

READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST READING: Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

The Holiness Code in Leviticus urges people to be holy because God is holy. Holiness is lived out as God's people exercise justice and love in their dealings with one another. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves.

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

² "Speak to all the congregation of the Israelites and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

¹⁵ "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. ¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is at stake: I am the LORD.

¹⁷ "You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. ¹⁸ 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 1

Their delight is in the law of the LORD. (Ps. 1:2)

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

² **Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.**

³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither;
everything they do shall prosper.

⁴ **It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶ **For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Paul uses maternal imagery to depict the caring and nurturing relationship he shares with the Thessalonian Christians. When he first came to their city it was not to benefit himself but to share the gospel with them, which was his responsibility as an apostle of Christ.

¹ You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, ² but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. ³ For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, ⁴ but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts. ⁵ As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, ⁶ nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, ⁷ though we might have made demands as apostles of

Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. ⁸ So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:34-46

Put on the spot by the Pharisees, Jesus displays wisdom by summarizing the law of God in just two commandments and by demonstrating the Messiah must be more than the son of David.

³⁴ When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵ and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” ³⁷ He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: ⁴² “What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” ⁴³ He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴ ‘The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet” ’?

⁴⁵ “If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” ⁴⁶ No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.