

15th Sunday of Ordinary Time – Cycle C

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Lectionary: 105

Reading 1 [Dt 30:10-14](#)

Moses said to the people:

"If only you would heed the voice of the LORD, your God,
and keep his commandments and statutes
that are written in this book of the law,
when you return to the LORD, your God,
with all your heart and all your soul.

"For this command that I enjoin on you today
is not too mysterious and remote for you.
It is not up in the sky, that you should say,
'Who will go up in the sky to get it for us
and tell us of it, that we may carry it out?'
Nor is it across the sea, that you should say,
'Who will cross the sea to get it for us
and tell us of it, that we may carry it out?'
No, it is something very near to you,
already in your mouths and in your hearts;
you have only to carry it out."

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37](#)

R. (cf. 33) Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

I pray to you, O LORD,

for the time of your favor, O God!

In your great kindness answer me

with your constant help.

Answer me, O LORD, for bounteous is your kindness:

in your great mercy turn toward me.

R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

I am afflicted and in pain;

let your saving help, O God, protect me.

I will praise the name of God in song,

and I will glorify him with thanksgiving.

R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

"See, you lowly ones, and be glad;

you who seek God, may your hearts revive!

For the LORD hears the poor,

and his own who are in bonds he spurns not."

R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

For God will save Zion

and rebuild the cities of Judah.

The descendants of his servants shall inherit it,

and those who love his name shall inhabit it.

R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

or [Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11](#)

R.(9a) Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The law of the LORD is perfect,

refreshing the soul;

the decree of the LORD is trustworthy,

giving wisdom to the simple.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The precepts of the LORD are right,

rejoicing the heart;

the command of the LORD is clear,

enlightening the eye.

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R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.
The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever;
the ordinances of the LORD are true,
all of them just.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.
They are more precious than gold,
than a heap of purest gold;
sweeter also than syrup
or honey from the comb.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

Reading 2 [Col 1:15-20](#)

Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation.
For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth,
the visible and the invisible,
whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers;
all things were created through him and for him.
He is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.
He is the head of the body, the church.
He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,
that in all things he himself might be preeminent.
For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell,
and through him to reconcile all things for him,
making peace by the blood of his cross
through him, whether those on earth or those in heaven.

Alleluia [cf. Jn 6:63c, 68c](#)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.
Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life;
you have the words of everlasting life.
R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel [Lk 10:25-37](#)

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said,
"Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law?
How do you read it?"
He said in reply,
*"You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart,
with all your being,
with all your strength,
and with all your mind,
and your neighbor as yourself."*
He replied to him, "You have answered correctly;
do this and you will live."

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus,
"And who is my neighbor?"
Jesus replied,
"A man fell victim to robbers
as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.
They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead.
A priest happened to be going down that road,
but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

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Likewise a Levite came to the place,
and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.
But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him
was moved with compassion at the sight.
He approached the victim,
poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them.
Then he lifted him up on his own animal,
took him to an inn, and cared for him.
The next day he took out two silver coins
and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction,
'Take care of him.
If you spend more than what I have given you,
I shall repay you on my way back.'
Which of these three, in your opinion,
was neighbor to the robbers' victim?"
He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy."
Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

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There is a saying that “one can’t see the forest because there are too many trees”. Sometimes I think my life is like that. Relationships change, finances change, health states change, technology changes, expectations of those around us change, all to the constant drumbeat of time. Maybe we should ask if our religion changes in light of all that is changing around us? Certainly we feel the uncertainty as if we were Blowing in the Wind.

For those of you who remember Bob Dylan, He wrote the song, "**Blowin' in the Wind**" in 1962, wherein it poses a series of rhetorical questions about peace, war and freedom. The refrain "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind" has been described as "impenetrably ambiguous: either the answer is so obvious it is right in your face, or the answer is as intangible as the wind". Dylan acknowledges in a later interview that the melody of "Blowin' in the Wind" as an adaptation of the old African-American spiritual "No More Auction Block" from the slaves freed in Great Britain in 1833. The critic Michael Gray suggests that the lyrics are a particular rhetorical form used often in the New Testament and based on the Old Testament book such as Ezekiel (12:1–2): "The word of the Lord came to me: 'Oh mortal, you dwell among the rebellious breed. They have eyes to see but see not; ears to hear, but hear not.'" In "Blowin' in the Wind", Dylan transforms this into "Yes'n' how many ears must one man have ...?" and "Yes' n' how many times must a man turn his head / Pretending he just doesn't see?" For what it is worth, I subscribe to the first explanation about answers being obvious!

