

Read



Deuteronomy 30:10-14
Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31,
33-34, 36, 37 or 19:8,
9, 10, 11

Colossians 1:15-20
Luke 10:25-37

LIVING THE WORD

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 14, 2019



REFLECTION

Moses was a reluctant leader to the Israelites. He might even be called a bit of a whiner! He did not want to take on the role of inspirer and leader to the Israelites as it seemed like an impossible task. Yet in his role, he was convincing. Can you imagine telling a group of people that all of their bad habits must stop and God would save them? His inspiring words in Deuteronomy today remind us of our own priestly duty, which “is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out” (Deuteronomy 30:14). Jesus furthers this point in Luke’s account of the Gospel as he shares the story of the Good Samaritan. His inclination toward mercy led him to help the man who had fallen even though socially and politically they came from very different worlds. The Samaritan’s desire to act with mercy can inspire all of us to dig a little deeper into our own hesitations, eliminate our doubt, and trust that God is always merciful like the Good Samaritan.

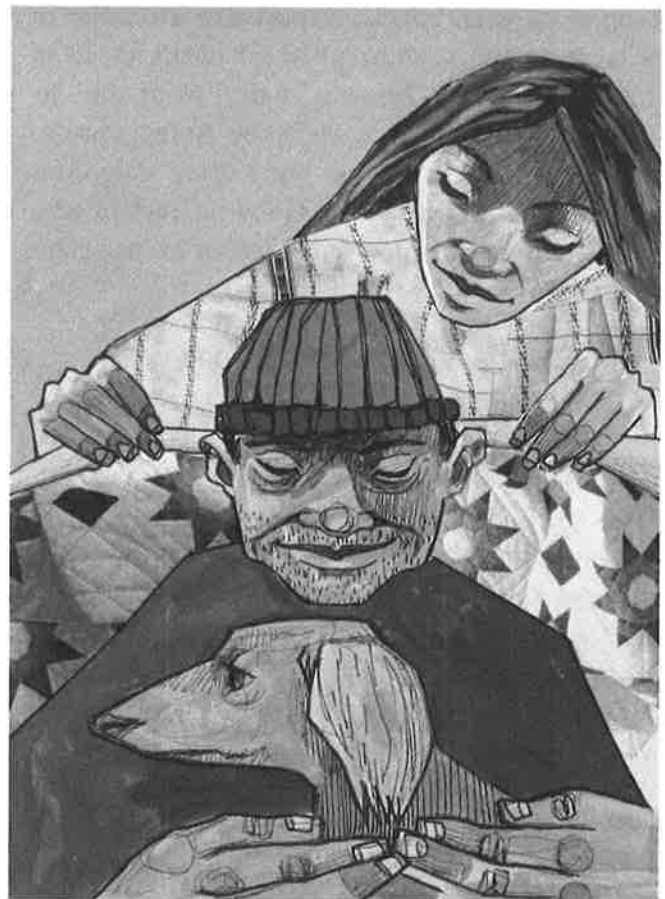
? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What does Moses mean “it is something near to you” (Deuteronomy 30:14)?
- ❖ Who are you in the story of the Good Samaritan?



ACTION

Who are the outcast in your community? What are their needs? Look up an organization that represents this group locally or nationally. Try and learn all that you can about their culture and community. Check out their calendar of events and go to one of their events that is open to the public. If possible, volunteer with them. In doing so, you will show mercy to this community just as the Good Samaritan did in Luke’s account of the Gospel today.





July 14, 2019

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #105C

Deuteronomy 30:10-14

Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37 or 19:8, 9, 10, 11

Colossians 1:15-20

Luke 10:25-37

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

The familiar parable of the Good Samaritan is shared by Jesus to illustrate what is truly meant by loving one's neighbor. In response to a scholar of the law's question about what he needs to do to inherit eternal life, Jesus asks him what the law says. The scholar answers correctly. In response to the question about who is truly one's neighbor, Jesus shares the story of the Good Samaritan who offers love to another out of a sense of what is right and merciful.

Q FOCUS: Love your neighbor and treat others with mercy.

Liturgical Calendar Connection

As we continue through the summer season of Ordinary Time, we celebrate the Memorial of St. Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, on Monday of this week. Bonaventure was a Franciscan theologian who was extremely devout in his faith. He embodied the true Franciscan spirit through the way that he lived (commitment to the Gospel, prayer, and active charity). He was instrumental in bringing the Franciscan order back to the founding principles and spirit with which St. Francis had started the Franciscan community (a life of poverty and the preaching of repentance).

