



Christ in Our Neighborhood

February 12, 2023

Prayer

Lord, our God,
You call us from darkness into light, from sin into righteousness. Help us abide in your Son, so that we may be righteous in all we do. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Sirach 15:15-20

It has been said, “The god you worship is the god you deserve.” Our First Reading would suggest that. According to the Book of Sirach, “Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given to him.”

These rather black and white words are warning shots to those who had failed to abide in the Commands of God. If they worshiped the True God of Israel, they would be saved. If they chose another god, they we die in their sins.

It is from this perspective that we should read Sirach’s message of the all-seeing God: “The eyes of God are on those who fear Him.” God knows and sees all who follow Him and those who follow false gods.

This isn’t to say that people will not sin. Indeed, God had a remedy for those who desired to live righteous lives but slipped from time to time. In the Old Testament, the remedy was daily sacrifices in the temple. In the New Testament, it was the once for all, never-to-be-repeated sacrifice of Jesus the Christ.

Questions

Do you deserve God? Does God deserve you?

Commentary

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

Our First Reading reminded us that God sees everything and everyone. Our inner heart and conscience is revealed to God by the way we follow His commands.

Now, through the giving of the Holy Spirit, we have the blessing of peering into the heart of God. Those who live in the Spirit see God in a way that cannot be seen by those without the Spirit. In the Spirit, we see God in a “mysterious” and “hidden” way. We see “even the depths of God.”

As Catholics, we celebrate this hidden mystery of God in Christ; especially in the Eucharist. With the Lamb of God lying on our altars every Sunday, we proclaim “the mystery of our faith.”

This once-for-all, never-to-be-repeated sacrifice on our altar is hard for unbelievers to fathom. Those who do not live in the Spirit live only in the “wisdom of this age,” and not in the wisdom and mystery of faith in Christ the Lord.

Question

How does your faith surpass mere human “wisdom”?

Bishop John Dolan of the Diocese of Phoenix offers this five-part series on Sermon on the Mount.

Over these five weeks, you are invited to rediscover Jesus’ powerful teaching found in the Gospel of Matthew.

For more on this five part series, visit dphx.org/christ-in-our-neighborhood.

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Commentary

Gospel: Matthew 5:17-37

As we continue in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, we hear him say, "I have come not to abolish [the law] but to fulfill." He offers a few examples of a fulfilled law:

1. Thou shall not kill also includes, *thou shall not live in anger.*
2. Thou shall not commit adultery includes, *thou shall not lust.*

It is interesting to note that these two laws (above) are of the original Ten Commandments and Jesus' disciples are expected to live according to the spirit of the law. The next four examples (two this weekend and two next Sunday) are attributed to Moses, but are seemingly reversed by Jesus.

3. Whoever divorces his wife must submit a bill of divorce becomes, *whoever divorces his wife causes her to commit adultery.*
4. Do not take a false oath but make good to the Lord all that you vow becomes, *do not swear at all. Let your [own] "Yes" mean "Yes" and your [own] "No" mean "No."*

In each of these cases, we hear the Lord say, "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." Living only according to the letter of the law limits us in our growth and relationship with God and God's people. If we live only by the letter of the law, we can get by through life without a loving relationship. God expects more!

Question

What more does God expect of you beyond merely following His commandments?

This Week's Task

Valentine's Day is this week.
Tell someone you love them!

Group Prayer

The group offers the following prayer:

God, my Father, may I love You in all things and above all things.

May I reach the joy which You have prepared for me in Heaven.

Nothing is good that is against Your Will, and all that is good comes from Your Hand. Place in my heart a desire to please You and fill my mind with thoughts of Your Love, so that I may grow in Your Wisdom and enjoy Your Peace. Amen.

Continue with Psalm 112

Psalm

Response: Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Blessed are they whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.

Blessed are they who observe his decrees, who seek him with all their heart.

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

You have commanded that your precepts be diligently kept.
Oh, that I might be firm in the ways of keeping your statutes!

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Be good to your servant, that I may live and keep your words.
Open my eyes, that I may consider the wonders of your law.

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Instruct me, O LORD, in the way of your statutes, that I may exactly observe them.
Give me discernment, that I may observe your law and keep it with all my heart.

R. Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord!

Conclude with an Our Father