

March 11, 2017

Deut. 26:16-19

Matt 5:43-48

Follow God's precepts and love your enemies.

In our reading from Deuteronomy, Moses enforces the precepts that we must observe the statutes and decrees from the Lord. We are not to dispute them, but to observe them heart and soul. By doing so, we enter into a covenantal relation with God. We are reconciled to be true believers. When we walk in his ways and hear his voice, we will become a people sacred to the Lord.

In our Gospel reading from Matthew, Jesus tells us to "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." By doing so, you will become children of God. We are told that we have to accept the fact that there will be those who do evil because God allows the sun to rise and the rain to fall on those who are good, as well as bad.

Jesus tells us it is easy to love those who love us. It is an inherent response to love those who love us. However, someone who has committed a terrible wrong usually leads us to an inherent response of hate. By loving and praying for that person we are doing what Jesus asks. By loving our enemies we attest our belief in Jesus. We are reconciled to do as he tells us, and we are offering our enemies to Jesus. Is not the love of Jesus inclusive to our enemies? Jesus wants us to be always forgiving. By so doing, we shall approach the perfection that belongs to God.

Reflection questions:

1. In Matthew 5:43-48, what do you think Jesus means by the word love?
2. Besides giving thanks and praise and petitions in our prayers, what might you include for our enemies and those who persecute you?

*Lenten reflection by Deacon Steve Grandfield.*