

# Christ teaches us to love

30th Sunday of the Year (October 27): (R3) Matthew 22:34-40; (R1) Exodus 22:20-26; (R2) 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10.

One day a man came across a woman pushing a heavy baby carriage up a hill. She was struggling with it a little bit, so the man offered to push it up for her. It was quite unwieldy so that it was no easy job to get it to the top of the hill. Once they reached the woman's home, she thanked the man for his help. He asked if he might get a peek at the baby he was pushing. The woman laughed. "Mercy me," she said. "This wasn't a baby we've been struggling with. It's my husband's weekly packs of beer." Things are not always what they seem.

Could people look at our lives and see that there are two laws that govern them: love of God and love of neighbor? When a lawyer asked Jesus what is the greatest commandment, Jesus answered, "Love of



Father Albert Shamon

## A word for Sunday

God." Then because they were trying to trap Jesus, he went on to say that the second commandment is like this, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

We might ask ourselves, what is love. Very often when we say to someone, "I love you," we really mean "I need you." We hear people say "I love my new car" or "I loved that movie." What is love?

First of all, love is something we learn. We are not born loving. Babies are lovable. But they aren't necessarily loving. Their chief concern is their own needs. They cry until someone satisfies their needs. Unfortunately, some people never get beyond that kind of approach to love.

Most of us, however, learn along the way to share. We learn to quit grasping and to start giving. We

learn to return love as well as to receive it.

Where does such love originate? St. John tells us it originates with God. He said, "God is love." And we love because God first loved us.

Secondly, love is something we do. We can talk about love, but that's all it is unless we perform loving actions. Saying we love is not enough. Love is a concrete act. "God so loved the world that he GAVE his Son. The Son so loved the world that he GAVE his life." Love is not only something we learn, but also something we do.

Finally, love is the hope of the world. If we don't learn to love, then the world would be engulfed from century to century with violence, wars, hatred and despair.

The hope of the world is love, and the source of love is Jesus Christ. He showed us real love in action. He taught us that love is at the heart of religion. Real love cuts across racial lines, nationality lines, gender lines. It binds men and women into a loving community in Christ.

Most of us know the name Corrie ten Boom whose story, *The Hiding Place*, has inspired millions. Not many people know of her equally courageous nephew, Peter van Woerden.

During the Nazi occupation in Holland, Peter transported Jewish children under the cover of darkness from their homes to secret hiding places where they were saved from the Nazis. He was eventually caught and spent several months in prison. After the war, he and his musical family traveled throughout Israel, singing and witnessing for the Lord. When he had a massive heart attack, they rushed him to Haddasah Hospital in Jerusalem. The doctor on call that

## Daily Readings

Monday, October 28  
Ephesians 2:19-22; Psalms  
119:2-5; Luke 6:12-16

Tuesday, October 29  
Ephesians 5:21-33 or 5:2A,  
25-33; Psalms 128:1-5;  
Luke 13:18-21

Wednesday, October 30  
Ephesians 6:1-9; Psalms  
145:10-14; Luke 13:22-30

Thursday, October 31  
Ephesians 6:10-20; Psalms  
144:1-2, 9-10; Luke 13:31-35

Friday, November 1  
Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14; Psalms  
24:1-4AB, 5-6, 1 John 3:1-3;  
Matthew 5:1-12A

Saturday, November 2  
Daniel 12:1-3; Psalms 23:1-6;  
Romans 6:3-9 or 6:3-4, 8-9;  
John 6:37-40

day skillfully saved his life.

After he recuperated, Peter expressed his gratitude to the medical staff. When they discussed the Holocaust, the doctor suddenly burst into tears. So did Peter. For as they compared notes, the doctor told Peter that he was one of those children Peter had rescued. Now, years later, their paths had providentially crossed, and one of those whom Peter had saved from extinction was there to save him.

Peter van Woerden and Corrie ten Boom have modeled for us the kind of love that will one day save the world. It is a love without boundaries or borders — that makes no distinction with regard to race or religion.

To know Jesus is to know love — love of God and neighbor.

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

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