

***Eleventh Week of Ordinary Time (English)***  
***Third Sunday after Pentecost (Latin)***  
***June 14, 2026***  
***Year of the Church in History***

*“Lex orandi, Lex credendi, Lex vivendi” (Ancient Latin Maxim)*

As we proceed to read and reflect upon The First Apology of Saint Justin Martyr, I would like us to keep in our minds the ancient Latin maxim which translates into: ***Lex orandi*** (how we worship), ***Lex credendi*** (what we believe), ***Lex vivendi*** (how we live). In essence, the way we pray and worship shapes what we believe which in turn determines how we choose to conduct our lives. It is my intention, in the following reflections, to repeat this first paragraph so we may have a visible reminder each time we read. Likewise, I will present key statements from Saint Justin, using our Eucharistic Liturgy (Mass) as a benchmark.

*“But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration. . . And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.”*  
*(Saint Justin, First Apology)*

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, copyright AD 1994, takes a great deal from an earlier Catechism given to us as a fruit of the Council of Trent. The Council of Trent, held in the Italian city of Trent, was conducted in three main sessions spanning the years AD 1545-1563. One of the main goals of this Catholic Church Council focused on clarifying teachings and enacting reforms based upon those teachings. In both versions of the Catechism, we find a detailed explanation of the Third Commandment which begins: *“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work”* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, p.580, 1194 edition).

We must ask ourselves: Why was a communal observance of Sunday, as a day devoted to the praise of God, such an important part of early Christianity as told by Saint Justin? As Catholics, we have all been raised to hold those beliefs expressed by both Catechisms. It is our firm and certain belief that we are obliged to attend Mass on Sunday, barring sickness or necessary work and travel. We do this because it is a fulfillment of what God first began as He led His people forth from the land of Egypt by the hand of Moses.

Let us remind ourselves of what we heard last weekend from Saint Justin. A person must be “washed” with the washing which forgives their sins. We know this to be Baptism. One could

say the children of Israel endured the punishments attributed to sin as they performed slave labor in Egypt. God, acting through Moses, along with his brother Aaron, sought to free His Children. Once the Passover was complete and the Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb had been offered, the people were allowed to depart. Grief stricken, Pharaoh had ordered this due to the final plague involving the death of the first-born males, both man and beast. God showed His power by splitting apart the waters of the Red Sea so the people could escape the Egyptian army which had begun pursuing them. This moment was understood to be repeated through Baptism when the new convert to Christianity was separated from the Devil, sin and death as they traveled through the water. Whether they were fully immersed or were only able to receive a few drops poured upon their heads, this action symbolized what took place in Exodus. A second moment from Exodus was repeated when God instructed Moses to create a sacred space, the Tent of Meeting, where He could reside present with His Children. It was in this sacred space; communal worship would be offered to Him by His Children. This notion of gathering on the Day of the Sun (Sunday), the first day of the week, as a community to give praise to God, was never meant to be optional; again, minus sickness, imprisonment, or some necessary reason. The Apostles conveyed this obligation of Love to the new Christians who followed their teachings. This practice continued in the generations which followed as recorded by Saint Justin. Even in our time, we still come together as His Children, to thank Him for saving us from the Devil, sin and death.