So as we were listening to these readings today, we are given the simple and to the point answers. The first reading actually starts in the middle of a sentence. The rest is, “ if you would heed ... and return to the Lord”, and in a following passage Deut 31:19, Moses finishes up by saying, “ I have set before you life and death... choose life”. You may catch the weariness of Moses as we see him again exhorting the children of God to heed the voice of the Lord – their God and our God. This chapter of Deuteronomy is the last before Moses anoints Joshua to lead Israel and shortly thereafter dies. So it is packed with the knowledge, experience and conversations with the Father over most of his 120 years of life. Moses simply states what we must do to love the Lord, and most importantly it is found within us. It is not found externally, not in the heavens or across the seas, but within our hearts. If we take time to pray, to reflect, to hear the little voice within us, we will know how to love God. It seems to me that Moses’ words are as fresh today as they were back then.

In this second reading, I find Paul’s letter to the Colossians to be obvious as well. It is about Divine Love and is set before us as a temple for our own attempts at love. In this letter we find the depths and bounds of God’s love for the Son. The Son is preeminent in the Father’s eyes. The Son is above all else. Paul also points out that The Son is the head of the body of the Church – us. So again the Father’s love for us is shown by His gift of giving His Son and in turn His saving sacrifice. We find the Father’s love in this body the Church, in the people we find ourselves

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among, in the people we pass our lives with, in the people we walk with on our paths to salvation. One more time we are told how simple it is to be close to the Father – by living the life of Christ and maybe more tangibly in the Church.

There are two parts to today's reading from Luke, we come first to the discussion between the Scribe and Jesus. This is one of the passages that I marvel at - what greater opportunity did anyone than have than to ask Jesus face to face – "What are we here for?"! And instead the Scribe sees the encounter as just an intellectual exercise. However, the answer the Scribe provides, and Jesus approves, is simple and it comes from the heart – his heart and our hearts. It rephrases the simple way Jesus states the two greatest commandments in another part of the Gospels. It is a personal understanding of the Law. Though Moses addresses the first half of the law in Deuteronomy, namely that of loving God. The Scribe restates Moses and then completes the sentence with how our relationships with each other are so important. They are important enough to be required for our salvation as we find out throughout the Gospels.

The second part of today's Gospel shows how the Samaritan makes the stranger's recovery his concern. The care he provided was intimate and personal as demonstrated by his not only touching the man, but by touching the blood from his wounds! He makes it the focus of the rest of his day and night. It was not to end when he left in the morning, but rather he would stop back after his work duties were done. It costs him time, money, physical effort, and whatever lost opportunity he may have suffered by not getting into town as planned. If I was the stranger, I can only think that, "yes I was loved by the efforts of this stranger" That I would be grateful and would think how my life has been changed forever by this person who walked with me for a while. Who cared enough for me to ensure I recovered. A person I did not know. I think I could see the Lord in his eyes. This then is the lesson of how we need to love!

Even today we always need to know with everything we are made that we are loved by the Father. We need to know that we are loved by His Son. Then we must do whatever is needed to love our neighbor so they too know they are loved by the Father and Son. Also we need to make them feel they are also loved by another human being that is interested enough in the most important task of their lives - their salvation. So, today's readings we are reminded that living a life of a Chosen Race, is not complex and confusing. Rather it is simple and has been laid out by the Father through the prophets and later by His Son. We are called to recognize we are given the law as a gift of love. God as Father and Son both love us enough to give us what we need for our salvation. We are also asked to take that gift and let others know they are loved as well. Not in some ethereal way, but show it so they can feel it - here and now - from the Father through the Son through us to them.