



## LIVING THE GOSPEL



**15<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time.  
July 13<sup>th</sup> 2025**

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**Theme: "But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion when he saw him."**

### **Gathering Prayer**

**All:** O God, who show the light of your truth to those who go astray, so that they may return to the right path, give all who for the faith they profess are accounted Christians the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ and to strive after all that does it honor. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Exploring the Word**

#### **Gospel Reading: Luke 10: 25-37**

<sup>25</sup> There was a lawyer who, to disconcert him, stood up and said to him, 'Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?'

<sup>26</sup> He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? What do you read there?' <sup>27</sup> He replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself'. <sup>28</sup> 'You have answered right,' said Jesus 'do this and life is yours.' <sup>29</sup> But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?'

<sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, 'A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of brigands; they took all he had, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side.

<sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion when he saw him. <sup>34</sup> He went up and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him on to his own mount, carried him to the inn and looked after him. <sup>35</sup> Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said "and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have." <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the brigands' hands?'

<sup>37</sup> 'The one who took pity on him' he replied. Jesus said to him, 'Go, and do the same yourself'.

### **Gospel Focus**

Jesus shares the parable of the Good Samaritan in response to the scholar's question about who his neighbor is. The scholar seems to be trying to limit his responsibility to the law's commands, to draw a boundary around who "counts" as a neighbor and whom he must treat as himself. In response, Jesus describes as an exemplary neighbor this

Samaritan who goes out of his way to care for the injured man he stumbles upon. This man is not a neighbor in any of the ways we usually understand; he is a stranger who happens to be on the path, an interruption to the Samaritan's travels, an inconvenience. But the Samaritan responds with extreme care and generosity: he provides first aid and follow-up care, reaching into his own pocket to ensure the robbers' victim is restored to health. Jesus does not answer the scholar's question directly—he does not speak to who is or is not deserving of our neighborly love. He instead describes what it means to *be* a good neighbor, and as with most of Jesus' teachings, it is far more radical than reasonable.

## **Gospel Reflection**

Like the scholar of the law in today's gospel, we all know from experience that it is easy to talk to ourselves out of doing a good deed; there are reasons to avoid it or to let someone else of greater means or experience help out. He knew what to do. He knew what his religious convictions prompted him to do. He could recite the law perfectly. He also knew what his heart was urging him to do. He just needed someone to reassure him his rationalizations are well founded, and that no one would expect him to do anything for some stranger in need.

It would have been easy for Jesus to give him the answer he wanted: "Yes, of course you are right. He is not your responsibility. Someone better equipped will tend to him." But he does not, Jesus knows that it will not be easy for the scholar hear his answer. Better than rational arguments, a story will help the scholar move out of his head and listen to his heart. There is, however, a twist to the story that Jesus tells. It is not a straightforward tale about someone like the scholar who is "moved with compassion" that he might easily emulate.

The complication is that the scholar of the law would never identify with a hated Samaritan. More likely he would see himself in the person in need at the side of the road. From that perspective, he would watch in horror as the priest and Levite, the ones he would expect to act with pastoral attention, pass him by while justifying themselves. To receive lavish aid from a despised Samaritan breaks open the strictures of his heart, as he experiences a flood of grace from this unexpected source.

The question is not really "who is my neighbor?" Deep down the scholar knows that each human being and every creature are neighbor and kin. The scholar does not want to admit this to himself because of what it will ask of him. In the depths of his heart, however, he knows what he must do to aid a fellow traveler in need. It is not really too hard or too mysterious to figure out, as Moses tells the Israelites in the 1st reading. You do not need someone to "go up into the sky" or "cross the sea." How to live out God's way as elaborated in the Scriptures is actually "something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry out it out," as Moses asserts.

Sometimes we need to be helped out of our rationalizations for not doing what our listening heart prompts us to do. At other times we are asked to be the one who speak truth lovingly to a friend who struggles to do what compassion asks of him or her.

Heeding the voice of God to know the right action and the right time requires deep listening in contemplative silent prayer, in honest conversation with trusted friends, and with openness to hearing the cacophonous cries of needy neighbors.

## **Old/New Testament and CCC links**

### **First Reading - Deut 30:10-14**

Moses said to the people: <sup>10</sup> "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. <sup>11</sup> "For this

command that I enjoin on you today is not too mysterious and remote for you. <sup>12</sup> 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?' <sup>13</sup> 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?' <sup>14</sup> No, it is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out."

### **Responsorial Reading - Ps 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37**

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

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)**

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)**

"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)**

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)**

### **Second Reading – Col 1:15-20**

<sup>15</sup> Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. <sup>18</sup> He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he himself might be preeminent. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> 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.

### **Catechism of The Catholic Church**

**2083.** Jesus summed up man's duties toward God in this saying: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (*Mt* 22:37; cf. *Lk* 10:27: ". . . and with all your strength.") This immediately echoes the solemn call: "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD." (*Deut* 6:4) God has loved us first. The love of the One God is recalled in the first of the "ten words." The commandments then make explicit the response of love that man is called to give to his God.

**2196** – In response to the question about the first of the commandments, Jesus says: "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is

no other commandment greater than these." (Mk 12:29-31; cf. Deut 6:4-5; Lev 19:18; Mt 22:34-40; Lk 10:25-28)

The apostle St. Paul reminds us of this: "He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. The commandments, '*You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,*' and any other commandment, are summed up in this sentence, '*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*' Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom 13:8-10.)

### **Sharing and Discussion**

1. "Have you ever found yourself setting limits on who deserves God's love or mercy—even in subtle ways? How does that measure against God's love, which knows no limits?"
2. The Samaritan response begins with compassion. When you think of compassion, what comes to mind? How does it shape the way you respond to others?"
3. The man in the ditch must accept the help of the Samaritan in order to find relief. Have you ever found yourself needing help—and it came from someone you didn't expect? What did that moment teach you?"

### **Closing Prayer**

**Leader:** O God, you revive the hearts of the lowly and fill them with gladness. Hear our prayers this day, and help us always to share the abundance of your mercy with our neighbors. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our brother.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen.