

“It is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out.” Words referring to the neighborly way of love commended to us by God taken from our first reading today from the 30<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Deuteronomy – sisters and brothers, may the Lord give to you his peace and his joy.

A Sunday School teacher asked her students, “Now class, you remember the story of the Good Samaritan who helped the poor man on the side of the road. What would you do if you saw a man lying on the ground bleeding to death?” One of her students responded, “I think I’d throw up.” Trying to carry on with her lesson, the teacher continued, “In the story of the Good Samaritan, and why do you think the Levite passed by that poor man on the other side?” Another student chimed in, “I’m not sure but I’d guess it was because he had already been robbed.” She decided to switch tactics and began showing them pictures from her travels in the Holy Land. She projected a picture of an ancient inn onto the wall as she said, “And that’s the Inn where the Good Samaritan took the wounded traveler. But yet another student in the group objected saying, “that wasn’t an actual incident. Jesus used the story as a parable to illustrate his point.” The teacher quickly replied, “Then in your case, this is the hotel that he had in mind.”

(Sigh) It’s not always easy to deal with people, is it? And not just objectors in a classroom... In life, people carry around a lot of baggage; all of us do. Some of it is just more apparent than other’s. And that baggage we all too easily and unconsciously inflict on others. So, we put up walls – physical walls, mental walls, emotional walls – so that we don’t get hurt and can find some level of comfort in the midst of our own strife. Indeed, boundaries are important. They prevent us from exceeding our limits. But they also can turn us inwards and prevent us from giving our all. Like the scholar of the law from the Gospel, we end up spending a lot more time justifying our own selves and our way of life than we do thinking about the welfare of others. There are many people who come across our path every day and, concerned with our own wellbeing, we pass them by on the other side of the road. Then we wonder why our lives are so empty, which only leads us to turn further inwards on ourselves.

This is where the truth of Jesus’ parable shines forth. What is the purpose of neighbors, especially those neighbors who are difficult and whom we’d rather shut out of our lives? Quite simply, neighbors are the people who pull us out of (and save us from) ourselves (2x). The Samaritan, like so many others, had his own things to attend to. Furthermore, Samaritans and Jews were enemies – there was no reason to lend assistance. But our hero is forever known as the *Good Samaritan*, because he was pulled out of his own self and managed to love. Deuteronomy is right to say that spirituality isn’t so mysterious, mystical, magical, inaccessible, or far away as we might think... Our spiritual well-being is at hand, in our own neighborhood. Let us recognize God in the many people around us soliciting us to love with *all* our heart, *all* our being, *all* our strength, and *all* of our mind. Our neighbors are our saving grace.

Readings: <http://usccb.org/bible/readings/071419.cfm>

**Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Lectionary: 105**

**Reading 1** [DT 30:10-14](#)

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Moses said to the people:

"If only you would heed the voice of the LORD, your God,  
and keep his commandments and statutes  
that are written in this book of the law,  
when you return to the LORD, your God,  
with all your heart and all your soul.

"For this command that I enjoin on you today  
is not too mysterious and remote for you.  
It is not up in the sky, that you should say,  
'Who will go up in the sky to get it for us  
and tell us of it, that we may carry it out?'  
Nor is it across the sea, that you should say,  
'Who will cross the sea to get it for us  
and tell us of it, that we may carry it out?'  
No, it is something very near to you,  
already in your mouths and in your hearts;  
you have only to carry it out."

**Responsorial Psalm** [PS 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37](#)

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**R. (cf. 33) Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

I pray to you, O LORD,

for the time of your favor, O God!

In your great kindness answer me

with your constant help.

Answer me, O LORD, for bounteous is your kindness:

in your great mercy turn toward me.

**R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

I am afflicted and in pain;

let your saving help, O God, protect me.

I will praise the name of God in song,

and I will glorify him with thanksgiving.

Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.

"See, you lowly ones, and be glad;

you who seek God, may your hearts revive!

For the LORD hears the poor,

and his own who are in bonds he spurns not."

**R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

For God will save Zion

and rebuild the cities of Judah.

The descendants of his servants shall inherit it,

and those who love his name shall inhabit it.

**R. Turn to the Lord in your need, and you will live.**

**Or** [PS 19:8, 9, 10, 11](#)

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**R.(9a) Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

The law of the LORD is perfect,  
refreshing the soul;  
the decree of the LORD is trustworthy,  
giving wisdom to the simple.

**R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

The precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the command of the LORD is clear,  
enlightening the eye.

**R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

The fear of the LORD is pure,  
enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the LORD are true,  
all of them just.

**R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

They are more precious than gold,  
than a heap of purest gold;  
sweeter also than syrup  
or honey from the comb.

**R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.**

**Reading 2 COL1:15-20**

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Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God,  
the firstborn of all creation.  
For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth,  
the visible and the invisible,  
whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers;  
all things were created through him and for him.  
He is before all things,  
and in him all things hold together.  
He is the head of the body, the church.  
He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,  
that in all things he himself might be preeminent.  
For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell,  
and through him to reconcile all things for him,  
making peace by the blood of his cross  
through him, whether those on earth or those in heaven.

**Alleluia CF. JN 6:63C, 68C**

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**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life;  
you have the words of everlasting life.

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel LK 10:25-37**

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There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test Jesus 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."