

## Commentary on the Readings for June 18, 2023

### The 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The theme of the readings for this day involves our relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the 'Collect' or the first prayer that the priest-celebrant offers, we will hear him pray for the 'help and grace to follow you (Gods') commands', but how can we do this if we don't know what God wants from us or for us? Let us see how this is worked out in the readings for today.

The **First Reading** is from the *Book of Exodus (19:2-6)*, we hear Moses tell the Jewish people of his time, that God had given him the Divine Covenant which, was to govern the Jewish people for thousands of years. "Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, etc...etc." The meaning of these words might be lost in today's world, but it is significant in spiritual understanding for all times, as we will explain.

In the **Responsorial Psalm (Ps 100)**, we hear more of what our relationship with God should be: "come before him with joyful song", "He made us, we are His people", "the Lord is good, His kindness endures forever,". If we have a strong personal relationship with Jesus Christ, all of these qualities will be natural to us.

In the **Second Reading (St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (5:6-11))** we hear how Christ goes "all-out" to offer himself to us and proves what He offers by dying on the cross for all mankind. This passage should make us want to offer ourselves to Him – but do we?

In the **Gospel Reading** from the *Gospel of Matthew (9:36-10:8)*, we hear of so many ways that Jesus (God) has demonstrated his love for us, the ultimate being His death on the cross. Our response should be one of love and gratitude. If sincere, our relationship will cause us to call on Jesus whenever we are in need of serious help to resolve problems or situations that we cannot do (or should not do) without His assistance or guidance or approval.

**Relationships** are a very sensitive subject- easy to damage, but not always to heal. In all of the above readings, we learn of the various ways that Jesus gave himself to us and now it is our turn to give ourselves to Him seriously, and by doing so, only then can we expect the help and guidance that Jesus offers to us. That "help" then is in spiritual guidance and direction, which should govern all of our lives.

**MFB**