Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time — October 31, 2021

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

Before Christmas years ago, a missionary Sister, teaching young boys aged nine to eleven in Ghana, West Africa, asked them to write down three things they wanted for Christmas. As usual with young boys, they had all kinds of wishes: some wanted sport articles, others modern gadgets, a TV set, a bicycle and so forth. But one little fellow wrote as follows: "I want to love God with all my heart: I want to love my neighbor as myself; I want to live a very simple life". Greatly surprised, the Sister held the lad after class and asked him where he got these ideas. Without hesitation he replied: "O Sister, I've been thinking about this for a long time." Sister was deeply impressed. Here was Jesus Christ walking on earth again, having put his Spirit into the heart of a little Ghanaian boy. How many adult Christians have such a degree of Christ's Spirit!

When Jesus was asked by the scribe which was the greatest commandment of the law, he did something very unusual. If he had merely mentioned the great commandment (the Shema) of Deuteronomy 6:4 (as in this weekend's First Reading), the love of God in its solemn setting, it would not have been unusual. But that he added to it a rather obscure commandment from the book of Leviticus about love of neighbor and put it on an equal footing with the love of God, this was something new. In the mind of Jesus, my neighbor was not just my countrymen or women, but anyone in need be he or she kinsman or kinswoman or stranger, as is clear from the parable of the Good Samaritan. This is a two-pronged fiery arrow with which Jesus wishes to pierce the whole world and set it on fire with the highest of all virtues, that of love. All other commandments are included in this twofold commandment, even the "Ten Commandments" given by Moses. Henceforth in the community of Jesus, love alone was to motivate all actions.

All his life the Lord gave a perfect example of this twofold love. He was always open to the Father's will by serving his fellowmen and women with great love. Nothing in the gospels stands out more than his universal love which reaches out to everyone regardless of his or her stand in life. He set out to accomplish the Paschal Mystery for humankind's salvation, but it was out of sheer dedication to the Father who had so ordained it. His love led him to the heights of heroism on Golgotha, where love of God and love of humankind combined in one great act of the divine holocaust. Of this the pierced Heart of Christ stands as an everlasting symbol and witness.

Just as a fire once started needs to be continually fed with fuel lest it die out, so the fire of love needs to feed on the fuel of constant self-giving. Selfishness will gradually quench true love. Love grows by acts: acts of love offered frequently to God, and acts of kindness and goodness or of patient forbearance in regard to others. What a different world we would live in if every Christian tried his or her best to carry out the injunction on love given by the Savior!

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**November 2**	**11:00AM**
Valdivia Family		Lily Militar
Wed.	**November 3**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Thur.	**November 4**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Fri.	**November 5**	**11:00AM**
Emmanuel F. Fernando†		Gloria
Sat.	**November 6**	**4:30PM**
People of the Parish		
Sun.	**November 7**	**9:00AM**
Dorothy Militar (birthday)		Lily Militar
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
Alice Marshall †		ICF #14

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