



# Bringing Home the Word

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)  
July 13, 2025

## Love of the Law

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Years ago, I saw a chart that identified the faith of the Old Testament as a religion of law and that of the New Testament as a religion of love. This is not only seriously wrong, it is also dangerously biased. The two commandments to love as recorded in today’s gospel originate in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, respectively. Several of the prophets describe God’s love of Israel in tender, even passionate, terms. (See Isaiah 43:1, Jeremiah 31:3.) To think otherwise is to tread alarmingly close to a form of antisemitism. We must remember that the religion Jesus loved deeply, and

which he sought to bring to fulfillment, was the religion of ancient Israel.

Part of the error of that chart might have been a misunderstanding of the meaning of law. We might think of law as “proscription” or “restriction” (you must...or you must not...). The Hebrew meaning is more flexible. Some translate the Hebrew word *torah* as “instruction” or “directive.” The psalmist delights in the law because it refreshes the soul and gladdens the heart. Today’s first reading tells us that the law is already in our hearts. The law of love was certainly in the heart of the Samaritan who cared for the stranger on the side of the road.

If we can see that laws are meant to help us care for ourselves, others, and the world, we will soon realize that living as the laws direct us might bring us to a deep love for the law. †



***The psalmist delights in the law because it refreshes the soul and gladdens the heart.***

## Sunday Readings

### Deuteronomy 30:10–14

[Moses said,] “No, it is something very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it.”

### Colossians 1:15–20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

### Luke 10:25–37

[Jesus said,] “A Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight.”

## A Word from Pope Francis (1936–2025)

The first Christians were called “disciples of the Way” (cf. Acts 9:2), that is, of the journey. In fact, believers strongly resemble the Samaritan—like him, the believer is on a journey, is a wayfarer... Along the way, he or she meets people, heals the sick, visits villages and cities. This is what the Lord did; he was always on the move.

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I think of obeying the law as an act of love for the community?
- How do the rules in my home promote loving relationships?



# Ministry to People on the Periphery

Fr. Michael McAndrew, CSsR

“Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach

all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the gospel” (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 20).

What does it mean to be on the periphery?

It means to be unnoticed, on the fringes of society, on the margin, and living in the shadows. When people are unnoticed, it is easy to ignore them. If we do not recognize these people’s presence, the ordinary life of parish communities may leave them on the periphery. Today, migration is a highly sensitive and divisive issue in the United States and Western Europe. Migrants are on the front pages of newspapers, but in Church ministry, they are often on the periphery.

Pope Benedict XVI states that international migration “requires bold, forward-looking policies of international cooperation if it is to be handled effectively” (*Caritas in*

**Let our actions be shaped by prayer and discernment of God’s will for us.**

*Veritate*, 62). Understanding that no singular nation can address migration problems independently, he goes on to assert that “every migrant is a human person who, as such, possesses fundamental, inalienable rights that must be respected by everyone and in every circumstance.”

In migration ministry, there are crosses and blessings. For all people serving migrants, we need to support each other. That support can be the comfort of prayer and sacraments, but it can also be standing with migrants in their times of trial and stress. It can mean taking public positions that are unpopular or controversial as dictated by the circumstances of each case. I admire the dedication of all people walking with migrants today. Whether we work in parishes, religious education, agriculture, education, social services, government service, or advocacy, let our actions be shaped by prayer and frequent evaluation and discernment of the will of God for us in our often divided world. †

From *Walk With My People: A Life in Migration Ministry* by Fr. Michael McAndrew, CSsR, Liguori Publications (828720). To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org).

## Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “Finding Your Way Through the Old Testament” by Virginia Smith

When I was twelve...I resolved to read the Bible, one chapter per day, until I finished. I plunged in, assuming I was about to read a book cover to cover, unaware that I was actually entering a library where not one but seventy-two books awaited me: books of poetry, songs, letters, allegories, historical sagas, and more. I treated them all alike under the impression that, no matter where you open it, the Bible is the Bible. It’s helpful to know that the Old Testament is divided into four groups: 1. The Pentateuch (Greek for “five books”), also known as the Torah (Hebrew for “the Law”); 2. The Historical Books; 3. The Wisdom Books; and 4. The Prophetic Books.

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org) • 800-325-9521



Ever-present God,  
help me to look for you  
in the interruptions,  
the unexpected delays,  
the setbacks, the chance  
encounters. We pray  
in Jesus’ name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

## WEEKDAY READINGS

July 14–19

**Monday**, St. Kateri Tekakwitha:

Ex 1:8–14, 22 / Mt 10:34–11:1

**Tuesday**, St. Bonaventure:

Ex 2:1–15a / Mt 11:20–24

**Wednesday**, Weekday:

Ex 3:1–6, 9–12 / Mt 11:25–27

**Thursday**, Weekday:

Ex 3:13–20 / Mt 11:28–30

**Friday**, Weekday:

Ex 11:10–12:14 / Mt 12:1–8

**Saturday**, Weekday:

Ex 12:37–42 / Mt 12:14–21

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