

think of you) 'On my lips' (that I may continually praise & tell of you) 'In my heart' (that my I may love you). In other words, the love of God mustn't remain, simply words written down, but it should be active, at the very centre of our lives motivating our every thought, word & action. But then comes the punch, the ending which gives the whole story its message '*You must love your neighbour as your self.*' St John tells us: 'A person who does not love his neighbour that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen (1 John 4:20) Jesus teaches us today, that true religion isn't the observance of rules and regulations, attending church and saying prayers etc. True religion is sharing in God's love. We do not begin to love God, until we begin to love our neighbour.

Prayer over the Offerings

Look, we pray, O Lord, on the offerings we make to your majesty,
that whatever is done by us in your service may be directed
above all to your glory.

Communion Antiphon

*We will ring out our joy at your saving help
and exult in the name of our God.*

Prayer after Communion

May your Sacraments, O Lord, we pray, perfect in us what lies
within them, that what we now celebrate in signs we may one day
possess in truth.

***“Love cannot remain by itself – it has no
meaning. Love has to be put into action,
and that action is service.”***

Saint Mother Teresa

Thirtieth Sunday

Year A

25th October 2026

The Two Inseparable Commandments

Today, the Gospel continues to proclaim serious lessons, that Jesus taught in the framework of harsh confrontations with the scribes and Pharisees and in so doing, Jesus reveals the Father's Kingdom and how we are to live our lives if we wish to enter into it. In today's passage an 'expert in the Law' questions Jesus, concerning the 'greatest commandment.'

The Ten Commandments, given to Moses on Mount Sinai, (Exodus 20) reveal God. They are a light in our darkness; a pathway leading to life. Notice, however, how the scribes and Pharisees use the Law – it is no longer life-giving, on the contrary, they use it to trap Jesus, to ensnare him. In his reply to their question, Jesus challenges them, and us, to get back to the heart of the matter – to love God, to love our neighbour.

Entrance Antiphon

*Let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice; turn to the Lord and his
strength; constantly seek his face.*

Collect

Almighty ever-living God, increase our faith, hope and charity, and make us love what you command, so that we may merit what you promise.

EXODUS 22: 21-27

'You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and

your children fatherless. If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a money-lender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him. If ever you take your neighbour's cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.'

THE WORD OF THE LORD

The Book of Exodus tells about the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, the covenant of Sinai and the wandering in the wilderness, therefore the material is very old, between 1446 – 1406 BC. Today's passage comes just after God has revealed himself to Moses on Mount Sinai and given Israel the Ten Commandments. What follows is a series of laws and prescriptions elaborating, filling out God's Law. These are definitely not 'add ons', thought up after the event, but they are the fruit of reflection and the experience of living as God's children. So, we should welcome the stranger, care for the widow, the orphan, the poor in need – because that is how God treats us! We are called to reflect God's love in our lives.

PSALM: 18(17):2-4, 47, 51

Response: *I love you, LORD, my strength.*

I love you, LORD, my strength; O LORD, my rock, my fortress, my saviour.

My God, my rock where I take refuge; my shield, my saving strength, my stronghold. I cry out, 'O praised be the LORD!' and see, I am saved from my foes.

The LORD lives, and blest be my Rock! May the God of my salvation be exalted. The LORD gives great victories to his king, and shows merciful love for his anointed.

1 THESSALONIANS 1:5-10

You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy

Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians is one of the earliest letters he wrote (50 AD) just 20 years after the life and ministry of Jesus. It is not a careful theological treatise, but an urgent and hurried response to the problems of a developing community. Before he corrects his listeners, he begins by thanking & encouraging them – a fine lesson for us all. In accepting the Gospel, the Thessalonians have become an example to all.

Alleluia, Alleluia! If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, says the Lord, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him. Alleluia!

MATTHEW 22: 34-40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.'

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

In his reply, Jesus points to the very central faith of Israel: 'Listen, Israel: the Lord our God is one and Him you shall love with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.' (Deuteronomy 6: 5) This reminds me very much of the prayer, the minister prays before he proclaims the Gospel on Sunday: 'Lord be in my mind' (that I reflect &