

- Our second reading from the Book of Revelation is a marvelous consolation, as St. John describes for us the future that lies in store for those who persevere in loving God.
- He tells us that the souls in Heaven are the “great multitude, which no one [can] count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue.”
- They “are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”
- Indeed, St. John tells us they suffer no more, neither hungering or thirsting, nor afflicted by heat or the sun, for Christ our Paschal Lamb will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”
- It is a blessed thing indeed to survive the travails of this life and go to Heaven. And it is toward this goal of Heaven that our minds and hearts must constantly be turned. It is the hope for Heaven that must be our strength in this life.
- For as beautiful as this world can be, it is a vale of sorrow and tears. And most of us do not go to Heaven without in some way suffering through the evils of this world.
- Of course, our world was not created for evil. God did not create evil. Evil is the result of the free choice of men and angels to disobey God, to act against God’s will.
- Evil was ushered in by our first parents when they directly chose to disobey God – aided and abetted by the satanic serpent, whom himself, along with the other reprobate angels, refused to serve to God and were cast out of Heaven because of it.
- Though we were created to be good by an all-knowing, all-powerful God Who is Goodness Incarnate, we nevertheless have the capacity to go against God. God gave us free will so that we can choose to love Him, for we can only truly love if we are free to choose to do so.
- And the primary way we show that we love God is by choosing to be obedient to Him. Choosing to be obedient, to do God’s will (as best we know it) both unites us to God and prepares us for Heaven.
- Yet, to intentionally act against God and His holy will is evil. It separates us from God and hinders our chances for Heaven.
- In our current time and place, one of the greatest evils we find is abortion – an evil that, for nearly 50 years, has been legalized and protected by the law of our land. And since then, well over 60 million American children have been killed in the wombs of their mothers.
- While women typically do not seek out abortion because they want to commit evil and offend God, and while we can never judge the intentions of women who abort their children, we must still recognize that the very act of abortion is evil – terribly evil.
- It’s an evil that has not only robbed our country of 60 million citizens and the goodness those people would have brought into the world, it’s an evil that has cheapened the value of human life in the minds of so many.
- As most of you undoubtedly know, the Supreme Court is considering overturning Roe vs. Wade, the case that legalized abortion throughout our country.
- This week a draft opinion from the justices was leaked to the press showing that a majority of the justices do indeed want to overturn this terrible ruling.
- In the wake of this bombshell, pro-abortion supporters have been positively apoplectic in their rhetoric. So much of what I’ve read in the media this week about pro-abortion supporters reminds me of the Jews in our first reading today!

- In this story from the Book of Acts we hear how Paul and Barnabas have been winning converts with their preaching amongst the Gentiles in Antioch, and as a result many of the Jews become violent and jealous, and throw them out of their city.
- It's the same way with the virulently pro-abortion crowd: when faced with opposition, they resort to violence and intimidation. And this makes perfect sense, as they steadfastly champion violence against the most vulnerable members of our society: unborn children.
- Sadly, man is capable of tremendous evil. And when we commit evil over and over again, we become hardened in our sin – which makes us unable to see just how terrible the sin is.
- Becoming hardened in our sin is a real tragedy because it makes it so much harder to be saved and get to Heaven. Becoming hardened in sin also makes us more willing and capable tools in the hands of the evil one, so that we lead others into sin.
- Evil can be very subtle and enticing at times. And the capacity to commit evil is not formed over night, but rather evolves over time as we make little choices here and there to sin. It's usually by little steps of rebellion against God and His laws that we become capable of evil.
- So, we must be on our guard with our own souls, protecting them from those things that may lead us to reject God's will. And we must be ever attentive to Christ speaking to us.
- Think of today's Gospel: "Jesus said: 'My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand.'"
- Our Lord is the Good Shepherd, and He desires to lead us to eternal life. But we must learn to listen for His voice so that we can indeed follow Him. Listening to the voice of the Lord and heeding His commands makes us His sheep and is our best preparation for Heaven.
- As for this situation with the Supreme Court, it's likely going to be many weeks before a final decision comes back on whether or not Roe vs. Wade is overturned. Yet in the meantime, it's very important that we pray and fast for this.
- Not only must we pray and fast that Roe vs. Wade is overturned, but we must also make acts of reparation for this terrible sin that has been a scourge on our country these last 50 years.
- Furthermore, we must commit ourselves firmly to the truth, just like St. Paul and St. Barnabas – even if we have to face angry, violent mobs who are hellbent on opposing us.
- Lastly, we must keep our eyes on the prize, which is Heaven, praying that someday we may be counted amongst that blessed multitude who *stand before God's throne and worship Him day and night in His temple.*
- And as we honor and celebrate our mothers this weekend, may we always have recourse to our Most Blessed Mother, trusting that she who has the power to crush the head of the ancient serpent will always protect us from the vengeance of the evil one.
- O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.