

# Connecting with the Sunday Readings

**Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Gospel Word**  
Mark 12:28b-34

What would be the alternative to loving the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength? It would be loving God with part of our heart, a corner of our soul, a passing thought now and then, and remembering occasionally the strength we could be experiencing through Christ. Sadly, the way most of us live is that alternative. How often do we make God first in our lives? It's an ideal we would like to reach, but we only do it intermittently when the world steps aside and we remember, or trouble comes and we refocus our attention on him.

Fortunately, our Savior intercedes for us. He not only loves us enough to forgive us of our forgetfulness and unloving actions, but he loves us enough to stand in for us and sacrifice his life on the Cross so that we might be spared.

—by David Thomas, PhD, Co-Director, The Bethany Family Institute

## Living the Word

Like entitled, privileged teenagers we don't acknowledge our birth in Christ. We don't show honor and gratitude for our favored life. We could be blessed and increase greatly by keeping the Commandments. Our land of milk and honey awaits us.

Money, technology, fashion, belongings, or friend/family connections should not be our god. There is only one God. "The Lord our God is Lord alone!" We are to love him with all our heart, not reserve some for our interests (that he created/provided). We are to love him with all our soul, not save some for music and art. We are to love him with all our mind, not reserve some for psychics, astrologers and occultists. We are to love him with all our strength, and all that we have in us, not reserve some for our personal contests.

## One-line Prayer

Lord, may I reflect back to you the love that you have given so generously. Amen.