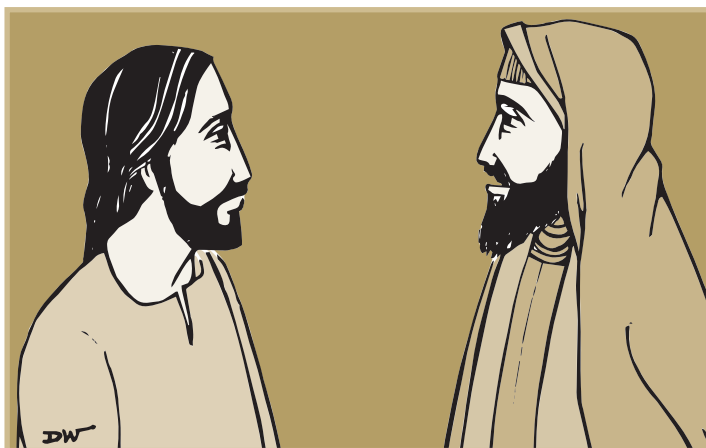


A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

*This is the first commandment, and the second is similar to it.*

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.



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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / B

3 NOVEMBER 2024

## 'LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD'

Have you seen a touch plate, a *mezuzah*, on the door frame of a Jewish house or business, and at the entrance to interior rooms? Maybe you have seen the ritual of touching this when entering any of the rooms. Inside the *mezuzah* is a tiny scroll of parchment inscribed with verses from Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. These verses contain the words of the *Shema* prayer and the command to 'inscribe them on the doorposts of your house'. In this ritual act of touching, the words of the prayer are brought to mind and heart.

Our first reading today contains these verses from the *Shema* prayer: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.' It is a reminder of the covenant with God. In today's Gospel we hear these words again when Jesus is asked what is the greatest of the commandments: 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Then Jesus adds a second 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' All of the commandments are summarised in these two. These words were received well by the questioner and Jesus responds, 'you are not far from the kingdom of God'. As we take the words of these two commandments to heart, recalling them and living them, we too can hear Jesus say to us, 'you are not far from the kingdom of God'.

Dr Rosemary Canavan

## FIRST READING

Deut 6:2-6

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy  
*Hear Israel, you shall love the Lord with all your heart.*

Moses said to the people: 'If you fear the Lord your God all the days of your life and if you keep all his laws and commandments which I lay on you, you will have a long life, you and your son and your grandson. Listen then, Israel, keep and observe what will make you prosper and give you great increase, as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you, giving you a land where milk and honey flow.

'Listen, Israel: The Lord our God is the one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength. Let these words I urge on you today be written on your heart.'

### ■ The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PS

Ps 17:2-4, 47, 51. R. v. 2

**R. I love you, Lord, my strength.**

1. I love you, Lord, my strength, / my rock, my fortress, my saviour. / My God is the rock where I take refuge; / my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold. / The Lord is worthy of all praise: / when I call I am saved from my foes. **R.**

2. Long life to the Lord, my rock! / Praised be the God who saves me. / he has given great victories to his king / and shown his love for his anointed. **R.**

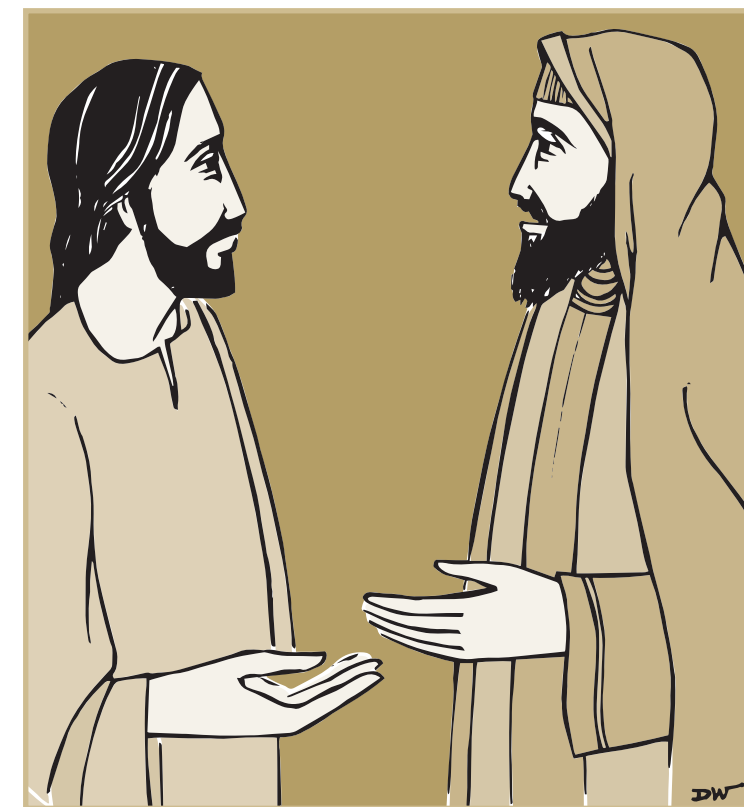
## SECOND READING

7:23-28

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

*This one, because he remains for ever, has an eternal priesthood.*

There used to be a great number of priests under the former covenant, because death put an end to each one of them; but this one, Christ, because he remains for ever, can never lose his priesthood. It follows then, that his power to



save is utterly certain, since he is living for ever to intercede for all who come to God through him.

To suit us, the ideal high priest would have to be holy, innocent and uncontaminated, beyond the influence of sinners, and raised up above the heavens; one who would not need to offer sacrifices every day, as the other high priests do for their own sins and then for those of the people, because he has done this once and for all by offering himself. The Law appoints high priests who are men subject to weakness; but the promise on oath, which came after the Law, appointed the Son who is made perfect for ever.

### ■ The word of the Lord.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words,  
and my Father will love them, and we will  
come to them.

Alleluia!