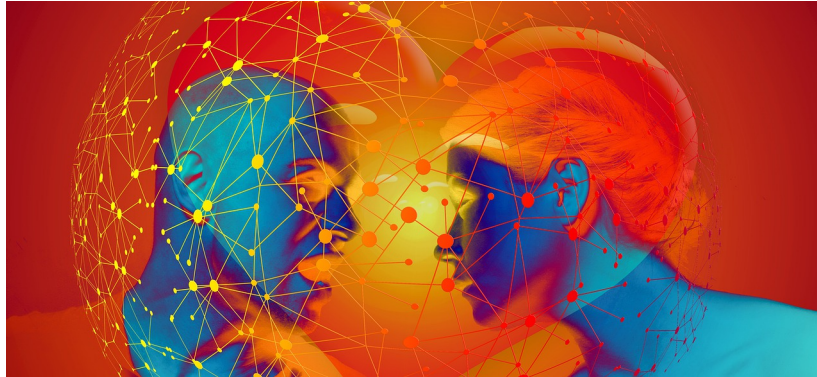


This Week's Scriptures
February 23, 2020
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Leviticus 19:1–2, 17–18 † 1 Corinthians 3:16–23 † Matthew 5:38–48



Reflection by: Mary Lanni, OPA

Whenever we feel appalled and angered by the bad behavior, insults, and cruelties that human beings inflict on each other, we need to visit and revisit these three readings from scripture. They show us the blueprint from which God created us and enabled us to spread God's love throughout our world. We are holy because God is holy (Leviticus), we are temples of God and the Spirit dwells within us (Paul to the Corinthians), and we have the capacity to go the extra mile, if asked, and love not only our neighbors but even our enemies (Jesus in Matthew).

Our human history is resplendent with those whose lives were lived very much in the way God intended, but it also records those whose lives were devoted to self interest, the desire for power and pure evil. These paths obscured the godliness of their creation and made them into torturers, oppressors, and criminals---violent and angry people. What do we do about them, sisters and brothers, children of the same Father? Jesus gives us an answer, but it is a very difficult one for us to accept and act upon. He tells us to turn the other cheek and respond with love.

Whether we can do this or not depends on how strongly we believe that the Spirit really dwells within us leaving no room for revenge and hate.