

# A Celebration for the Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Sentence

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength, and you shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these. *(Mark 10:29-31)*

## Opening Prayer or Collect Year B

God of peace,  
you taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved,  
in quietness and confidence shall be our strength:  
by the power of your Spirit lift us to your presence,  
where we may be still and know that you are God;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*or*

O God,  
whom to follow is to risk our whole lives:  
as Ruth and Naomi loved and held to one another,  
abandoning the ways of the past,  
so may we also not be divided,  
but travel together into that strange land where you will lead us,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Readings for the Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

### **Old Testament: Ruth 1:1-18**

*A Reading from Ruth, Chapter 1 beginning at verse 1*

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there for about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons or her husband.

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had had consideration for his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.' Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, 'No, we will return with you to your people.' But Naomi said, 'Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.' Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, 'See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.' But Ruth said,

'Do not press me to leave you  
or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;  
where you lodge, I will lodge;  
your people shall be my people,  
and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die—  
there will I be buried.

May the Lord do thus and so to me,  
and more as well,  
if even death parts me from you!

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Hear the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

### ***Psalm 146 APBA p 377***

- 1 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul:  
while I live I will praise the Lord;
- 2 While I have any being  
I will sing praises to my God.
- 3 Put not your trust in princes:  
nor in flesh and blood, which cannot save.
- 4 For when their breath goes from them,  
they return again to the earth:  
and on that day all their thoughts perish.
- 5 Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob:  
whose hope is in the Lord their God,

- 6 The God who made heaven and earth:  
the sea, and all that is in them,
- 7 Who keeps faith for ever:  
who deals justice to those that are oppressed.
- 8 The Lord gives food to the hungry:  
and sets the captives free.
- 9 The Lord gives sight to the blind:  
the Lord lifts up those that are bowed down.
- 10 The Lord loves the righteous:  
the Lord cares for the stranger in the land.
- 11 He upholds the widow and the fatherless:  
as for the way of the wicked, he turns it upside down.
- 12 The Lord shall be king for ever:  
your God, O Zion, shall reign through all generations.  
Praise the Lord.

### ***New Testament: Hebrews 9:11-15***

*A Reading Hebrews, Chapter 9 beginning at verse 11*

But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.

Hear the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

### ***Gospel: Mark 12:13-17, 28-34***

*A Reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark,  
Chapter 12, beginning at verse 13*

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Then they sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said. And they came and said to him, 'Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?' But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, 'Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it.' And they brought one. Then he said to them, 'Whose head is this, and whose title?' They answered, 'The emperor's.' Jesus said to them, 'Give to the emperor the things that

are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' And they were utterly amazed at him.

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' Then the scribe said to him, 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that "he is one, and besides him there is no other"; and "to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength", and "to love one's neighbour as oneself",— this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.' When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' After that no one dared to ask him any question.

For the Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**