

Cycle A – 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Oct. 25, 2026

“Love the Lord thy God”

OPENING PRAYER (Psalm 18)

Leader: I love you, Lord, my strength.

**All: The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer.
My God, my rock in whom I take refuge.**

Leader: I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.

**All: The Lord lives! Blessed be my rock,
and exalted be the God of my salvation,
Great triumphs God gives to his King,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed.**

*Leader: I love you, Lord, my strength.
Amen.*



First Reading – Exodus 22:21-27

The Torah or first five books of Moses are the most sacred part of the Hebrew Bible. The famous *shema* prayer is spoken twice a day: “*Shema Yisrael*—Listen O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone!” But it is not enough to just love God. Today’s reading calls for care of others. Israel’s laws are conditioned by a compassionate concern for the defenseless person, the alien, the poor, the widow, the orphan, because God is compassionate.

1. How is God revealed in this passage? What do the words reveal of God’s nature?
2. How does this passage relate to the gospel reading?
3. Does this text help us to define what the word “neighbor” means?

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

As a result of a “disturbance” in Thessalonica Paul and Silas had to leave, but they never left in spirit. This letter to the Thessalonian converts shows how concerned Paul was over their spiritual welfare, and how thankful Paul was over the way they embraced the truth. There was “affliction” at Thessalonica, and “joy” as well, for Paul and his fellow workers. So well have they imitated Christ and Paul that they themselves have become persons whom others should imitate.

1. What kind of “report” would Paul receive about us?
2. What does this passage reveal about Paul? About his Thessalonian converts?
3. What challenge is offered to us as Christians by these words of Paul?

Gospel Reading – Matthew 22:34-40

The Law of Moses contained 613 regulations, and in theory, all were to be observed with equal fervor. But religious teachers saw some as more important than others, some being “light” and some being “heavy”. The lawyer who asked Jesus what he regarded as the greatest commandment wanted to know how the Torah (God’s law) is to be put into practice in daily life. Jesus responds by removing the love of God and the love of neighbor from any list of religious laws and observances. He puts love of God and human love on the same plane, making them the background and texture of all teaching and behavior.

1. How do we show our love for God? How would we describe it?
2. How do we think we measure up when it comes to loving our neighbor?
3. How do we define the term “neighbor”?
4. Why is love of God and love for neighbor bound together?
5. Why does Matthew mention law and prophets as being fulfilled by his commandment?

LIVING THE WORD

How will I act upon the Word of God this week? What is God’s challenge for us?

PRAYING THE WORD

Intercession: For all judges, lawyers summoned by God to help bring about the reign of love in our world and for all those who find it hard to love, we pray to the Lord through the intercession of St. Thomas More.

(Invite personal intentions, ending with “Our Father... ”)

Concluding Prayer:

Leader: O my God, I love you above all things, with my whole heart and soul.

All: You are all good and worthy of all my love.

Leader: I love my neighbour as myself for love of you.

All: I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

Leader: May God direct our steps and show us how to walk in charity and peace.

Leader: Now let us share with one another that sign of Christ’s peace.