Our Parish COMMUNITY

October 25, 2020
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
Ex 22:20–26
1 Thes 1:5c–10
Mt 22:34–40

[The LORD said,] "You shall not oppress or afflict a resident alien, for you were once aliens residing in the land of Egypt." —EXODUS 22:20

PEXELS

God's Lessons of Love

The readings today are all about love. The first reading tells us *who* we should love; the Gospel tells us *how* we should love. We know that it is not difficult to love those who love us, who are kind and generous to us, who make us feel that we are important. The reading from Exodus moves us in a different direction. We are to love the alien, the widow, the orphan, and the poor neighbor. In a patriarchal society, such as was ancient Israel, aliens, widows, and orphans were the ultimate outsiders. They had no male relative through whom they would benefit from the kinship structure. While the neighbor might be of the same tribe or clan, it is the poor neighbor who was to be loved, the one who might be a drag on one's life and resources.

In other words, we are to love the ones who cannot promise to make our lives more comfortable or enjoyable. In fact, the point of loving them is to make *their* lives more comfortable and enjoyable.

How are we to love them? The Gospel reading offers two different answers that are really very much alike. We are to love God totally, with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind. We are to love others as we love ourselves, with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind. More practically, we must do for others what we would do for ourselves, for to love them is to love God.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- *Who are the outsiders or people living on the margins of your society?*
- *What might you do to make their lives more comfortable or enjoyable?*

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