

15th Sunday OT – Luke 10:25-37

“And who is my neighbor?”

It is interesting that the readings for these next three Sundays can all be linked with the Lawyer’s question, ***“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”***

In today’s reading, the lawyer is learned enough in the Law to answer his own question; ***he is to love God and to love his neighbor.*** The story is simple enough and is familiar to any who knows anything about the gospels. A priest and Levite pass by. Technically, the Levite is a priest but whose main vocation since the time of Moses is to teach the Law. The priests, which are mainly from the sub-tribe of Levi, are of the family of Aaron and main vocation is the sacrificial offerings in the Temple.

If either of them were on their way to perform religious duties, they were in a dilemma. Contact with a corpse would disqualify them from their responsibilities. So, they pass by, refusing the absolute need of the sufferer. Of course, the third was a Samaritan, a foreigner, ***one of them***, hated by the Jews since the time of their return to Jerusalem from the Babylonian exile. The Samaritans tried to prevent the returning Jews from not only re-establishing themselves in their land but also tried to prevent them from rebuilding their Temple.

It is interesting that the lawyer could not even speak the word “Samaritan.” But he at least his original question was like those the crowds addressed to John the Baptist. Hon’s answers had been decent enough but were trite compared with the answer Christ gave. This parable tells us how repentance implies a complete change of outlook and behavior.