**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEB. 22-23, 2025**

Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 6: 27-38

[Jesus says:]

“But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic.

Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back.

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.

And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same.

If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit [is] that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount.

But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

Be merciful, just as [also] your Father is merciful.

Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven.

Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

**Intercession**

Let us be Christ for others through support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, thus following Jesus’ call to be generous without expecting anything in return.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

Jesus’ call to “do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6: 31) seems doable – until it applies to those who have hurt us. The “others” Jesus refers to aren’t limited to our family and friends who treat us with respect. “Others” includes the difficult people in our lives, even the malignant ones. He is asking us to transfer the kind of love reserved for ourselves and our loved ones to those who may very well be undeserving – when viewed exclusively through their actions – but who are children of God and thus merit love and respect. Elsewhere, Jesus says, “Even the pagans do good to those who do good to them.”

If we are to love as God loves, we must focus more on others and less on ourselves. There is no “what’s in it for me” in Jesus’ message. In fact, Jesus offers numerous examples of how the love He is calling us to is anything but reciprocal. Someone takes your coat? Give him the shirt off your back. Suffer a strike across one cheek? Turn to offer your assailant the other one. Someone wishes you ill? Bless them and wish them well. Are you the recipient of mistreatment? Pray for the perpetrator.

Jesus is holding us to a very high standard. Be generous, be loving, and expect nothing in return. We do this when, as parents, we spend the night tending to a sick child or spend hours consoling a friend who has lost her husband. But this is service given to those we know and love. When we give to those we never meet by supporting the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, we are answering Christ’s call to “lend expecting nothing back” (Luke 6: 35).

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Jesus was the perfect teacher. He presents to his students, His primary lesson: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31). Then He offers concrete examples to illustrate His point: “do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you, … give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back.” (Luke 6:27-28; 30).

This is difficult to hear and an even more challenging one to enact. “Love your enemies” ­– not tolerate, make room for, listen to, or work beside, but love. (Luke 6:27). This kind of love is divine love. God loves us like this, without condition, without expectation. Jesus is calling on us to love as God loves, meaning, not just those who are easy to love but ALL people. One way we can answer this call is supporting programs and initiative, like the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, without requiring any acknowledgement or return gift save the knowledge that we are doing our best to take Jesus’ lesson to heart.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Golden Rule image.

Header: “Give and gifts will be given to you” – Luke 6:38

Copy: To be generous to others as God is generous to us is a reward in itself! When you offer others support through the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, you answer Christ’s call to “do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31).