



30th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A – October 29, 2017

We would do well to heed Jesus' message in today's gospel (Matthew 22:34-40) He tells us that love of God and love of neighbor are two sides of the same coin. If we separate them, we are no longer following our "Lord's Way" of life.

That same message is found in the first and second readings as well (Exodus 22: 20-26 & I Thessalonians 1:5c-10)

St. John tells us in his first letter, chapter 4 verse 20, "Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they can see, cannot love God whom they cannot see".

A man of prayer once wrote: "God is not made of plaster or stone, he is not made of metal or bronze. He is living throbbing flesh. He sleeps under bridges, he has Tuberculosis, he suffers hunger, loneliness and fear. We believe that whatever we do to the least of our Brothers and Sisters, we do to Him". Sometimes, we do not realize what we believe.

God sent us into the world to take care of each other - to help each other, with special care for those who are not able to help themselves. That's what loving our neighbor means. We are here to learn how to love others as Jesus loves us.

By all means, teach a person to fish rather than give him a fish every day. But there are some people who are just not able to "fish" - whatever the reason. For some of them, the reason may be temporary, for others it may be permanent. Sometimes God sends angels to meet human needs. Mostly he sends us. Is there someone in your life who needs you to meet their need?

If you imagine loving God to be a vertical line between you and God, and loving your neighbor to be a horizontal line between you and the person you love. Intersect the lines and they form a cross. It is of that cross that Jesus says, "Pick it up each day and follow me."

That kind of love makes demands that are sometimes very difficult: caring for a parent who has Alzheimer's, caring for a child addicted to drugs, caring for a friend who was paralyzed in a drunk driving accident. These are not easy things to do. Love makes it possible and perfect love can make it a joy.

We are not all called to die for our faith, but we are all called to live it. As you pray your prayers tonight, reflect on how you do that when it comes to loving God - and when it comes to loving your neighbor. Peace!

