

God's Greatest Commandments

Today's first reading recalls the most sacred text in Judaism, the Shema Israel: "Hear, [O] Israel." These words are so sacred for Jews, they are prayed in the most important moments of peril or supreme holiness. Jews don't take these words lightly because they express the essence of their religion and relationship to God.

As Catholics, we fully agree with our Jewish brothers and sisters on this matter. Jesus himself answered the question of what was the first, greatest commandment—it was the Shema Israel. Why is it so important? Because it declares the unity of God: "The LORD is our God, the LORD alone!" (Deuteronomy 6:4). He is one supreme God, not a multitude of divinities as in the Greek and Roman polytheistic religions, or even today in Hinduism and Buddhism.

This belief in one God makes the monotheistic religions of Judaism and Christianity unique. Second, this supreme God deserves our love and obedience. "You shall love the Lord your God...." Our role as creatures called and saved by him is to offer loving obedience.

The Second Commandment flows from the first: If we love God above all, then we need to love our brothers, sisters, and ourselves.

What better icon is there of this love for God and neighbor than the love of a mother for her child, as shown in this wax sculpture? As the piece shows, our love should be reverent, tender, compassionate, and unique. Only you can give him your kind of love. There should be a constant flow of affection and union between us—no separation between him and us.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

For Reflection

How can I express greater reverence for God?

How can I express greater tenderness toward my loving Father?



Piece: *Aetas Aurea*, 1886–1887

Artist: Medardo Rosso

Location: Vatican Museums

PHOTO © GOVERNATORATO S.C.V. - DIRECTORATE OF MUSEUMS

*Hear then, Israel, and be careful to observe [the commandments],
that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly.*

Deuteronomy 6:3

Calendar

Monday

NOVEMBER 5

Weekday

Phil 2:1-4
Lk 14:12-14

Tuesday

NOVEMBER 6

Weekday

Phil 2:5-11
Lk 14:15-24

Wednesday

NOVEMBER 7

Weekday

Phil 2:12-18
Lk 14:25-33

Thursday

NOVEMBER 8

Weekday

Phil 3:3-8a
Lk 15:1-10

Friday

NOVEMBER 9

*Dedication of the Lateran
Basilica (Rome)*

Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12
1 Cor 3:9c-11, 16-17
Jn 2:13-22

Saturday

NOVEMBER 10

*Pope Leo the Great, Pope
and Doctor of the Church*

Phil 4:10-19
Lk 16:9-15

Sunday

NOVEMBER 11

*Thirty-second Sunday in
Ordinary Time*

1 Kgs 17:10-16
Heb 9:24-28
Mk 12:38-44



The award-winning Liguorian magazine helps Catholics apply the gospel message to life.

For a **FREE One-Year Subscription** (NO PURCHASE NECESSARY), call **866-848-2492**

Code P19274. New Subscribers Only. One per Household.

Dear Padre,

Can you clarify the role of nuns and women in the Church? When I was growing up, they seemed much more involved, but nowadays our church never seems to discuss their role or support their work.

Women's role in the Church is essential in many areas, including teaching, passing on the faith to their families, and witnessing to their faith in the community. Religious sisters are essential to the Church's pastoral care, as Vatican II states: "From the outset of the work of evangelization, the missionary 'planting' and expansion of the Church require the presence of the religious life in all its forms" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 927).

Religious sisters, and their religious brothers, share a universal call to be "devoted to the welfare of the whole Church...working to implant and strengthen the Kingdom of Christ" in a new generation of Catholics (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church [*Lumen Gentium*], 44).

Today, sisters have declined in number, but they are present and essential to Church ministry through religious education, pastoral care in hospitals, faith-based social outreach, and parish and diocesan administration. They continue Christ's presence, as did the women first to encounter the risen Christ and bring this Good News to others.

We need religious sisters; parents and parishes need to speak about vocations. God gives the gift, and we have the responsibility to nurture those women "called to signify the very charity of God in the language of our time" (CCC 926).

—Fr. John K. Schmidt, CSsR | Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



CNS PHOTO/GREGORY A. SHEMITZ



A Word From Pope Francis

A Church without women is like the college of the Apostles without Mary. The role of women in the Church is not simply that of maternity, being mothers, but much greater: it is precisely to be the icon of the Virgin, of Our Lady; what helps make the Church grow!

—Press conference, July 28, 2013



A Redemptorist Ministry

© 2018 Liguori Publications, Liguori, MO 63057-9999. Printed in USA. *Imprimatur*: "In accordance with CIC 827, permission to publish has been granted on June 19, 2018, by the Most Reverend Mark S. Rivituso, Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of St. Louis. Permission to publish is an indication that nothing contrary to Church teaching is contained in this work. It does not imply any endorsement of the opinions expressed in the publication; nor is any liability assumed by this permission." No part of this work may be used in any form without the prior written permission of Liguori Publications. Scripture texts in this work are taken from New American Bible, revised edition © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. To order Liguori Sunday Bulletins, call 800-325-9521, or visit Liguori.org.