

## FIRST READING: Leviticus 19:1–2, 9–18

A reading from Leviticus.

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

<sup>2</sup>Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. <sup>9</sup>When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. <sup>10</sup>You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.

<sup>11</sup>You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another.

<sup>12</sup>And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. <sup>14</sup>You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. <sup>16</sup>You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. <sup>18</sup>You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

## PSALM: Psalm 119:33–40

*Cantor sings refrain. Assembly repeats refrain. Cantor sings verses. Assembly sings refrain at R.*

<sup>33</sup>Teach me, O LORD, the way <sup>l</sup> of your statutes,  
and I shall keep it <sup>l</sup> to the end.

<sup>34</sup>Give me understanding, and I shall <sup>l</sup> keep your teaching;  
I shall keep it with <sup>l</sup> all my heart.

<sup>35</sup>Lead me in the path of <sup>l</sup> your commandments,  
for that is <sup>l</sup> my desire.

<sup>36</sup>Incline my heart to <sup>l</sup> your decrees  
and not to <sup>l</sup> unjust gain. **R**

<sup>37</sup>Turn my eyes from be- <sup>l</sup> holding falsehood;  
give me life <sup>l</sup> in your way.

<sup>38</sup>Fulfill your promise <sup>l</sup> to your servant,  
which is for <sup>l</sup> those who fear you.

<sup>39</sup>Turn away the reproach <sup>l</sup> that I dread,  
because your judg- <sup>l</sup> ments are good.

<sup>40</sup>Behold, I long for <sup>l</sup> your commandments;  
by your righteousness en- <sup>l</sup> liven me. **R**

## **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 3:10–11, 16–23**

A reading from first Corinthians.

<sup>10</sup>According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. <sup>11</sup>For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? <sup>17</sup>If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

<sup>18</sup>Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. <sup>19</sup>For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written,

"He catches the wise in their craftiness,"

<sup>20</sup>and again,

"The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise,  
that they are futile."

<sup>21</sup>So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, <sup>22</sup>whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future — all belong to you, <sup>23</sup>and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 5:38–48**

<sup>38</sup>You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' <sup>39</sup>But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; <sup>40</sup>and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; <sup>41</sup>and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. <sup>42</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

<sup>43</sup>You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

<sup>44</sup>But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup>Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS:**



These readings are related to the Lectionary readings for this Sunday. We invite you to take time each day to read the assigned Bible passage.

Sunday	Matthew 5:38-48	Jesus teaches about love
Monday	Exodus 22:21-27	Compassion for neighbors
Tuesday	Proverbs 3:27-35	Showing good to neighbors
Wednesday	Matthew 7:1-5,9-12	The Golden Rule
Thursday	Luke 6:27-36	Be merciful as God is merciful
Friday	Romans 12:9-21	Caring for the enemy
Saturday	Proverbs 16:1-8	Living God's way
Sunday	Matthew 6:24-34	Do not worry

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK:**

"You have heard people say, 'Love your neighbors and hate your enemies.' But I tell you to love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you." *Matthew 5:43-44* (CEV)

**SAY, PRAY AND BLESS:**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Jesus, thank you that your love for us never changes. Help us to show love to others today, even when they hurt us. Amen.

**Epiphany Mealtime Prayer:**

Christ our light, shine upon us. Refresh us through this meal to reflect your love to others. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the Spirit of God live in you. May the Spirit fill you with God's love and God's wisdom. Amen

### CARING CONVERSATION:

Discuss in your household or small group:

- When do you find it easy to show love? When is it hard to show love?
- Jesus tells us that we should not only love those who love us, but love those who treat us badly and pray for them. How can we show love for our "enemies"?
- How does Jesus show love for those who don't love him?

### DEVOTIONS:

In our world today, there are many people who actively oppose the Christian faith, sometimes with violence or acts of terror. Jesus commands us not to repay evil with evil, but to love our enemies and pray for them. This week, pray for opponents of the Christian faith. Ask God to bless them and to give them a new heart and spirit. Ask God to help you see them through the eyes of Christ and to teach you how to love them.

### SERVICE:

In Leviticus 19:9-10, God asked the Israelites to be generous to poor people and foreigners who were living near them. When the Israelites harvested their crops, they were to leave behind some of the produce for these people to collect. Discuss how your household might better share God's blessings to you with the poor in your community. For example, could you purchase an extra food item or two in your grocery shopping to donate to a local charity or food shelf?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS:

Regular household outings are one way of providing the time, space and the means household members need to develop and maintain relationships with one another. Household outings can also have spiritual elements that help to foster your relationships with God. This week, search out old buildings in your community that have cornerstones that indicate when they were constructed. As you go, talk about what it means to have Jesus Christ as the foundation for your lives. (1 Corinthians 3:11).