

Dear Padre,

A friend told me not to worry about salvation because we're predestined to be saved or condemned. Why try to be a good person if God has already decided where I'll end up?

The idea that some people are predestined to be saved and others are damned is contrary to Catholic teaching.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that “when therefore [God] establishes his eternal plan of ‘predestination,’ he *includes in it each person’s free response to his grace*” (600; emphasis added).

The *Catechism* (1038) also cites the parable of the separation of the sheep from the goats, in which the sheep and goats are separated not randomly, but based on their actions: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory...all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father’....And [those on the left] will go off to eternal punishment” (Matthew 25:31–46).

God wants to save all people. The way we respond to God’s gift of salvation is called *free will*. Unfortunately, not everyone accepts that gift.

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TO STUDIO / SHUTTERSTOCK



A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

Jesus says, “I came to bring division.” It is not that Jesus wishes to split people up....Following Jesus entails giving up evil and selfishness and choosing good, truth, and justice, even when this demands sacrifice and the renunciation of our own interests. And this indeed divides; as we know, it even cuts the closest ties.

ANGELUS, AUGUST 18, 2013

Monday

AUGUST 15

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Rv 11:19a;
 12:1–6a, 10ab
 1 Cor 15:20–27
 Lk 1:39–56

Tuesday

AUGUST 16

Weekday
 Ez 28:1–10
 Mt 19:23–30

Wednesday

AUGUST 17

Weekday
 Ez 34:1–11
 Mt 20:1–16

Thursday

AUGUST 18

Weekday
 Ez 36:23–28
 Mt 22:1–14

Friday

AUGUST 19

Weekday
 Ez 37:1–14
 Mt 22:34–40

Saturday

AUGUST 20

St. Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church

Ez 43:1–7ab
 Mt 23:1–12

Sunday

AUGUST 21

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 66:18–21
 Heb 12:5–7, 11–13
 Lk 13:22–30