

NO CCE classes February 23, 25, 26.



Breaking Open the Word for Families for The Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time By Ginger Herrington

Reading 1: *Be holy, for I, the Lord, am holy.* Moses brings the Word of the Lord to the Israelites: love your neighbor as yourself. Do not bear hatred for your neighbor in your heart. Reprove them (a Spiritual Work of Mercy: admonish sinners), but do not incur sin because of them. We can and should judge *actions*, but only God judges *the heart*. This is the Catholic teaching: love the *sinner* but hate the *sin*. Moses further instructs the Israelites to take no revenge and to cherish no grudge. Let God deal with those who have hurt or offended you and those who have sinned against God. God in His mercy allows the weeds to grow up with the wheat. He does not quench the smoldering wick, nor does he break the bruised reed. In other words, God gives us time to come back to Him. Jesus' Great Commandment to "love one another," echoes God's commandment to the Israelites.

Reading 2: *You are the temple of God, which is holy.* St. Paul informs the Corinthians that God has made us; God has called us. He washed us of our sins in Baptism; He forgives our sins in Confession; He feeds us with His very self in the Eucharist; He anoints us in several sacraments. When we are anointed in Baptism, Confirmation, or Holy Orders, we are set aside for Christ and empowered to be His ambassadors to the world. In Baptism, we are incorporated into His Body, the Church. In the Eucharist, we partake of His Divine Nature as He feeds us with His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. We should treat our bodies and our souls with the respect deserving of God's temple. Feed your body with good food and nourish your soul with the Eucharist, received worthily. Strengthen your body with regular exercise and fortify your soul with daily prayer and Mass every Sunday and holy day of obligation. Wash your body well every day and allow Jesus to cleanse your soul in Confession. God has given us the sacraments so that we can respect the great gift God has given: a share in His Divine life and His Presence dwelling within us.

Gospel: *Jesus said: be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect.* Jesus cites the Code of Hammurabi: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. While this may seem barbaric to us, this code was actually merciful: it prevented people from exacting revenge beyond their own injuries. Jesus turns this well-known law on its head and uses it in regard to *love*, not *revenge*. Jesus says we should *love more* than people ask of us: if someone asks for your tunic, give your cloak as well (a Corporal Work of Mercy: clothe the naked). If someone needs you for one mile, stay with them for two miles (a Spiritual Work of Mercy: comfort the afflicted). Then Jesus intensifies the love He expects of us: love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you (Spiritual Works of Mercy: bear wrongs patiently and forgive readily). Jesus showed this intense love when He exclaimed from the Cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Loving all people, regardless of what they have done, marks us as children of God. Let us strive to be perfect, as our Heavenly Father is perfect. Let us follow Jesus' example.



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