

25 OCTOBER 2020
THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OPENING HYMN

**A new commandment I give unto you,
That you love one another as I have loved you. -2**

True, love is patient, not arrogant, nor boastful;
Love bears all things, love is eternal.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty, ever-living God, increase our faith, hope and charity and make us love what You command, so that we may merit what You promise. 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.

FIRST READING: Ex 22:20-26

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 17:2-4,47,51

Our Response is: I love you, Lord, my strength

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/**

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/**

SECOND READING: 1 Thes 1:5-10

GOSPEL: Mt 22:24-40

REFLECTION:

Most of us associate or allow ourselves to be surrounded by those who love us. We do not have any difficulty loving these people. However, we are invited to reflect on our attitude when it comes to loving the people who we do not know and we do not like.

In the first reading from the book of Exodus, God teaches Israel how to love. God reminds them they were strangers in a foreign land and that He rescued them. He hears the cry of “the widow or the orphan” and “poor neighbours” in need. The first reading talks about giving our money, cloak etc. to meet the material needs of the poor amongst us. Learning to give whole heartedly in a way, prepares us for the Messianic banquet that Jesus promises us. Jesus shows us the way of perfect love by a total self-giving of himself. In his earthly life he cared for others, especially sinners, tax collectors, outcasts etc... Jesus teaches us to move out of our close circle and love everyone. Who are the people I will come across this week to whom I can show love and concern? **Pause**

The Psalmist reminds us that we need to love God whole heartedly, with all our strength. By saying “*I love you, Lord, my strength*”, implies that we acknowledge that God gives us the strength to love Him as well as our neighbour. Let us ask God to give us His grace, that this strength to love others may grow in us. **Pause**

In the Gospel, the Pharisees ask Jesus “*which is the greatest commandment of the law?*” By asking this question, the Pharisees reveal that their attitude and motives are not genuine and not desirous of loving and caring for people. Jesus teaches us that the demand of the law encompasses all our relationships with God, self and neighbour. It is Love that should be the defining point in all our relationships. Obedience to any commandment should willingly flow out of our love and not be a slavish obedience. Jesus teaches us that Love is the greatest commandment. He has shown us the way of discipleship; it is for us now to follow in his footsteps. **Pause**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader: God invites us to share his love with everyone. Let us confidently bring our prayers before Him.

Our response is: Lord, hear our prayer

We pray for all the members of the Church, that we may reach out to help those in need; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those in authority, that they may work for the upliftment of their citizens and find alternatives to solve problems peacefully rather than spend resources on war; may they be led by God's Spirit; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those who are poor and needy, that the communities may reach out to them and meet their needs; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those baptised, that we may be open to the Spirit's call to totally give of ourselves to serve others; **pause**; let us pray to the Lord...

Leader: Loving Father, you showed us the fullness of love by sending your Son, Jesus. Hear our prayers and strengthen us in hope that we might always follow your command of love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us together at the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:
(All say the Lord's Prayer together) Our Father...

CLOSING PRAYER

O Lord, may Your Word perfect your love in us, that what we now celebrate, we may one day possess in truth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

This is my commandment:

Love one another as I have loved you. (2)

I may give away my possession,

Even give my body to be burnt.

If I have no love, I'm no better.

For of all the greatest is love.

*Commission For Liturgy
Archdiocese of Bombay*