

Love of God and love your neighbour (Mark 12:28-34)

Love of God and love your neighbour are the main theme of Today's readings. A scholar of the law tested Jesus by asking "Teacher, what is the greatest commandment?" Jesus points to the commandment of the "Shema Prayer" and then goes on beyond to the second commandment- 'to love one's neighbour as oneself'. The "Shema", the prayer that every devout Jew recites each morning on rising. The word "Shema" means 'listen', that has also the sense of 'obey'. Israel is a people addressed by God' called each day to listen and obey. Actually, there are 613 commandments and of which 365 prohibitions and 248 other prescriptions. That is why the lawyer asked Jesus which of these 613 commandments is the greatest. Jesus summarizes these into two: The two parts come from the Old Testament; the commandment to love your neighbour occurs in Leviticus 19:18, while the commandment to love God appears in Deuteronomy 6:5. Jesus refers to two Biblical passages and joins them to form two faces of one supreme commandment of love. These are like the two beams that make up a cross. One points upward and one points sideward. For Jesus, these two dimensions together constitute what it means to be an authentic Christian. In the gospel, Jesus simply takes the Ten Commandments and summarizes them in a few words, Love of God and love of neighbour. The Ten Commandments put into a few sentences. The first three, love of God. The next seven, love of neighbour. There is a canonical order in it. Jesus placed "love of God" before the commandment to love your neighbour. As Paul says, the problem is not the law, the problem is that we cannot keep it. (Rom 7:13-20). How do we love God? Our daily experience says that it is very hard to love the unlovely neighbour until the disciple's heart is filled with the love of God . Gods asks us to love Him with all our hearts, mind, soul and strength and consistently love the neighbour as must as the self. It is easy to trust in God when things are going always right. But when our health is in not good, our children are not

going fine, economical problems,, too often we are get discouraged and we cannot trust in God. The problem with the unconditional trust is that there be always things that we do not understand. There will be always unanswered questions. We have seen the mountain climbers. For them the rope is their strength. God knows what He is doing. God is a sovereign God. We need to trust Him. If I am not getting anything I am going to trust in You. God has given the grace to be happy today. God has given the grace to be happy where you are. Unconditional trust is needed. You are in control of my life and I believe in you even if I do not understand everything. God's plan is better than our plan, His way is higher than our ways. Who are my neighbours? Is it the house near to my house too? May be, but those people who are in need of our material, emotional and spiritual helps. They are in need of our concern, care, love and compassion and this is a concrete manifestation of our love for God. It is through our neighbours whom we see God. How do we love our neighbour? By looking at their goodness. We can love one another through encouragement to another. Love by edifying one another. Jesus says, help others that is why we are created as pairs. Amen.