



Time to PREP

- *For Class*
- *For the Week*
- *For Yourself*

WEEK #6 – October 25th, 26th & 28th, 2021

Gospel for October 31st, 2021
31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mark 12:28b-34

*One of the scribes came to Jesus and asked him,
"Which is the first of all the commandments?"*

Jesus replied, "The first is this:

Hear, O Israel!

The Lord our God is Lord alone!

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your mind,
and with all your strength.*

The second is this:

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

There is no other commandment greater than these."

The scribe said to him, "Well said, teacher.

You are right in saying,

'He is One and there is no other than he.'

And 'to love him with all your heart,

with all your understanding,

with all your strength,

and to love your neighbor as yourself'

is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

*And when Jesus saw that he answered with understanding,
he said to him,*

"You are not far from the kingdom of God."

And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...



- ♥ *Daughter of Erin Kelleher (R1A Catechist) who is having surgery.*
- ♥ *Daughter of Marilyn Harmyk (Conf Facilitator) who is having surgery.*
- ♥ *Lucille Panos (Special Needs Catechist) who is ill;*
- ♥ *Family member of Betsey Conway (T4A Catechist);*
- ♥ *PREP catechists, students and families;*

Background on the Gospel Reading

As we continue to read from Mark's Gospel, our Lectionary skips a chapter that helps set the context for today's reading. If we were to read the sections skipped ([chapter 11](#) and part of [chapter 12](#)), we would hear about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, his cleansing of the Temple, and the questioning of Jesus' authority by the chief priests, scribes, and elders. The context, therefore, for this Gospel is Jesus' growing exposure before the Jewish authorities. Jesus is being questioned and tested by the Jewish authorities, yet the scribe who addresses Jesus in today's Gospel seems to be an admirer; he is not testing Jesus.

The question posed in this week's Gospel requires Jesus to interpret the Law of Moses. The Mosaic Law consists of the Ten Commandments and many additional commandments, numbering into the hundreds. For a devout Jew, adherence to the Mosaic Law is an expression of faithfulness to God's covenant with Israel. The ranking of these commandments was regularly debated among the teachers of the Law.

Jesus was not the only Jewish religious teacher to connect these two commandments, love of God and love of neighbor. Both of these commandments were central elements of the religious tradition that Jesus learned from his Jewish community. Indeed, these commandments continue to be central aspects of contemporary Jewish religious understanding. Jesus' response to his questioners proposed an integral connection between these two aspects of the Jewish Law. Love of God finds its expression in our love for our neighbor. Many believe, however, that this connection was heard in a new and fresh way when spoken by Jesus.

The scribe who questions Jesus in this week's Gospel engages in a positive dialogue with Jesus. He agrees with Jesus' teaching that the

commandments to love God and love neighbor stand above the commandment to offer worship and sacrifice in the Temple. With this dialogue, Jesus appears to close the debate with the Jewish authorities. Mark reports that no one dared to question Jesus further.



All Saints Day

Monday, November 1st, 2021

Halloween, All Souls, Purgatory, and the Communion of Saints

(excerpt from article written by Joe Paprocki)

... For Catholics, the month of November is the month of All Souls and the first two days of the month are celebrated as [All Saints Day](#) and [All Souls' Day](#) respectively. Halloween, of course, is the eve of the celebration of All Saints or All Hallows Eve and has evolved into a secular holiday in which kids and grown-ups alike wear costumes, go trick-or-treating, and party. Some Christians abhor this celebration. Catholics respond by saying, in essence, "lighten up." We see this as an opportunity to invite people to enter into a mystery that is not spooky. We see it as an opportunity to invite people to connect with their loved ones who have died and who now live with us through the Communion of Saints. It is an opportunity to reflect on what happens to us after we die and how it simply makes sense that coming face-to-face with the glory of God involves a transition of sorts, just as our eyes need to adjust when going from a dark space into bright sunlight. For Catholics, this experience of transition is referred to as purgatory—not a place but a state of existence as we transition from this life to a life of eternity with God. We pray for those in this transition—the "poor souls" in purgatory—and ask them to pray for us. All of this simply amounts to us remaining in communion with those who have died, knowing that "life has not ended but only changed."

So, this [Halloween](#), and throughout all of November, go ahead and "see" dead people. Go ahead and talk to dead people. You're not crazy. You're Catholic.