

## 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: July 11, 2010

From the Book of Deuteronomy in our 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, we hear Moses trying to exhort and encourage Israel to keep God's law, (i.e. the commandments and certain specific religious statutes.) This specific Deuteronomic text has been seen as an attempt to bridge the gap between ancient Israel and early Judaism as it calls for all Jews to remember that time prior to the Babylonian Exile. It pleads for the people to re-learn the lessons of those formative years as they wandered in the wilderness under Moses leadership. Those memories are seen as the only way that Judaism can secure its future while in exile.

Now I ask you to recall the following verse from that passage we have just heard proclaimed: "For this command that I enjoin on you today, is not too mysterious or remote for you." It is Moses' intent to basically enlighten the people to the fact that following God's Law should not be seen as something mysterious or confusing. It should be seen as making sense, because in a few verses later, Moses further articulates his thoughts and reasoning when he says: "It is not up in the sky,... Nor is it across the sea,... No, it is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you only have to carry it out." What Moses is describing is something that seems "natural" to us in a very profound manner. We are called to recognize that God's Law is already inscribed in our hearts and minds, *a priori*, (i.e. before our intellectual being.)

When Moses came down from the mountain with the ten (10) commandments on those stone tablets, it wasn't as if he were revealing some new moral law because what God had articulated to Moses, he had already built into each of us. It was as if God were saying to us: "These commandments will guide your life because this is how I made you." Now think about that for a minute, God's law is neither arbitrary nor imposed from the outside, because it is an inner part of our being. It simply helps us to live joyful and happy lives to the fullest measure possible. It gives us meaning and aids us in living out our lives.

In our modern language we call this inner knowledge of right and wrong our conscience. It is an innate, God given ability to know good from evil and right from wrong. It's what helps keep us on the right path; however, while our consciences are a strong voice, they are only that, a voice, which competes with other voices in our psyche. And on occasion, these other voices can obscure the one true voice of God; thus, we make poor decisions. We sin. We hurt others and ourselves and wonder why we are not at peace.

Friends, God's law exists for but one purpose and that is so we can be all that God wants us to be. It is there to help us continually hear God's voice among all the other voices in our daily lives. It is there to remind and assist us in responding to the things of the world with love. And, when we need to make moral decisions in our lives, we should ask ourselves this question: "Is this decision that I'm about to make the loving thing to do and will my decision give glory to God?" If we did but this, we are more likely to make the right choice, which would also be a good and loving choice.

God wants us to experience wonderful and beautiful things for he has created us to live our lives filled with great meaning, joy and peace. And, God's law helps us to do just that, whether we fully understand it or not. Remember, this law is not there for God's benefit; rather, it is there for our benefit. So, start forgiving, start reconciling, start trusting, start seeing the good in people and start loving. Because: **It's the law!**