

Cycle A

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary: 148

Reading I: Exodus 22: 20-26

One of the dominant themes throughout the Old and New Testaments is presented in today's reading from the Book of Exodus. The theme has become known as "the Golden Rule." It essentially means to treat each person as we would want to be treated. Often living according to the "Golden Rule" is also known as living in **right relationship**. This same theme will be echoed in the gospel selection for today's celebration of Holy Mass.

Reading 2: 1 Thessalonians 1: 5c-10

Saint Paul speaks of the importance of having Jesus Christ as the model for our behavior, that is living a holy and honorable life. Throughout the ages the Church has recognized holy men and women as models for Christian life. Each and every person is called to holiness using the unique talents and temperaments God has bestowed upon us all. One of the greatest ways to give praise and honor to God is to use God's gifts in a manner that assists others. Using those gifts for others is one aspect of living in **right relationship**.

Gospel: Matthew 22: 34-40

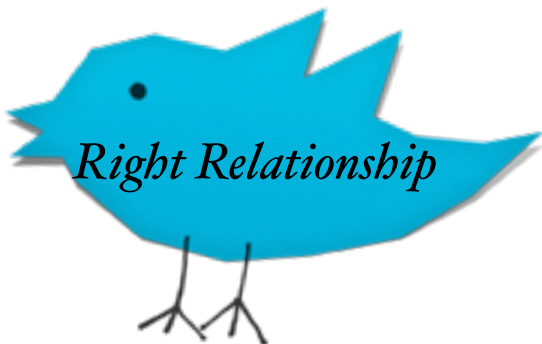
Jesus consolidates the entire Law into the two great commandments that have everything to do with **right relationship**. The two commandments focus on our relationship with God and with other human beings. In this passage we see the scholars of the Law trying to trap Jesus and Jesus responds to their trap by stating clearly and unequivocally that what was commanded by Moses and taught by the prophets is summarized in the commandments to love God and love our neighbor. Jesus links the two commandments so that it is virtually impossible to love God authentically without having regard and concern, that is love, for our neighbor.



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



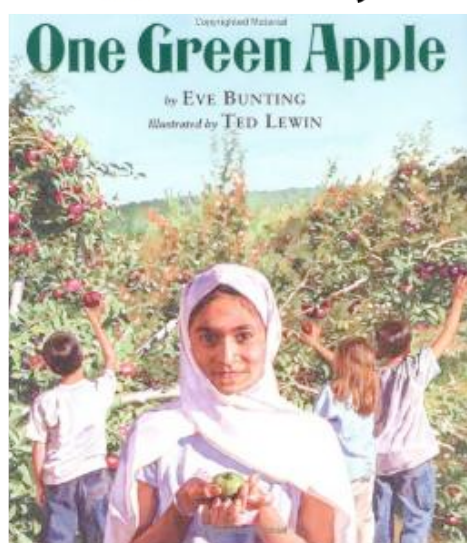
ordinary
time



lectionary
reading



children's
story



One Green Apple

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Illustrated by Ted Lewin

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character
education
activity

**The beginning of entering into
a "right relationship" with
God and with others, is to
recognize that we are
intended to be in relationship
and not isolated or alone.**

One Green Apple

This beautifully illustrated book becomes an opportunity for students to learn and appreciate the richness and diversity of God's world. As a Muslim girl (Farrah) rides in a hay wagon heading to an apple orchard on a class trip, her duppata (the head scarf) on her heads sets her apart. She observes that while some children are friendly, others are not. As the story progresses and the students each supplies an apple into the cider press, Farrah places a green apple into the press while all the other students place shiny red apples in the press. The resulting cider from the collective contribution of all the students is delicious, thus providing a metaphor for the benefits garnered by the richness of diversity. Certainly this story speaks explicitly to the importance of relationships and growing into **right relationship**.

Activity

Step One: Prior to the class assemble all materials needed for the art project being proposed:

an ink pad, construction paper, several magnifying glasses, and colored markers.

Step Two: Using the ink pad have each student of the class make a thumbprint in the middle of a piece of construction paper. Using the magnifying glasses have the students look at their thumbprint and the thumbprint of others. Ask them if they see similarities and differences.

Step Three: Have each students use the markers to add and draw around the thumbprint to create unique thumbprint animals. Have them write their names on the back of their creation so they will know which one is theirs.

Step Four: Discuss with the students that even though we are all people made in God's image and likeness, our fingerprints and other things about us make us unique images of God. Gather all the pictures of the thumbprint animals and cut them out and place them on a paper "Noah's Ark" that will hang on the bulletin board or a wall of the classroom.

**“Right Relationship”
involves committing
ourselves to
generosity of heart
and spirit which will
ultimately lead us to
an inner peace.**



case study

**Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.**

What could you do today?

Talk with your family and with your parent’s permission ask your pastor or one of the other priests or lay ministers if there are new families in the parish that are new to this country. After this inquiry ask the pastor or minister to inquire if the new family would like to have an opportunity to meet you and your family. Have your family host the new family and provide the foods that are traditional to your family and ask the new family if they would enjoy sharing some of their traditional foods. remember to remind everyone in your family to remain open and appreciative of the uniqueness of these new friends. It would probably be a good idea to do some research on the culture of the family in order to make them feel more at home. No doubt there will be other opportunities to share the dress, music, dance and other traditions in future meetings.

Look Feel Know Act

Love, when put into practice, become **right relationship** and we are called to be in relationship with everything in God’s creation.

Look and see that each of us is called to be in relationship with:

- God
- Ourselves
- Other Human Beings
- Nature

Once we commit ourselves to this connectedness it will become important to see how well we are doing in each of the four areas. Develop a simple reminder by saying daily, to God, yourself, others and nature: “I am aware of you and I wish to grow into deeper relationship with you.” Repeating statements for 29 days in a row usually helps you develop a habit.

This story of *One Green Apple* helps illustrate the importance of the scriptural commandment to be loving to those who are new to the community. Try and recall how comfortable it was when you entered a new place or joined a new team and someone greeted you and made you feel welcome. Throughout the scripture we encounter a God who encompasses all into a circle, unfortunately there are times when we exclude people from an inclusive circle and also time when, because of sin we can place ourselves outside the circle. God is always calling us to become one with the circle again.



closing tool

Pray that you will always strive to see the image of God in everyone and to see any differences as a richness that God has given to the world and to you. Amen.



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