Feb 23

LEVITICUS 19:1-2, 17-18

The LORD said to Moses,

“Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them:

Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.

“You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart.

Though you may have to reprove your fellow citizen,

do not incur sin because of him.

Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against any of your people.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

I am the LORD.”

PSALM 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13

R. (8a) The Lord is kind and merciful.

Bless the LORD, O my soul;

and all my being, bless his holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and forget not all his benefits. The Lord is kind and merciful.

He **pardons** all your **iniquities,**

**heals** all your **ills**.

He redeems your life from **destruction,**

crowns you with **kindness and compassion**. The Lord is kind and merciful.

**Merciful and gracious** is the LORD,

slow to anger and ***abounding in kindness****.* {Jerusalem Bible has: “***rich in faithful love*"** }

Not according to our sins does he deal with us,

nor does he \***requi**te us according to our crimes. The Lord is kind and merciful.

{\* means: what should be **requi**red}

As far as the east is from the west,

*He puts our sins so far he won’t*

*remember them.*

so far has he put our transgressions from us.

As **a father** has compassion on his children,

so **the LORD** has compassion on those who fear him. The Lord is kind and merciful.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:16-23

Brothers and sisters:

Do you not know that you are the temple of God,

and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person;

for the temple of God, which you are, is holy.

Let no one deceive himself.

If any one among you considers himself wise in this age,

let him become a fool, so as to become wise.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God,

for it is written: *God catches the wise in their own ruses, = from JOB 5:13*

*{5:13 He traps the crafty in the snare of their own shrewdness, turns subtle counselors to idiots.}*

and again:

The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, {= from PS 94:11 . . . knows exactly how men they are **vain.**/ or like a **puff of wind** think, how their thoughts are a **puff of wind**}

So let no one boast about human beings,

for everything belongs to you, Paul or Apollos or Cephas,

*If you live and think with XT you will be* HIM

*and have “it all.”*

or the world or life or death, or the present or the future:

all belong to you, and you to Christ, and Christ to God.

Alleluia [from the 1st letter of JOHN 2:5]

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Whoever keeps the word of Christ,

the love of God is truly perfected in him. R. Alleluia, alleluia.

This section follows the Beatitudes

and the salt, light and other readings from Feb 9 and 16.

Gospel MATTHEW 5:38-48

Jesus said to his disciples:

“You have heard that it was said,

*\*\*\* always* ***MIS****understood.*

*It means Do* no more *than is proportionate. Don’t say: “This is extra for good measure! Just to teach you a lesson!”*

*Then Xt says do even* ***less*** *than you could*

*for peace.*

*\*\*\*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*

But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil.

When someone strikes you on your right cheek,

turn the other one as well.

If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic,

hand over your cloak as well.

*These lines all add up to:*

*Do more than the minimum!*

Should anyone press you into service for one mile,

go for two miles.

Give to the one who asks of you,

and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.

“You have heard that it was said,

*You shall love your neighbor and #hate your enemy.*

# =you have no ‘love’ for your enemy,

*but XT kicks it up.*

*Xt says: LOVE your enemies.*

*WHY? God loves everyone, good or bad.*

*Be like God, your Father.*

But I say to you, love your enemies

and pray for those who persecute you,

that you may **be children of your heavenly Father**,

**for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good,**

**and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.**

For if you love those who love you,

*God loves even the BAD.*

*If you want to imitate God,*

*do the same.*

*Love both those considered “good” or even those seen as “bad”.*

what recompense will you have?

Do not the tax collectors do the same?

And if you greet your brothers only,

what is unusual about that?

Do not the pagans do the same?

So **be perfect**, just as your **heavenly Father is perfect.**”