Church Teaching Connection

"Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers . . . without a witness to mercy, life becomes fruitless and sterile. . . . The time has come for the Church to take up the joyful call to mercy once more. It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters. Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope" (*Misericordiae vultus*, 10).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 10:25-37

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus

replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn, and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

► In what ways shall we live our lives in order to experience the promise of eternal life, to do what is right, to be a good Christian?

► What does it mean to be a Christian?

These are questions that are related to the question that a scholar of the law asked Jesus in today's Gospel reading from Luke, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" This question sets up a story that should be familiar to us: the parable of the Good Samaritan.

► When the scholar asks this question of Jesus, how does Jesus respond?

Jesus responds by asking the scholar a couple of questions in return: "What does the law say?" and "How do you interpret this law?"

► Why do you think that Jesus responded to the scholar's question with a couple of other questions?

Jesus is using the scholar's area of expertise, the law, as a method for sharing his own teaching. The scholar rightly responds by quoting the law, saying, "*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*"

► Can you name some other passages in Scripture where this teaching, about loving God and one another, is shared?

When the scholar answers correctly, Jesus tells him that if he does these things, he will have eternal life. But then the scholar has another question for Jesus, one that on the surface may seem to be pretty straightforward: "Who is my neighbor?"

► Does it make sense that the answer to this question would be anyone who needs help? Who are your neighbors today?

Jesus answers this second question from the scholar with a parable, which happens to be one of his favorite methods for teaching.

► How familiar are you with the parable that Jesus shares, the parable of the Good Samaritan?

He begins the story with a scene of a man falling victim to some robbers. He was left on the side of the road in a really sad state of affairs, nearly half dead.

► How would you have responded had you come across this man lying on the side of the road?

In the story, we hear that a couple of people come across him, a priest and a Levite, and they both pass him by (and even crossed over to the other side of the street to avoid him!). These two individuals, who were supposed to be religious and holy people, completely avoid this man at the time of his greatest need. These two become the epitome of hypocrisy in this story. It was left to a Samaritan man, a foreigner to that land who would have been ostracized by the local community and who really had no reason to help this man, to come to this poor man's

aid and help him to get the care and assistance that he needed. The text says that “he was moved with compassion at the sight” of the man on the side of the road. He attends to the injured man’s wounds, takes him to an inn where he further takes care of him, and then goes above and beyond the call of duty to give money to the innkeeper to pay for the continued care for this man. The Good Samaritan becomes the epitome of one caring for one’s neighbors, regardless of what the social and religious norms were of the time. He recognizes this broken man as his own neighbor and responds accordingly. The Samaritan is the true neighbor to the victim, for he showed mercy and kindness, even when he could have passed him by.

► Who are the neighbors in your life who need mercy and kindness from you? How can you serve them?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the “Church Teaching Connection” on page 234.

The scholar of the law correctly summarizes the Greatest Commandment, to love God fully and to love one’s neighbor.

In teaching about who is one’s neighbor, Jesus shares the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this story, it is the Samaritan, a foreigner, who shows compassion and mercy towards the robbers’ victim.

We are all called to a life of mercy and compassion towards our brothers and sisters.

Act on the Word

The Great Debate

Revisit the story of the Good Samaritan and divide your group of youth into two equal-sized, smaller groups. Have a volunteer read the entire parable to the teens. Assign one group to present a case against helping the robbers’ victim, and assign the other group to present a case for helping the victim. Share with them information about the Levitical purity laws in Judaism so that they have some understanding of the parameters that the priests and Levites were attentive to in their ritual practice (see Leviticus 21 for instruction to the priests regarding Jewish purity laws). Invite each group to work together to present a case, as if they were in a courtroom, as to whether or not the priests and Levite should have assisted the victim on the side of the road. Invite an objective participant (your pastor, DRE, a parent) to serve as a judge in this case. Have each group present its case to the judge and to the other group and see who has the stronger argument. Encourage them to be creative in their arguments.

Closing Prayer

*Creator of all,
to love you we must also love our neighbor
as ourselves
and be merciful to others as you are toward us.
Remove whatever hinders us from love.
Help us be models of your loving care,
that how we live each day, at home, at school,
and in the world,
reflect the work of the Good Samaritan.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.