

Homily
Friday of the 16th week in OT
July 28, 2023

I love the Ten Commandments! They encompass everything we need to know and do to be truly children of God, Christ for one another. Like the Greatest Commandment, “Love God, love neighbor,” they begin with our relationship with God, “I, the Lord, am your God,” and continue with our relationship with one another, “You Shall not...”

Who can name the Ten Commandments in order, from memory, without looking? I cannot; I never had to memorize them, but I’m pretty sure I can list them all, just not in the right order.

Who remembers the Mel Brooks movie, “History of the World, Part 1?” In one scene, Mel Brooks plays Moses coming down the mountain juggling three large stone tablets.

Hear me! Oh hear me! All to heed! The Lord! The Lord Jehovah has given unto you these fifteen...” then one of the three tablets slips out of his hands and crashes to the ground. He looks down at the pile of rubble, “Oy! Ten! Ten commandments for all to obey!

He was right about one thing, “Ten commandments for all to obey!”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus tells us the familiar parable of the Sower and Seed. We know we are supposed to be Rich Soil. But how do we do this? How can we make sure we are Rich Soil and not Rocky Ground or Thorns?

Jesus tells us to love God and love our neighbor. This is such a simple command, but so hard to employ in our lives. It’s not easy to love God when true evil presents its ugly head, “Why, God? Why?” It’s not easy to love neighbor when that neighbor hurts us physically, financially, emotionally, spiritually. It’s one thing to avoid what the Ten Commandments tells us not to do, but when someone else breaks one or more of the Ten Commandments against us, we are supposed to forgive.

Rich Soil is soil that embraces Love Neighbor in what we say and do and in what we don’t say and don’t do. But Rich Soil also requires we embrace forgiveness for those who do or say things that hurt us.

I’ve heard this from several sources, so I can’t give proper credit, that if we can’t forgive someone right now, we pray to God to forgive that person in our place until we have the grace, mercy and love to forgive on our own. God is very good about grace, mercy and love, especially when we just can’t muster the strength to forgive on our own.

In a few moments, we will receive Jesus, Who is God, grace, mercy and love incarnate, Who becomes one with us, to strengthen, nourish and heal us, so we can be grace, mercy and love for our neighbor. Like I said a minute ago, it’s simple, but it is not easy.

Today, we pray for God’s love to enter us, and be for us what we aspire to until we can become Rich Soil. God, let us be love for one another.