



# Christ in Our Neighborhood

30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Prayer

Loving Father,  
help us to be instruments of Your will on earth. For the times  
we disrupt Your will, we ask forgiveness. Let us see  
Your hand in our lives each day. Make us Your  
instruments. Amen.

## Commentary

### 1st Reading: Exodus 22:20-26

We are in the second week of our series on  
“All In!” Responding to God’s call is not  
for the faint-hearted. It requires a lifelong  
commitment and includes carrying one’s  
cross.

How we go all in depends on the gifts God  
has given us and the way in which we  
respond to God’s call. Some of us are called to the single life,  
others to the consecrated life, still others to the married life.

Today, we recognize a life of priesthood. We remember the  
priests of our parishes and communities. We also remember  
those who are studying for the priesthood and those who are  
beginning to respond to God’s call. We keep them all in our  
prayers!

What kind of priest would God be calling?

Of course, we hope that he may have intelligence enough to  
finish his philosophical and theological studies. He should  
have some administrative skills. But above all, God’s priests  
must be pastoral. They must tend to all of God’s people and  
not be selective with whom they prefer to minister.

Our First Reading gets right to the point. All priests — and  
all people of faith — must not oppress aliens, abuse  
widows, or orphans, or extort the poor. On the contrary, a  
priest must be a defender and shepherd of all God’s people,  
especially the most vulnerable.

## Question

What would you hope to see in a future priest?

## Commentary

### 2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

We all recall the priest’s invitation after the consecration  
at Mass: “The Mystery of our Faith.” One of our responses is,  
“We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your  
Resurrection until you come again.”

This response, in part, comes from Paul’s many letters,  
including this letter to the Thessalonians. Here, Paul  
congratulates the church community for turning  
to God from idols and as they serve Him, they ...

“await his Son from heaven,  
whom he raised from the dead,  
Jesus, who delivers us from the coming wrath.”

This short memorial acclamation in Paul’s letter  
has repeated in some form, time after time, Mass  
after Mass, for over two-thousand years.

Whenever ordained priests and priestly people gather around  
the altar, we affirm what we believe. This timeless acclamation  
is a part of our rich Catholic history. It will continue for many  
years to come — until He returns in glory — as long as priests  
and priestly people gather in His name.

Meanwhile, these words run empty unless we become imitators  
of the one who died, rose, and promised to come again. Paul  
reminds his church in Thessolonica — and he reminds us  
today — to be imitators of Christ until He comes.

## Question

How am I an imitator of Christ?

This is the second of a four-week series,  
All In!

Information: [dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood](http://dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood)

## Commentary

### Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40

The new commandment requires a new temple and a new priesthood.

The old law, with its temple and priests, gives way to Jesus Christ who is the New Law, the New Temple, the New Priesthood.

If we abide in His love, we have a share in His new law, we become His temple, and we have a share in His priesthood.

By virtue of our Baptism, we are configured to Christ who is priest, prophet, and king.

However, we must be imitators of Christ — as St. Paul reminds us in the Second Reading — and remember that we have put on His garment.

To be priestly people (ordained and lay members), we must follow this new command:

“You shall love the Lord, your God,  
with all your heart,  
with all your soul,  
and with all your mind.  
This is the greatest and the first commandment.  
The second is like it:  
You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

## Question

How have you embraced this new law in your life?

## This Week's Task

Send a letter to your parish or community priest and thank him for responding to the Lord's call.

Offer a prayer for seminarians who are studying for the priesthood.

Prayer for more vocations to the priesthood.

## Group Prayer

The group prays the following Prayer from the U.S. Bishops:

Gracious and loving God, we thank You for the gift of our priests. Through them, we experience Your presence in the sacraments.

Help our priests to be strong in their vocation. Set their souls on fire with love for Your people.

Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Inspire them with the vision of Your Kingdom.

Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel. Allow them to experience joy in their ministry.

Help them to become instruments of Your divine grace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

“The whole law and  
the prophets depend  
on these two  
commandments.”

### Continue with Psalm 18

## Psalm

**I love you, Lord, my strength.**

I love you, O LORD, my strength,  
O LORD, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer.

**R. I love you, Lord, my strength.**

My God, my rock of refuge,  
my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold!  
Praised be the LORD, I exclaim,  
and I am safe from my enemies.

**R. I love you, Lord, my strength.**

The LORD lives and blessed be my rock!  
Extolled be God my savior.  
You who gave great victories to your king  
and showed kindness to your anointed.

**R. I love you, Lord, my strength.**

### Conclude with an Our Father