

LIVING FAITH

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

October 31, 2021



THE GOSPEL TODAY (Mark 12:28b-34)

One of the scribes came near and heard the religious authorities disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?”

Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Then the scribe said to him, “you are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbour as oneself,’ – this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

When Jesus saw that the scribe answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask Jesus any questions.

TAKING THE GOSPEL HOME

Scripture scholars tell us that in Judaism at the time of Jesus Rabbis and thinkers tried to distil the Law of Moses down to its core value(s). So the scribe in our gospel today is asking Jesus about his thoughts on that issue.

Jesus answers the scribe’s question by putting together two great commandments found in the Old Testament.

- The first shows up in three places in the Old Testament; Jesus quotes the first of them, which is Deuteronomy 6:4-6. It is the words with which services in the synagogue begin to this day. These words express belief in the one God, and they call on Jews to love God with their whole being.
- The second is from Leviticus 19:18. In its Old Testament context this commandment had to do only with other Jews, but Jesus puts no boundaries on it.
- Jesus’ special contribution to the discussion was to put those two commandments together. So for followers of Jesus the core of our moral life is to love God with every fibre of our being and to love all others as we love ourselves. The response of the scribe to Jesus’ statement is a reminder to us of the importance of putting love into action, especially love of neighbour.

TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- In the end, Jesus said to the scribe, “You are **not far** from the kingdom of God.” What do you make of that? What would make the scribe a **part of** the kingdom of God?
- If you have a Bible, look up (in the Old Testament) *Micah* 6:6-8. Does anything there remind you of what the scribe said to Jesus in the gospel? Discuss.
- In the passage from Micah, how does the prophet distil down the Law to its essentials?

The Greatest Commandment



"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Mark 12:30-31 (NIV)

Choose the word that best matches the definition.

- ___ 1. A rule or law; direction or instruction to do something
A. greatest B. God C. commandment D. love
- ___ 2. The most important; better than all others of the same kind
A. answer B. neighbor C. heart D. greatest
- ___ 3. To have a deep feeling of affection or attraction for someone
A. neighbor B. heart C. love D. law
- ___ 4. A person who lives near or next to another
A. commandment B. teacher C. answer D. neighbor
- ___ 5. The creator of heaven and earth; The One we worship
A. teacher B. law C. God D. answer
- ___ 6. Someone who educates or trains others
A. greatest B. teacher C. heart D. second
- ___ 7. A system of rules or principles
A. heart B. commandment C. neighbor D. law
- ___ 8. The center and source of a person's emotions or feelings
A. God B. heart C. law D. answer
- ___ 9. Coming next in order after the first one
A. answer B. law C. teacher D. second
- ___ 10. A spoken or written reply to a question
A. teacher B. answer C. greatest D. love

CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FALL CAMPAIGN



Let's listen to the voices
of our brothers and sisters fighting
for
their right to a healthy environment

World leaders have gathered for the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26). Although these powerful decision-makers are debating the future of the planet, they are probably too far removed from the realities of its most vulnerable people. It is up to us to hear and amplify the voices of those who are defending their rights and the environment against economic ravage.

Medarda Hernandez, whose community in Honduras has been repeatedly harmed by large industrial projects, including supposedly "green" projects, says, "if other extractivist projects start in our community, we are not going to let them pass. I ask the international community to come to our aid, because we are really suffering from this situation."

So that people like Medarda do not go unheard, let's make Canadian companies operating abroad responsible for protecting human and environmental rights. Join Development and Peace's **People and Planet First** campaign to make this happen. Visit <https://devp.org/en> to learn more.

IN THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS



TO LEARN MORE, GO TO:
<https://www.synod.va/en.html>

Further details on the synodal process in the Archdiocese of St. John's will be available in the coming weeks in parish bulletins and in the Archdiocesan catechetical resource, *Living Faith*. Stay tuned next week for the link to the online survey!

All Saints' Day, also known as All Hallows Day, the Feast of All Saints, or the Solemnity of All Saints, is celebrated in honour of all the saints, known and unknown. Christian celebration of All Saints' Day stems from a belief that there is a powerful spiritual bond between those in heaven (the "Church triumphant"), and the living (the "Church militant"). In Catholic theology, the day commemorates all those who have died and are with God in Heaven. It is a national holiday in many historically Catholic countries.

In the Western Christian practice, the liturgical celebration begins at Vespers on the evening of 31 October, All Hallows' Eve (All Saints' Eve), and ends at the close of 1 November. It is thus the day before All Souls' Day, which commemorates the faithful departed.

The exact origins of this celebration are uncertain. The primary reason for establishing a common feast day was because of the desire to honour the great number of martyrs in the early Church. In fact, there were so many saints that there were not enough days of the year for a feast day for each martyr and many of them died in groups.

A common feast day for all saints, therefore seemed most appropriate. Over time, the Church settled on November 1, which seemed appropriate, as this is in the late Fall, when the days grow shorter, the nights longer, and we are surrounded by signs of the dying of the year and of nature. It was Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) who set the date for the celebration of All Saints on November 1.

IN THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK
THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED
(ALL SOULS)



A PRAYER FOR ALL SOULS DAY,
OR WHEN ANY PERSON HAS DIED

