

We Respond

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice; turn to the Lord and his strength; constantly seek his face.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 17)

ANTIPHON: I love you, Lord, my strength.

RESPONSE: I love you, Lord, my strength.

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) We will ring out our joy at your saving help and exult in the name of our God.

Or

Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, as a fragrant offering to God.

TODAY'S READINGS Exodus 22:20-26; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Matthew 22:34-40

NEXT WEEK (All Saints Year A) Rev 7: 2-4, 9-14; Ps 23; 1John 3:1-3; Matthew 5: 1-12

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*Loving God
and your
neighbour*



25 October 2020 30th Sunday Year A

October is traditionally a month in which we focus on Mary. In our journey of praying the rosary from the first mystery, the Annunciation, until we come to Pentecost, Mary gives us an example of loving God and loving our sisters and brothers. The rosary ends with her Assumption and Coronation, a reward for keeping the greatest commandment.

The Pharisees in today's gospel reading should have been enjoying the moment when their rivals, the Sadducees, having tried to trick Jesus with a question concerning the resurrection, were silenced by him. But on that day, the Pharisees and the Sadducees joined in an attempt to silence Jesus. Losing arguments with Jesus meant risking losing their followers and increasing Jesus' popularity. So, they called on an expert in the law to ask another tricky question.

His question sounds genuine. Over the years, the scribes, Pharisees and the Sadducees had burdened the lives of ordinary Jews with 613 rules, Dos' and Don'ts. There were "greater laws" and "smaller laws" and "oral and written" laws. Hence the question: Which commandment assured eternal life? But the purpose here was to trap Jesus. They wanted Jesus to say something at variance with the Law of Moses and thus hasten his condemnation.

Jesus replied with a surprising combination of the two Old Testament texts,

Deuteronomy 6:5 (You shall love the Lord your God ...) and Leviticus 19:18 (You shall love your neighbour ...) For the first time ever Jesus brought these commandments together and said that on these two together hung the rest of the Scripture. That was an unexpected answer which enraged his enemies. But here is the heart of Jesus' teaching.

Today's first reading speaks of how greatly God cares for His people. God calls the poor, the widow, the orphan and the stranger "His People." The Lord says to Moses "I shall hear their cry. . . I will listen, for I am full of pity." Saint Catherine of Genoa, a mystic, once prayed, "Lord, you say that I should love my neighbour, but I can love no one but you." God replied to her in these words: "Everybody who loves me loves what I love." God loves his people. Loving God and loving your neighbour are inseparable. As the First Letter of St John tells us, "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen."

On the last Sunday of this Marian month may we learn from Mother Mary. In the miraculous icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, she holds the Son of God close to her heart, but her eyes are fixed on the wounded world and its suffering people.

Manoj Kunnath CSsR
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