

# FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## LECTIONARY #105

### READING I Deuteronomy 30:10-14

#### A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

**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."**

Deuteronomy = *dee-ter-AH-nuh-mee* or  
*dyoo-ter-AH-nuh-mee*

Be sure your assembly hears who the  
speaker is.

Let Moses speak the first sentence with  
solemn authority.

The balance of the text is a cold dose of  
reality splashed upon the people.

Don't make these analogies overly serious.  
Moses is clearly exaggerating to make his  
point: You don't have to fly to the heavens or  
cross the sea to get this!

Pause before the final sentence. This is  
the climax of the text and the heart of his  
message.

#### READING I

Attentive listening is a fundamental response to the Word of God. "Hear (*Shema*), O Israel" is the beginning of the daily prayer called the *Shema* that takes its name from the opening call to listen. After listening and acknowledging the one God, the people are to love the Lord their God with their whole being. In today's reading from

Deuteronomy, Moses uses a similar pattern as he urges the people to heed the voice of God and to keep God's commandments with all their heart and soul. Moses tells the people they must return (*sub*) to the Lord, reminding them that they have often turned away. Shortly before today's verses, Moses had already begun his emphasis on returning or repenting. The

people's action of repentance is closely aligned with God's action of restoring them, with the same verb (*sub*) used both for divine and human action.

In this part of his admonitions, Moses teaches that returning to the Lord is not slavishly keeping the commandments. Rather, the people are to return to the Lord with a wholehearted, loving relationship

For meditation and context:

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 69:14, 17, 30–31, 33–34, 36, 37 (see 33)

**R. 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.  
 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.

“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.”  
 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.

or:

For meditation and context:

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11 (9a)

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

The fear of the LORD is pure,  
 enduring forever.  
 The ordinances of the LORD are true,  
 all of them just.  
 They are more precious than gold,  
 than a heap of purest gold;  
 sweeter also than syrup  
 or honey from the comb.

READING II Colossians 1:15–20

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians**

**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. »**

Colossians = kuh-LOSH-uhnz

Start with strength making the first statement a declaration of your own faith.

He is leading to the assertion that even the angelic beings were created by Christ, so none can be superior to him.

and do what God commands. There are no excuses. With a series of negatives, Moses dismisses the idea that the Law is impossible for the people to understand; it is not too mysterious, not remote, not up in the sky, not across the sea. God’s law is so near that it is in the people’s speech and in their hearts. If they listen attentively to God’s voice today and follow God’s commandments, they will thrive in the land of the promise.

**READING II** The canticle from Colossians is a majestic poem, perhaps used originally in a baptismal liturgy, extolling Christ in sweeping, cosmic language. Just before the canticle itself, Paul introduced it by praying that the community would give thanks to God, who has given them the inheritance of the saints, rescued them, and brought them into the Kingdom of Christ in whom the believers have been redeemed and forgiven.

The God who has acted so graciously cannot be seen, yet Christ the beloved Son is the very image of God, the *icon* who makes the invisible God visible. Throughout the canticle, the dominion of Christ has no limits. The words “all things” and “everything” repeatedly emphasize Christ’s reign over the entirety of creation, embracing the visible and invisible, heaven and earth, angelic beings above and the Church below, time and eternity.

Rejoice in this assertion; rather than arguing the point, celebrate Christ's dominion over all things.  
His "body, the church" is sitting right in front of you. Speak to them.

Slow down for the final line that introduces the sobering reminder that what Christ did he did at great cost.

Let your tone signal that the man's motivation is insincere.

Jesus is aware of the lawyer's insincerity.

The man is learned and gives the "right" answer.

Jesus seems content to leave it at that and move on.

But the lawyer is determined to hear more from Jesus.

Now we see that Jesus had more to say all along. He dives into the story with energy.

Twice Christ is described as "first-born." As the firstborn of all creation, Christ holds a unique and preeminent place, not as a created being, but as the one in whom all else was created. Christ is also the firstborn from the dead, the one who leads the way in re-creation by rising from the dead. As the first to rise, he is the source of Resurrection for his brothers and sisters. His death and Resurrection are the means

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**.

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GOSPEL Luke 10:25-37

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke**

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.**

of establishing reconciliation and peace, bringing together those once estranged.

The Cantic expresses the fundamental faith not only of the early Church but also the faith of believers in every age. In Christ we are born; in him we are sustained; in him we are reborn to eternal life.

**GOSPEL**

The lawyer in today's Gospel asks Jesus two

questions, each with a different motivation. The first, regarding how to inherit eternal life, is meant to test Jesus. Rather than answering, Jesus turns the question back to the lawyer. Since he is a scholar of the law, he should know what is written there. When he brings together passages from the Torah, he makes the two mandates to love into a single commandment. Though the lawyer has exhibited correct knowl-