

6th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sirach 15:15-20
Ps 119:1-2,4-5,17-18,33-34
1 Corinthians 2:6-10
Matthew 5:17-37

Monday February 13

Genesis 4:1-15,25
Ps 50:1,8,16bc-17,20-21
Mark 8:11-13

Tuesday February 14

Sts. Cyril & Methodius

Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5,10
Ps 29:1-10
Mark 8:14-21

Wednesday February 15

Genesis 8:6-13,20-22
Ps 116:12-15,18-19
Mark 8:22-26

Thursday February 16

Genesis 9:1-13
Ps 102:16-23,29
Mark 8:27-33

Friday February 17

Genesis 11:1-9
Ps 33:10-15
Mark 8:34 – 9:1

Saturday February 18

Hebrews 11:1-7
Ps 145:2-5,10-11
Mark 9:2-13

The Jewish religious authorities of Jesus' day were often literalists in their interpretation of the Law of God. Jesus, however, gave a deeper meaning to the Law. He placed his focus on the *goal* of the Law: Love.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus explains that we fail to fulfill the Law when our so-called obedience isn't motivated by love.

Jesus completely fulfilled the true meaning of the Law. In doing so, he took upon himself our disobedience and died for us in the most generous gift of love.

As his followers, we also are to be generous with love. Obeying all the commandments – truly obeying them – requires loving God with our whole heart, all the time, and loving others as ourselves.

Jesus explains how to transform literal interpretations of

God's laws into the Law of Love. In each example, he shows that we are to choose the most loving approach to every problem, no matter how difficult.

His first topic is anger: Sinful anger is judgmental and we are judged by this sin. Jesus provides the remedy: Go and do whatever is necessary to be reconciled. This, he points out, is even more important than worshipping God. How genuine can our worship be if anger has replaced love in our hearts, since God is love?



Another example is lust, which is a counterfeit of love because it treats others as objects. And divorce from a valid marriage is a failure to love as Christ loves, who taught that love makes sacrifices and endures hardships.

Remarriage, he says, furthers the sin because it's unloving to the spouse of the original union.

Jesus extends this teaching to every area of life. Breaking an oath is unloving. Lying and never intending to keep the commitment is unloving. In fact, the entire Sermon on the Mount, of which this Gospel reading is a part, explains how to love.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. Were you ever treated unlovingly because of another person's legalism? How did that experience hide the true nature of Jesus?
2. What habits do you have that are unloving toward yourself? How do they affect others?
3. Recall a time when someone treated you unfairly but you responded with an act of love. How difficult was it to give that love? What were the results?
4. Name common ways that Christians fail to obey God. What did Jesus do to make up for those failures? For example, how do you suppose Jesus treats unborn babies who've been aborted or miscarried?