

CATHOLIC HOMILY

Homily Transcript

June 14, 2026

In our first reading today, God speaks to the people of Israel who have been now summoned into the desert, and he says to them, I so desire to make a covenant with you. And he has made other such covenants with the children of Israel. First of all, with all of humankind, when he made a covenant with Noah. Then he made a covenant with Abraham and said, eventually your children will be as numerous as the stars in the sky, and then this covenant with Moses. And then he also made a covenant with David, saying to David that a member of his family will sit on his throne forever.

And then, of course, what you and I partake of today, the new and eternal covenant poured out for you, the blood of Christ as we celebrate Mass today. And covenant is a very sacred word. Covenant is when one person makes a sincere gift of self to another and hopes that the other will give back their being to them. Marriage is a very good example of it. But in this case, it's God who reaches out to human beings all the time in making a covenant, a deep and abiding relationship with us. Next Sunday we celebrate Father's Day, as you know. And sometimes I've seen fathers wearing a t-shirt where it says, the world's greatest dad. And I'm glad we feel that way about our dads. But God is our greatest father.

He is our Abba. St. Paul says that we cry out Abba, Father, in his letter to the Corinthians. And we are asked to make a gift of self back to God. And it's really difficult because we are wounded people. We have the sin of Adam in us and Eve. And that sin causes us to say, no, I want it my way, that pride of Adam and Eve. It's difficult to make our self a gift back to God. St. Augustine writes this, quote, you were within me, but I was outside. Created things kept me from you. But if they had not been in you, they would not have been at all, end quote. So St.

Augustine, one of the greatest saints of the church, who entered into this deep covenant with God for a time in his life, knew that he was outside of where God was and that he sought God and created things while we do the same. We are often so distracted by created things that we lose track of this relationship that we have with God and such an important relationship. In order to be mindful that God is in us and God is wanting to have this deep friendship with us, we have to pray. And I don't think we have to pray for hours on end, but to have some few moments during the day that are concentrated with the awareness that God is in me. And he wants all of my love for him to be given back.

And as we become more aware that he is within us, there is a blessing that becomes. And then we turn to him in our need. We turn to him in our joy. We really have a provident Father who provides for us, and we believe that. The people who believe that the greatest and have entered into a deep covenant with God are the saints that we so love. I am a part-time chaplain at Kapaun Mount Carmel High School,

and we are working on these murals that are behind the altar. There's like about six murals that have four saints painted beautifully in each of the murals, and we're working on one of the last murals in which is depicted St. Gianna, St. Sebastian, St.

Andrew Dung-Lac, who's a Vietnamese saint, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. And I didn't know a great deal about St. Gianna, and so seeing her painting, I knew that she's a favorite saint of many mothers. And so I did some study about St. Gianna, some, and found out that she died in 1962, that she was a wife, a mother, a pediatrician, who always cared for poor women and the elderly in her medical work. She loved operas, and she loved a mountain climb. She was a human being like us in many, many ways. A woman full of passion, a woman full of love, who really did love God wholeheartedly, returned God's initiative of entering into this covenant.

And then what she is best known for is when she was carrying her fourth child in her pregnancy, she was told that she had a very, very dangerous and difficult disease, and that it would need to be operated on, but she knew that it would endanger the life of the child. And so she carried the child a term, and then a week after the child was born, she passed away. Just a courageous woman, someone who was filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit manifests Jesus, and Jesus manifests the Father. So when we love God, we are loving the Holy Trinity, and St. Gianna was full of this life of the Trinity in her. She reciprocated that covenant that God had made with her in so many ways.

Again, God wants to enter deeply into a relationship with each and every one of us. When I was in college at Wichita State before I entered the seminary, I finished my degree as a teacher. In the hallway there, someone had placed a plaque that says these words. There is only one hope. In Jesus Christ our Lord, who leads us to the Father through the life and the work of the Holy Spirit, there is only one hope. Jesus Christ, who leads us to the Father through the life and the work of the Holy Spirit, to help us enter into this covenant that God so desires for each and every one of us.