

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

LOVING THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL HEART AND SOUL AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF



Last This Sunday's readings bring us back to what is essential: **the Love of God and the Love of neighbor**: One cannot exist without the other. These two commandments are already found in the Law of Moses. But they are formulated separately. Later, the prophets will proclaim that one cannot worship God without respecting one's neighbor.

The first reading places great emphasis on this commandment: **"You shall love."** The entire history of God's people must be a story of love. It is about loving the Lord with all one's heart, with all one's soul, and with all one's strength. This commandment of God is in itself a path to life and happiness. The Letter to the Hebrews (2nd reading) does not speak directly to us of this Great Commandment of Love. But it shows us a God who continually takes the first step toward us by sending us his Son Jesus. Today's passage reminds us of the superiority of Christ's priesthood over that of men. To continually intercede with God, men have had to succeed one another over the centuries. **We advance towards God thanks to Christ, through Him, with Him, and in Him. He is the One who "loved us as no one has ever loved us."**

Today's Gospel returns to this Great Commandment. It is the encounter between Jesus and the scribe. The latter knows the Scriptures perfectly. He presents Himself to Jesus somewhat like an examiner who comes to test his student's knowledge. We heard Jesus' response: **"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."** And the second is: **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."** **These two commandments are one. One does not exist without the other.**

We are therefore created to love. God, who is love, created us so that we too might love and remain united with him. We will only find true joy by loving. It is not primarily a matter of doing many things, but of living with a filial spirit toward God and a fraternal spirit toward others. **By making ourselves neighbors to others, we draw closer to God, Who is love. My neighbor is the one I take the time to listen to and encounter. It is one and the same love that draws us to God and to others.**

Loving one's neighbor is not easy either, especially when they have many faults; when we watch the read the newspapers and watch television, we see acts of violence every day. We see men, women, and children victims, on our roads, of the recklessness of some. Others suffer from wars, family conflicts, hunger, and exclusion. Christ is present through those who can no longer bear being harassed. He is thrown out into the street every day. We must recognize Him in those who are dying of hunger, cold, and above all, of **LACK OF LOVE**.

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