

St. Louis Catholic Church

Wednesday of the 3rd Week of Lent

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9

Matthew 4:17-19

It is so obvious. Sometimes so obvious we don't even notice what is right before our eyes. Deuteronomy reminds us that laws are not obeyed for their own sake but they are God's guide to life. Deuteronomy is a series of homilies or instructions to motivate God's people. Moses received the law from God and gave it to his people and we even today hear God speak face to face.

We learn that sustaining a right relationship with God is absolutely necessary for survival. Today we are like the audience that Moses spoke to. The original generation of Israelites who received the law at Mt. Sinai and entered into a covenant bond with God had died. They had received the law or 10 Commandments but their lack of faith led them to death in the desert during the 40 years. This new generation is receiving a second law or the "law a second time". That's what Deuteronomy really means.

Now as they are ready to enter the Promised Land, Moses reviews the terms of the Covenant. Moses fears that this generation will also falter. New comforts in the Promised Land could become a distraction that they will forget to rely on God just as much as they did in the desert. A right relationship with God is absolutely necessary for their survival. Moses reviews "that you may live", and of course this new generation would hopefully remember that their fathers did not live but died. The Promised Land is a gift from God and not a legal acquirement nor a military conquest. The gift can be taken away.

Moses tells the people that they will be recognized for their "wisdom and intelligence" if they remain faithful and obey the law.

Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven as an unseen reality that He came to proclaim. Living for the Kingdom of Heaven means looking at the Kingdom of earth in a new way. Heaven is not in opposition of earth but puts it in proper perspective. The realm of earth is too a gift from God. We are to live in the world never losing focus on our true identity, which is to share eternal life with God.

If we strive for the Kingdom of Heaven then we are to live faithfully the message of God. To Jesus the Bible was the "law" and "the prophets". Other writings existed and they all contribute to the same message.

Anyone serving as a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven values everything in the word of God. Respect for the word extends to the smallest physical characteristics of the written text. The Lord seeks from His disciple respect for the spiritual and life giving message proclaimed by the words. Jesus has come to fulfill His Father's plan of salvation.

For example God gave us Commandments. Is it wrong to steal because God gave us a Commandment or has God given us a Commandment because it is wrong and would corrupt society? Now Israel, now Memphis, now Catholics, now St. Louis Parish, hear the statutes which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live.

Parents give laws to their children out of wisdom to protect their children. They don't lay down laws to "test" the child. Parents pray and hope that children will listen, hear and heed.

God, a loving parent, has laid down the law for us, His sons and daughters.

Law is intended to protect, nourish the least of us. Jesus says that He has not come to abolish the law. It is there to protect and nourish so that we may live.

Lord show us the path of life and fill us with joy in Your presence. Review the 10 Commandments--review the 6 Laws of the Church.

God Bless,

Msgr. John McArthur\

Key Events This Week:

1. Thursday Evening Confessions--5:00-6:00 p.m.
2. Friday is First Friday--Masses 6:15 a.m., 8:15 a.m., and 12:00 Noon
3. Friday Evening--Stations of the Cross--5:30 p.m.
4. Friday Evening--Fish Fry--Cafeteria--5:00-8:00 p.m.
5. Saturday--Men's Morning of Spirituality--8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Fr. Larry Richards (great speaker)--Confessions--Testimonies--Mass with Bishop Steib presiding
6. 40 Days for Life--2:00-3:00 p.m. or any hour during week
7. Saturday and Sunday Liturgies--Commitment Sunday--Bishop's Annual Appeal
Please bring pledge card to Mass--Basket in sanctuary for all to fill
Goal \$439,000 Goal 100% Participation nks and keep the light burning.