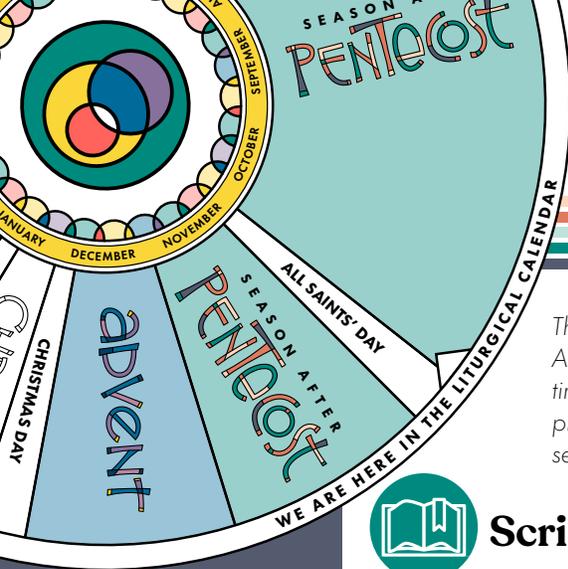


Mark 12:28-34

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday between October 30 and November 5



The Season after Pentecost is the period between the Day of Pentecost and the First Sunday of Advent. This season makes up half of the calendar year, and its liturgical color is green. It is a time to focus on the life and growth of the Church in the world, empowered by the gift of the presence of the Holy Spirit. 12th-century mystic Hildegard von Bingen captured the essence of this season when she wrote, "The Holy Spirit is the greening power of God. Our task is to blossom."



Scripture

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 neighbor 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 neighbor 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.



Questions

- Jesus told the people there were two greatest commandments. What were they?
- Back during Jesus' time, the people of Israel followed the Ten Commandments and other books of laws. The people thought these laws were very important, but the scribe asked Jesus what law is the most important. What stood out to you as Jesus answered the question?
- Loving God helps us grow in virtues—patience, kindness, respect, etc. How might loving God help us love our neighbors?
- We are all made in the image of God, which means we have God in each of us. In what ways does loving our neighbor honor God in each of us?
- Jesus uses the word "neighbor" to mean anyone around us—any member of the human race. Your family, friends, and even people you've never met are your neighbors. What are some things you could do this week to love your neighbor?

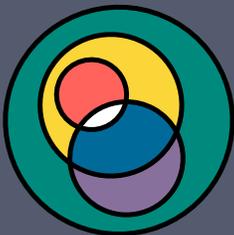
Look it Up!



Look up the Shema prayer, which is one of the most important prayers in the Jewish faith. In this story, Jesus says, "Hear, O Israel."

"Shema" means to listen or hear, which is the first word of the prayer.

mini
REVOLUTIONS





Activity

Materials:

Paper	Art supplies
Writing utensils	Snacks

This scripture talks about loving God and loving our neighbors. Our neighbors can be the people who live near us, the people in our community, or anyone we show care to. It reminds us there are many different ways we can show love: with our hearts, with our souls, with our minds, and with our strength. Think about neighbors in your life and make one or more of these projects to show your love for them! Make a plan to send it to them.

Show your neighbor you love them with your:

Heart: Make something from the heart for your neighbor. It could be a drawing, a painting, a poem, a scarf, a song—whatever creative thing you like to do to show your love to others.

Soul: Write a prayer or blessing for your neighbor. You can write your own or fill in the blanks on the one below:

To _____,

May God bless you in everything that you do. Please know God loves you, and I love you, too!

Your Neighbor,

Mind: Write a note to engage your neighbor's mind. You could write down a joke to make them laugh, a riddle for them to solve, something you like about them, or even a question you've always wanted to ask them.

Strength: Find a small snack to help nourish your neighbor's body and keep up their strength. Make sure it is in a wrapper or container so that it stays together until it's time for your neighbor to eat it.

Alternate Activity

Our story says we can love with our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. We can show our love for both God and our neighbors by praying for our neighbors and ourselves!

Find some space and focus on your beating heart. As you do this, say out loud, "God, I love you, my neighbors, and myself with all my heart!" Say the names of people you want to pray for.

Focus on your breathing. As you do this, say out loud, "God, I love you, my neighbors, and myself with all my soul!" Say the names of people you want to pray for. It's okay if you repeat names.

