

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
Psalm 15:2-5
James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Monday August 30

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Ps 96:1, 3-5, 11-13
Luke 4:16-30

Tuesday August 31

1 Thessalonians 5:1-6, 9-11
Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14
Luke 4:31-37

Wednesday September 1

Colossians 1:1-8
Ps 52:10, 11
Luke 4:38-44

Thursday September 2

Colossians 1:9-14
Ps 98:2-6
Luke 5:1-11

Friday September 3 St. Gregory the Great

Colossians 1:15-20
Ps 100:1b-5
Luke 5:33-39

Saturday September 4

Colossians 1:21-23
Ps 54:3-4, 6, 8
Luke 6:1-5

In the Gospel reading, Jesus chastises the Pharisees for honoring God only with their lips, not their hearts; love was missing when they judged that Jesus and his disciples sinned by disobeying a Jewish rule about cleanliness.

The rule was more important to them than the person. They had the self-righteous attitude of: "I know better than you, and I am better than you, proven by the fact that I obey the laws that you're breaking."

Obedience, when motivated by a self-righteous adherence to rules, is hypocrisy. It uses the law to feel superior to others. A modern example might be when someone tells a priest that he is sinning because he isn't adhering exactly to the norms for Mass as prescribed in the General Instruction of the Roman Mis-

sal. If he or she doesn't stop to understand why the priest believes the adaptations are allowable and pastoral, who really is the sinner?

When this happens, "in vain do they worship me," Jesus says. The meaning of the Mass has been lost.

There is a hierarchy of rules and laws. Some rules change with the needs of the times. Of greatest importance are the Commandments of God, the Moral Laws, which never change.



It is right to speak up when we witness disobedience, and we *should* do it, but only because we care about the sinner's spiritual growth and only when we can handle it without ignoring the reasons behind the disobedience. We are

most successful in guiding others into greater holiness when we take the time to first understand the roots of their disobedience and then address those concerns with love.

This is how we become, as the second reading says, "doers of the word and not hearers only", because, as James adds, "pure" religion is caring for others. The Pharisees in the Gospel story didn't care about the hunger of the disciples.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How do you know when you're being hypocritical in your faith?
2. How do you handle the discovery that you've done something uncaring?
3. Give an example of a Moral Law and an example of a regulation that was instituted by the Church to address a specific need for a specific time. How do they differ in importance?
4. Name one of the 10 Commandments or a teaching of the Church and explain how it became an opportunity for you to become more like Christ.