

Dear Parishioners,

Many rules and regulations govern our lives. If someone does not follow the rules to the letter a punishment or fine can be levied against that individual. We have the mind-set that constitutions and laws are established and enacted to protect individual rights of everyone and to insure good behavior. Regardless of their intent and scope all laws and constitutions have their limits. In fact they underscore quite emphatically the weaknesses of the human condition and for us as people of faith, how sinful we are without exception. We can delude ourselves in thinking that laws for society today are sufficient to protect us as they are written and envisioned yet we should not be amazed at the volumes of general laws that govern various sectors of society. Someone always finds a loophole, challenges the established norm and hence another law or amendment replaces the one violated or reinterpreted. The drum beat of the human race continues.

The Gospel for this Sixth Sunday of Easter allows us to hear and to reflect upon the fundamental core of Jesus' life and mission: obedience to the will of God is the action of love. The teaching has its origin in the great commandment of the Jewish-Christian heritage, "you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, mind and soul and you shall love your neighbor as yourself". The words of the teaching are simple yet the scope is profound. The practice of our Catholic faith should not be based on reward or punishment. It must be based on how we first love God and are eager to serve God. Our Catholic life of faith is not based on lip service to Jesus' teaching but rather a strong commitment to God and a dedication to the needs of the good neighbor in the world. With uncertainty and anxiety gripping us today it is easy to become selfish, withdrawn, frustrated or cynical. Still these days can assist us to return to the core of our Catholic faith by focusing our attention and love on God and on our neighbor and by being reassured by Christ when he says, "and whoever loves me will be loved by my Father and I will love him and reveal myself to him".

God bless you.