

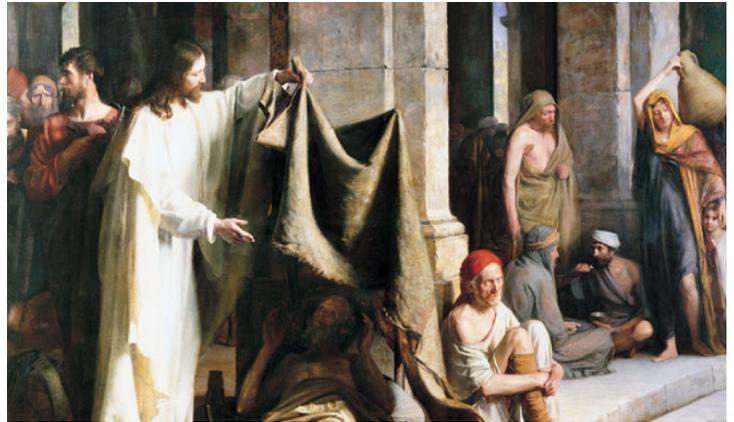


STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION ON LECTIONARY READINGS

October 25, 2020 — Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

[EX 22:20-26; PS 18:2-4, 47, 51; 1 THES 1:5C-10; MT 22:34-40](#)

Today's readings are all about love — the radical love of God for His people and the radical love we are called to live out in response. The stewardship way of life is nothing more and nothing less than the practical application of loving God and neighbor in our daily lives.



From the very beginning, God reveals Himself as a loving and compassionate Father Who has a particular concern for the most vulnerable of His people. He requires this same compassion from His people in our treatment of one another.

Our First Reading, from Exodus, is an example. In this ancient text God says, "You shall not molest or oppress an alien... You shall not wrong any widow or orphan... If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, you shall return it to him before sunset... If he cries out to me, I will hear him; for I am compassionate." This love of neighbor was a radical departure for the people of this era. But this is the radical God that we serve.

Jesus sums up the message of all the prophets as well as the purpose of all God's laws in today's Gospel passage, from Matthew. It is a message we have likely grown up hearing — but it is so beautiful and so challenging, it bears repeating again and again. It is Christ's response to a question about which commandment is greatest. His answer reveals both the greatest and the second greatest commandments.

He says, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind... The second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

How is the second like the first? What do the two commands have in common? Love.

Love God first and love neighbor as self. This is the heart of the stewardship way of life — simple enough for a child to understand, challenging enough to be the life's work of

every “grown-up.” The “how” of loving God first and neighbor as self is unique to each individual.

Perhaps God is calling you to love Him with your whole heart, soul and mind by committing to a daily time of praying with the Scriptures. Maybe He is calling you to spend time with Him in adoration or a weekday Mass. It might be that He is asking you to put Him first as a family with a time for evening or morning prayer together. Maybe He wants you to spend a bit less time watching the news or surfing the internet, and a little more time pondering the blessings He has given you throughout the day.

And how is God calling you to love your neighbor as yourself? Maybe it is by checking on a relative or neighbor who is isolated. Or by patiently listening to a colleague at work who is overwhelmed. Or by getting involved in a ministry that serves children or the poor.

The stewardship way of life is the unique way that each of us applies the two greatest commandments to our daily lives. To sum it up, it’s all about love.

— *Stewardship Reflections* by [Catholic Stewardship Consultants](#)