphrased.

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