

Reflection for the 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today in our Gospel reading on this 30th Sunday of Ordinary Time we hear of the Pharisees gathering together and one of them asking Jesus, “*Teacher, which Commandment in the Law is the greatest*” Matthew 22:36. Jesus responds to this question by providing not one but two Commandments. “*You shall 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 is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole Law and the Prophets depend on these two Commandments.*” Matthew 22: 37-40.

Jesus, in our Gospel reading this Sunday provides the two greatest Commandments which the Law and the Prophets depend on. These two Commandments are our foundation for the Law and the Prophets and as such are our foundation or starting point for our Faith. It is important to note that even though these Commandments together are what the Law and the Prophets depend on, these two Commandments are not equal in nature. Jesus clearly points out that the first Commandment is the greatest of our Commandments. We must first start our journey of Faith by loving our Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind. Then we can move forward in loving our neighbor and sharing the Good News with the world at large.

We see this approach with the Sacraments of our Faith, it is the norm that we would receive the three Sacraments of Initiation before we receive one or both of the Sacraments of Life Commitment: Matrimony, and Holy Orders. Only a permanent Deacon can receive both Sacraments of Life Commitment. It is important to note that it is the norm for a Catholic to receive all three Sacraments of Initiation, becoming a full member of the Church, before receiving one or both Sacraments of Life Commitment. By receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation, not only do we become full members of the Church, but we also grow in our relationship with God. When a person is fully a member of the Church, said person is ready to go forth and share the faith of Christ Jesus with the world and if called embrace one or two of the Sacraments of Life Commitment.

All of us as followers of Christ must make choices and decisions that are based on who we are and what we believe. May all the choices that we make in this life be guided by the life of Christ and the teachings of our Church. May we also remember the two greatest Commandments to love God completely and to love our neighbor as ourselves. By remembering the two greatest Commandments and embracing them, we can make decisions based on loving God and humanity at large.

Currently as a nation we are preparing for local and national elections on November 3, 2020, these elections in our nation occur every four years. Many of us might have already voted or will be voting soon. May we all embrace this opportunity and responsibility, not only taking the time to vote, but the time to pray, reflect, and become informed. May we also pray for our community, our nation, and our world.