

**READINGS AND REFLECTION FOR SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 2020**  
**TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

***First Reading: Ez 33:7-9***

***Responsorial Psalm: PS 95:1-2, 6-9***

***Second Reading: Rom. 13:8-10***

***Gospel: MT 18: 15-20***

The readings today seem to echo our need to love one another, to be there for one another, to bring peace, and to love each other as we love ourselves. “How well am I living this message?”

In the first reading Ezekiel is given his mission by God to speak the truth, speak the reality to the people. God urged him to repeat the truth several times and if the people do not listen, he should just know “you have done your part.” Here we are in the midst of the pandemic and how are we living our truth, our reality? We hear the reality of the virus, we are given mandates to follow and yet some say “this is a hoax”. How would these nay-sayers console a family who has had members die due to the virus? Such little things, ‘wear your mask and socially distance’, we know it helps to slow the spread...

In Romans we are reminded that we are not to owe a debt to anyone. There is the litany of the commandments repeated, the “nots”—to not commit adultery, do not kill, do not covet, do not lie, not... . All is summed up in the great commandment of Love, to love God above all else and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. If we did love like this, how would the daily news change? Instead of all the protests, violence, abuse, we would hear stories of caring, love lived in our daily sharing with others, of giving each other a hand up.

Our Gospel from St. Matthew continues the theme to forgive, to love the other. We have a power within us to better our world. Jesus tells us who ever comes together and agrees on things—“I am there in their midst.” We need to realize God-Jesus does walk with us and all we need do is take time to reflect and listen for God’s voice prompting us to do good. Prompting us to love and care for others as sisters and brothers. May we each have the grace to do our part, to live the gospel of Jesus, the gospel that calls us to reach out, to lift up, to forgive, and to bring peace.

St. Francis reminds us we must first have peace within our own heart, then we can extend a blessing of peace to others. Namaste!

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