

**There are two sharply opposed views
typical of present-day living of Christian faith:
One we may call the vertical dimension; the other, horizontal.**

Those who hold the vertical view says that
our religion has to do with God or with nothing at all.
Their concern is the salvation and sanctification of souls.
Prayer, meditation, receiving the sacraments, in the traditional sense,
are the elements of the vertical view.

**Proponents reason out
that when the church talks too much about social justice,
it defiles the sanctuary with worldly things,
even bringing politics to the pulpit.
“When we come to church on Sunday,
we want to hear about ‘spiritual’ things,” they contend.**

Now check yourself whether you are like this type of Christian?

**Advocates of the horizontal view, on the other hand, say
it is a scandal for the church to build magnificent edifices
when people nearby lack the basic necessities.**

Jesus was the friend of the poor and the downtrodden;
He went about preaching, curing the sick and doing good they claim.
When we are judged,
God will not ask us how kilometric our prayers and novenas are,
but how much we have helped the “least of Christ’s brethren” (Mt
25:40).

Again, check yourself whether you are this type of Christian?

Which of these two views is correct?
Where does the true Christian stand?

**In the gospel today, Jesus is asked,
“Which is the greatest commandment in the law?”**

**Jesus answers: “Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart...”
But then he quickly adds, “The second is like it:
You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”**

**The point Jesus is trying to stress is that
we cannot separate love of God from love of neighbour.
The two always go together.**

As St. John the evangelist puts it,
“If you say ‘I love God’ but hate your brother or your sister,
then you are a liar.”

Authentic discipleship consists
not in espousing one extreme view to the exclusion of the other
but in the pursuit of both.

**In Christ, we find the vertical and the horizontal
in wonderful harmony.
He went about doing good: Healing the sick, teaching,
comforting the lonely and bereaved,
but despite his busy schedule,
he would go to some quiet, deserted place, like a mountain,
to pray. (Read Mk 1:35).**

So ask yourself again:

Are you more of a worshipping Christian or serving one?

Someone remarked that we have more worshippers
than social-minded Christians.

When we come together for prayer at Mass,
it is often called “worship service.”

But worship ends when the final blessing is pronounced,
and the end of worship should be the beginning of service.

That’s why the priest says at the end of the Mass:

“Go forth, the Mass is ended!”

“*Ite, missa est*” in the original Latin.

The Mass ends here

but the beginning of living out the Mission is just starting.

An old friend told me once:

“I **like** it when people go to Mass

but I **love** it more when they go out of the Mass.”

Let's strive to follow Christ's will to love God and our neighbour.

And before we forget, this is not a mere advice or suggestion

but a **command**.

Doing this, Jesus assured us,

we are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.