

## Homily for 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dr. Laura is a well-known columnist to whom you can write in order to get advice. She has received countless letters covering every topic imaginable. Included in these requests for answers have been some strange religious issues. One of those reads as follows: “I’ve had it with my teenage daughter. I would like to sell her into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?”

Of course this is not the way the Bible should be read. You have to use your head when interpreting the Bible. This is the argument against reading the Scripture literally. If we do, we will ultimately run into problems. However, I learned a long time ago that a rule is not truly a rule unless there is an exception to it. And Jesus’ answer to the question of the Pharisee from today’s Gospel is that exception.

Here again are the Pharisees trying to trick Christ. They were the ones who had taken the original Ten Commandments and had turned them into 613 different rules, or commandments, of their own making. They were sure that whatever way Christ answered this question, He

would certainly have to run afoul of one or more of the 612 remaining commandments.

But Jesus not only knew the way to avoid their trap. He also knew exactly what they needed to hear. In the same way, Christ also knows exactly what we need to hear.

When all is said and done the thing that matters in life is how much we love God and how much we love each other. In a world divided by hatred, suspicion, finger-pointing and distrust, in a world where prejudice and greed occupy far more space than it should, love is the only thing that matters. And this love is a love that looks at the Word of God and discovers that true love begins by accepting the love that God has for each of us and then allowing that love to flow from our own hearts. God calls us to love in order that we might embrace all our sisters and brothers with the same intense love that God has for us. Each one of us must become a mirror that reflects God's love to the world.

In the end God will only ask us one question...did you care enough to love...to love me...to love all those I put in your life. How we live our lives and how well we love is the only thing that will enable us to answer that question. How well we love is the only thing in life that is really important.