

## WEDNESDAY REFLECTIONS

**TITLE:** Jesus Commands Hate?

**DATE:** for September 7, 2025

**ID:** 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Year (C cycle)

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 14:25-33

**By:** Fr. Bob Schmitz

*Abbreviations: WR=Wednesday Reflection which is followed by the title; FFS=For Us and For Our Salvation (see books) followed by the page number; CCC=The Catechism of the Catholic Church followed by the paragraph number.*

**TEXT:** Karl Rahner's study of original sin shows how actions done before us influence every relationship and all social institutions (FSS, 34-35). Some decisions were evil. Some evil became part of our interaction. Business and commerce can incorporate greed. *Good* pedagogy and *good* parenting can include cruelty like corporal punishment or harsh criticism. *Good* preaching can judge and condemn. In his *Foundations of Christian Faith*, Rahner writes: "This co-determination of the situation of every person by the guilt of others is something universal, permanent, and therefore original" (FSS, 35).

On Luke 14:26—Jesus saw this pervasive sinfulness embodied in the patriarchal family of the first century. The patriarch's control over his wife, children, extended family, servants, and slaves could be oppressive. Patriarchal control affected everything—the economy, the social order, even marriage.

The combination of *Jesus* and *hatred* does not compute in our hearts. Keep three things in mind: (1) One can hate the oppression—even in family—without directing hate to a person. The old expression works: Hate the sin; love the sinner. (2) Original sin does not impose guilt as personal sin does. We are not culpable for our forebears' sins unless we knowingly and willingly repeat them (CCC, 406). (3) Although such sin is all around us, no one has to participate.

On Luke 14:27—Jesus Christ did not desire a social revolution, but a revolution of the heart (WR *Crisis Management*). The cross is shorthand for that reformation. On the cross, Jesus gave his life out of love that we might have the fullness of life now and forever. If we take up the cross, we give ourselves out of love to raise others to a better life (FSS, 123). The love expressed on the cross would perfect our families. A revolution of the heart challenges all our interaction. It avoids violence, hatred, abuse, domination, the exclusion of others (those who differ from me), judgment, and condemnation. Any power over others becomes empowerment. Our interaction affirms others. Reconciliation and forgiveness overcome most divisions. Human potential expands when everyone is included.

On Luke 14:28-33—This week's Gospel asks how far we will go with the reformation of our hearts. Few can copy the Lord who gave his life for all. Extending our love to all may be the measure of our resolve. But such universal reach is the stuff of the greatest saints.

On Luke 14:33—It is especially hard to allow the cross to influence what we do with our wealth.

The question is whether we can navigate our world, critiquing evil, all the while extending God's love more fully to the people we meet.