There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"
He said in reply, You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."
He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."
But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"
Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place,
and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn, and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Our Scripture Reflection

“And who is my neighbor?” the young legal scholar asked Jesus. He was not looking for information. He wanted to make Jesus look naive and himself brilliant. He knew the Law held that a neighbor was a fellow Jew: Someone who looked like me, talked like me, ate like me, dressed like me, worshipped like me and thought like me. In telling the most familiar parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus is attempting to expand the man’s boundaries. For Jesus, since we are all His Father’s children, a neighbor is everyone or anyone in need. True love is meant to cover all people in all circumstances. Yet even though Jesus instructed him with this most compelling story, his heart would not stretch.

Food for your Journey

Come with me to a third-grade classroom. There is a 9 year-old kid sitting at his desk and all of a sudden, there is a puddle between his feet and the front of his pants is wet. He thinks his heart is going to stop because he cannot possibly imagine how this has happened. It’s never happened before, and he knows that when the boys find out he will never hear the end of it. When the girls find out, they’ll never speak to him again as long as he lives. The boy believes his heart is going to stop; he puts his head down and prays this
He looks up from his prayer and here comes the teacher with a look in her eyes that says he has been discovered. As the teacher is walking toward him, a classmate named Susie is carrying a goldfish bowl that is filled with water. Susie trips in front of the teacher and inexplicably dumps the bowl of water in the boy’s lap. The boy pretends to be angry, but all the while is saying to himself, “Thank you, Lord! Thank you, Lord!”

Now all of a sudden, instead of being the object of ridicule, the boy is the object of sympathy. The teacher rushes him downstairs and gives him gym shorts to put on while his pants dry out. All the other children are on their hands and knees cleaning up around his desk. The sympathy is wonderful. But as life would have it, the ridicule that should have been his has been transferred to someone else — Susie. She tries to help, but they tell her to get out. “You’ve done enough, you klutz!”

Finally, at the end of the day, as they are waiting for the bus, the boy walks over to Susie and whispers, “You did that on purpose, didn’t you?” Susie whispers back, “I wet my pants once, too.”

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**A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear God, Help me this day to imitate Your Son Jesus by loving all people as He loved them, especially the least in Your Kingdom. In doing so, may I reveal Your love to the world. Amen