

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Forgiveness is an important and necessary virtue
and a prerequisite for peace and serenity.**

Exodus 22:20-26

This excerpt is part of the book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:22 - 23:33) and it deals with laws of social conduct. We need to read the whole section in order to get a good appreciation of what the legal code prescribed for Israel. Israel is called to be just toward the less privileged in their community. God hears the cry of the poor because he is compassionate, and God's people must do the same.

Justice for Israel meant right relationship with God and one another. Biblical justice is fidelity to covenantal relationship. People of the Covenant are related to one another and this relationship demanded that they care for one another. They were to act toward one another as God acted toward them. They were also to act toward the widows, orphans and the aliens as God acted toward them. God's compassion must characterize God's people.

Psalms 18

This is a royal thanksgiving Psalm for a military victory. The whole Psalm is found in 2 Samuel 22. David wrote this Psalm after he had finally won all his battles. He uses words that describes how he feels about the God who gave him victory over his enemies. He sees God as his strength, rock, fortress, deliverer, shield, Altar, stronghold and so on. He has learned to trust in God's provident care. He expresses his complete confidence, "I call, and He answers".

God's act of deliverance is described in poetic language.... God came riding on the cherubs and on the wings of the wind; He drew me out of many waters and brought me to a broad place.....He delivered me because, "He delighted in me". Even in the midst of natural disasters, God cares for me. God has given himself to his people in love and his love is loyal, steadfast, and unconquerable.

This Psalm carries much for our reflection and prayer. Read and prayerfully reflect over this Psalm. Use your imagination. Visualize if you can, "God riding on the cherubs", "riding on the wings of the wind", "leaning toward me" because "He delights in me".

I love you O Lord my strength,

**O Lord, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer.
My God, my rock of refuge,
My shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.**

I Thessalonians 1:5-10

Paul wrote to the Thessalonian community encouraging them and affirming them in their works of love. He told them how much he appreciated their faith and how encouraged and supported he felt when he came to know of their faithfulness in love. He assured them of remembering them constantly in prayer.

Paul encouraged them to be strong in faith and to be bold and courageous in the practice of their faith. He was convinced that believers in Jesus should never be afraid or ashamed of their commitment to Christ. They must be prepared to live out their faith in the midst of a difficult and challenging world. Paul saw the conversion of the Thessalonians as part of the good news that was being proclaimed in Macedonia and Achaia and other places. He saw Thessalonian's conversion and their Lifestyle as a "living Gospel". They had turned away from false gods to the true and living God. This is what Paul remembered, appreciated, and affirmed in the Thessalonian community.

Say a word of encouragement and support to someone today!

Remember in prayer those who serve you in faithfulness and love!

Mathew 22:34-40

A lawyer asked Jesus what he thought was the greatest commandment. This was an attempt to trap Jesus into making some statement that could be used against him.

Jesus used even an attempt to trap him as an opportunity to proclaim profound truth. This teaches us and calls us to use every opportunity, including unpleasant ones, to proclaim and reveal God's truth and goodness and love.

Jesus placed love of God as the first and the greatest and love of neighbor as the second.

The essence of the whole law is proclaimed as "love of God and love of neighbor". Love of God must guide all that we are, all that we do and all our relationships. Love of man and the world must be grounded in the love of God.

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave his disciples this final commandment and declared love to be the defining characteristic of Christianity: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John

13:34-35). Jesus went on to say "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). This sacrificial love of Jesus is what his disciples are called to follow.

Saint of the Day, October 25 - Pope Boniface I and 20 other saints are remembered on this day

Pope Boniface I was Pope from 418 - 422. Little is known of his life before his election as Pope. He was a priest at Rome and served as papal delegate to Constantinople under Innocent I. When Pope Zosimus died in December 418, a majority elected Boniface pope, and a minority elected Eulalius pope. Pope and antipope were consecrated on the same day. He was ordained by Pope Damasus I. The Council of Spoleto was convoked in 419 to settle the dispute. Symmachus the Prefect supported Eulalius, and the Emperor Honorius supported Boniface, who was enthroned as Pope after the council.

Boniface condemned Pelagianism and encouraged St. Augustine to write against it. He ordered the singing of the Gloria in excelsis on Holy Thursday and regulated several points of Church discipline. He defended the rights of the Holy See. Boniface I died on Sept. 4, 422, in Rome.

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