# LSW

children

Year B

**Thirty-first Ordinary Sunday**

**Images**

Commandments

Promises

**Points to note**

This passage is one that children can easily identify with. To take the idea further, we should attempt to concentrate on the concept of commandments and covenants. You may wish to look at the first reading for the covenant that God made with the people of Israel.

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life;

you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark

(Mk 12: 28-34)

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, “Which is the first of all the commandments?” Jesus replied, “This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord your God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord you God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” The scribe said to him, “Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.” Jesus, seeing how wisely he has spoken said, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And after that no one dared to question him anymore.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Discussion**

What are laws? What kind of laws are there? Who makes them? What happens when you break a law? *Explain that laws are things that we have to do or to follow. Get the children to discuss in practical terms about the laws they have encountered: those in school and those at home.*

*Explain that sometimes we have to do things not because there is a law that says we have to do it but because of a promise we made. Discuss about promises and how they work. Introduce the idea of a contract or a covenant. A covenant is just a fancy way of saying a contract. A contract or a covenant is where two persons promise to do certain things for each other.*

God made a covenant with the people of Israel. Do you know where was that covenant made? *In the wilderness of Sinai. The covenant that God made was not just with Moses but with the whole people of Israel and in a way, with us as well.* What were the promises that God and the people of Israel made to each other? *The people of Israel promised to keep God’s laws and God promised to keep the people of Israel as his people.*

What were the laws that God wanted the people of Israel to keep? *Keep in mind that although we think largely of the Ten Commandments, the laws that the people of Israel were to keep can be found in the second to the fifth book of the Old Testament. These laws cover a wide range of areas and involve the whole of the people’s daily lives.*

Do you know that someone has counted all the laws that God all? Do you think anyone can remember all 613? That is why the laws were summarised into the simple Ten Commandments. *Discuss what a commandment is.* Can anyone tell us what all the Ten Commandments were?

Summarising into the Ten Commandments was still not enough for some people, and there were people who tried to summarise them into one commandment. If Jesus had to have only one commandment, which would he have picked? *You may wish to discuss how the Ten Commandments can be summarised into the commandment of love.*

Who would you love? *You can put everyone into two categories: (i) God; and (ii) people around us. The Ten Commandments, for instance, can be split accordingly: the first three deals with (i) and the others deal with (ii).*

*Some people say that the cross symbolise this idea as well: the vertical line (loving God) and the horizontal line (loving each other). We should always be reminded that the two directions of love must always go together, otherwise there is no cross!*

Is it possible to love God without loving the people around you? Is it possible to love people around you without loving God? Why do you say that? *While it is clear from 1Jn that ‘whoever who says he loves God but does not love his brother is a liar’, you may get very interesting ideas from the children. You could expand on it by discussing God being upset at how we fight each other and being mean to one another, very much like how Mom gets angry when we fight.*

*Discuss the practical ways of how we love God by loving one another. How does it make God happy that we love one another.*