The Living Word

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A — 25 October 2026

First Reading Ex 22:20-26

If you are harsh with the widow or the orphan, my anger will rage against you.

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

"If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

"If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 17:2-4. 47. 51. R. v.2

(R.) I love you, Lord, my strength.

1. I love you, Lord, my strength,
   my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
   My God is the rock where I take refuge;
   my shield, my mighty help, my
   stronghold.
   The Lord is worthy of all praise:
   when I call I am saved from my foes. *(R.)*

2. Long life to the Lord, my rock!
   Praised be the God who saves me.
   He has given great victories to his king
   and shown his love for his anointed. *(R.)*

Second Reading 1 Thes 1:5-10

You turned away from idols to serve God and await his Son.

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread – and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!
All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.
Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 22:34-40

You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

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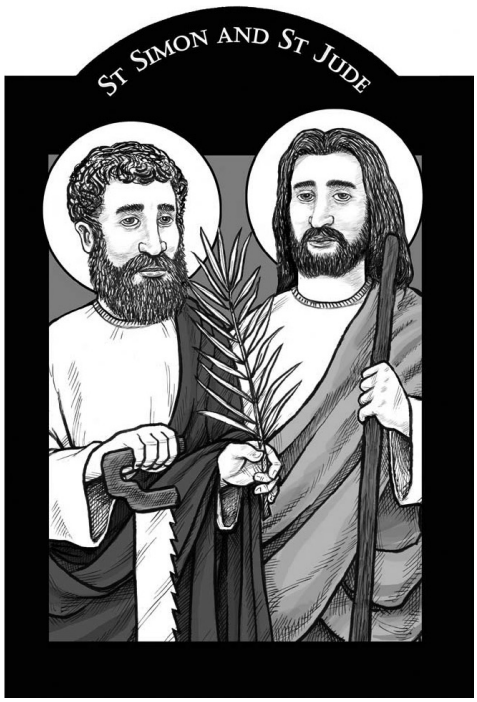
Reflection *by Fr Michael Tate*

Did you notice that Jesus does not command us to love 'God'? No, we are to love 'the *Lord* your God', the One who rescued the Jewish people from slavery. The resurrection of Jesus Christ reveals the Lord God as the liberator from the apparent final dominance of death. Loving such a liberator is the natural response. So, 'Love *the Lord* your God'.

Then Jesus does not command us to love our neighbour! Rather, 'Love your neighbour as *yourself* .' But who is 'yourself'? In the wonderful story-telling of Genesis, we are told that Adam, an earthen statue, had Divine Breath breathed into the nostrils, creating him as a human being. We earthlings are conceived with the Divine Breath at the core of our being.

The challenge for you and for me is to see 'yourself' in that way, and thereafter every human being whose lives we can affect: the neighbour. And in today's global world, the neighbour can be a person in a society geographically or culturally distant.

We could pause for a moment to see the true dimensions of God, self and the other, to more easily fulfil the dual command.



St Simon and St Jude *were two of Jesus' twelve apostles. St Simon was known as 'the Caananite' or 'the Zealot' by other evangelists and St Jude was a blood relative of Jesus and known as one of the 'brethren of the Lord'. Little, however, is known about either of these apostles after the events at Pentecost. Western traditions suggest that St Simon preached in Egypt before joining St Jude in Persia, where they were both martyred. In recent times, St Jude has become popular as the patron of 'hopeless causes'. This probably originates from early Christians confusing St Jude with Judas, who betrayed Jesus. As a result people never prayed for his help and so devotion to St Jude became somewhat of a lost or hopeless cause.*

CROSSWORD



Across

2: unwise

5: Jesus said, "Love _ _ _ _ _ _ as much as you love yourself"

7: more than all others

9: an examination

11: God's laws that were given to Moses

Down

1: someone who knows a lot about a specific subject

2: the opposite of last

3: the organ that pumps blood through the body

4: significant

6: the S_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ were foolish

8: Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, _ _ _ _ , and mind"

10: a rule that must be obeyed

Fill in the missing words to complete the story.

love
second
God
answered
yourself
teacher
heart
first
test
commandment

An expert in the Jewish law tried to _ _ _ _ Jesus. He asked, "_ _ _ _ _ _ _ , what is the most important _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ? "



Jesus _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : "Love the Lord your _ _ _ with all your _ _ _ _ _ , soul and mind." This is the _ _ _ _ _ and most important commandment. The _ _ _ _ _ _ is like it : " _ _ _ _ your neighbor as much as you love _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ ".

