

Reading: Jesus taught that the most important thing is to love God with all our heart. He also taught us to love and care for other people as we care for ourselves.

Recognising: Can you think of a person—a sibling, a parent or a friend—who shows you how to love God by being loving and kind to others?

Draw or write about a person who has helped you to be kind to others.

Responding: Father, I thank You for the love I receive from You and from others.

Father, I am sorry for the times when I have not shown love or kindness.

Father, I ask for Your help to love You and to share that love with others.

Resting: Remain silent for a few moments with the word 'love' in your heart.

Reflecting: When we love others we show our love for God.

Responsibility: **This week I will show love and kindness to someone by...**

LECTIO DIVINA

Living the Word

A WEEK'S JOURNEY WITH THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year A - 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

A companion for encountering Jesus' love in everyday life.



Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40

You are invited to **read** the Gospel passage slowly, attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question,

"Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?"

Jesus said, "You must 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 resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself.

On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also."

Background to Gospel passage

Where does it happen?
Jesus' encounter with the Pharisees and Sadducees unfolds amid growing hostility in Jerusalem.

When does it happen?
Jesus has just outwitted the Sadducees, who mocked his belief in the resurrection.

Who is there?
The Pharisees emphasised strict observance of the Torah and oral traditions, while the Sadducees, mainly priests and aristocrats, upheld the written Law and rejected oral traditions.

What happens?
Though often at odds, the Pharisees and Sadducees unite against Jesus, hoping to trap him. Asked to name the greatest commandment, Jesus declares that love of God, expressed through love of neighbour and self, lies at the heart of the Law and fulfils its deepest purpose. These loves are inseparable.

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Recognising Stage (Meditate)

- *Trust in the power of the Holy Spirit* ***at work within you.***
- ***Enter into the passage:*** *Where do you feel drawn? What touches you? What does it*
- *remind you of?*
- *Let the Gospel and your memories speak* ***to each other.***
- ***Notice the same loving presence of*** *Jesus at work* ***again today*** *in yourself and in others.*
- *If needed, use the following prompts to awaken such memories*

"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind…and you must love your neighbour as yourself."
When and how have you experienced that closeness to God is inseparable from loving and serving others, especially those in need?
Or
When and how have you experienced that loving and serving others helped you discover your true self and deepest joy?
Or
Can you enter into the experience of Jesus by remembering someone in whom you have seen that kind of 'wholeness' – someone at home with God, neighbour and self?

What memories come back to you? Listen deeply to your own life experience.

Where was it? When was it? Who was there? What happened?

(Some might find it helpful to journal their memory.)

I remember the time when…

Gen.25:16, 'Truly God was in this place and I didn't see it,' until now!

Prayer Response

You are invited to respond in your own words, and where possible, together with some words from the passage. *Let the prayer flow from your recognition of the passage, or any part of it, in life experience. You might find it helpful to journal your prayer.*

Tell your Father how this passage and the memories it has evoked have awakened gratitude for the presence of Jesus in your life and in the world. Heavenly Father, I thank you…

The Gospel is always a call to repentance as well. Share with the Father your sorrow for the times when you, or a community you belong to, have fallen short in living this Gospel. Heavenly Father, I am sorry for...

Ask your Father for the help you need to live the Gospel more fully—in yourself, your family, community, Church and world. Heavenly Father, please give us the help we need to…



You are invited to deepen this prayer experience by resting your heart silently in God's presence and love. The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage may help you on this journey to greater stillness and greater silence, e.g. "love."

An Invitation to Reflect

From your journey with the passage in meditation and prayer, what new insight or understanding have you received about the true meaning of love or some expression of it, into what it means to be fully human, and how God's kingdom is being made present among us today?

Rest in this truth, hold it in prayer and trust that it will bear fruit in your life.

Thought for the week

In giving ourselves in love, we discover who we truly are.

Responsibility

This week I will show love and kindness to someone by...