Focus on your head. As you do this, say out loud, "God, I love you, my neighbors, and myself with all my mind!" Say the names of people you want to pray for. It's okay if you repeat names.

Focus on your arms and legs. As you do this, say out loud, "God, I love you, my neighbors, and myself with all my strength!" Say the names of people you want to pray for. It's okay if you repeat names.



Micropractice

Good rules help us love our neighbors well. When you feel disappointed that you have to follow a rule that does not seem very fun, take a moment to breathe and consider how your good choices bless your neighbor.



Download a graphic to share with your community and on social media. You can download it here: illstrdm.in/minirevBAP23



Prayer

Dear God, we love you with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. We also love our neighbors. Help us show this love to everyone we meet and treat them as our neighbors. Amen.

HEAR O ISRAEL:

the LORD our GOD, ^{est} 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.

YOU SHALL LOVE

your

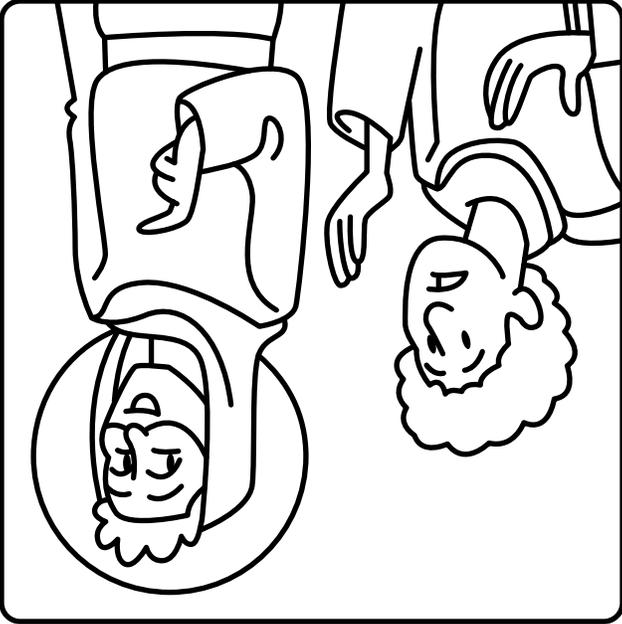
NEIGHBOR
as YOURSELF.

THERE IS NO OTHER COMMANDMENT GREATER THAN THESE.

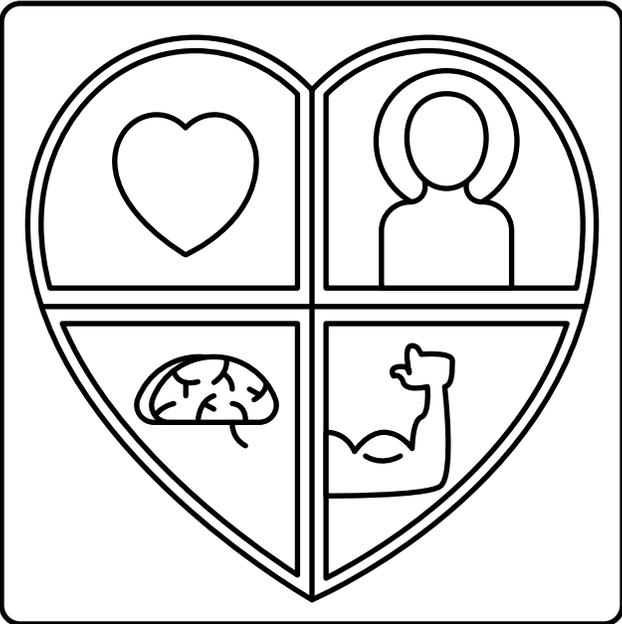
4. The scribe agreed with Jesus and called him teacher. He said, "Loving God and neighbor is the most important of all the rules!" Jesus smiled, replying, "You are close to God's kingdom!"



1. There once was a scribe who spent his whole life learning about God's laws. He saw Jesus answering questions with wisdom and knowledge. So he asked Jesus: "Which of God's rules is most important to follow?"



2. Jesus said this: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; love God with all your heart, and soul, and mind, and strength."



3. "And," Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself. If these two rules lead your heart, you will always be on the path to the kingdom of God."

