

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Mar 9th 2018

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

We are so used to quoting this phrase that we don't realize how significant it is. It is saying that the gauge of our loving others is loving ourselves. Sometimes we are taught the wrong idea that we should not love ourselves — that doing so is selfishness. But that is not true. We cannot truly love others if we do not love ourselves. What does this mean?. It means first of all that we acknowledge that all of what we are is from God — gift of God. So the first act of loving ourselves is appreciating ourselves and thanking God that of all possible beings, we are the ones chosen to emerge from nothingness into being. Then we look at ourselves — our body — the most amazing and most spectacular mechanism on earth — our circulatory system, our digestive system, how our brain works, the coordination of our muscles, bones, limbs — amazing! — .Loving ourselves means taking care of ourselves, giving ourselves good nourishment, avoiding harmful foods, drinks, habits, etc. It means maintaining good mental health, getting enough rest, avoiding addictions, forming good physical and mental habits, etc. It also means accepting ourselves for what we are — our gifts and our weaknesses. We are able to forgive ourselves and begin anew. And this is our way also of loving others — being caring and compassionate, being understanding and forgiving, being nurturing and considerate. I LOVE MYSELF. I LOVE YOU AS I LOVE MYSELF.

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