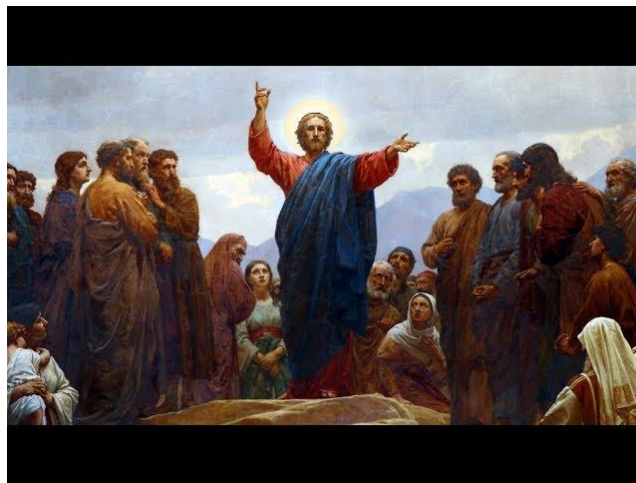


Friday, March 12, 2021
Friday of Third Week of Lent

How do we respond when we are asked to recite the first commandment? Probably in this way: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” That is a good answer. However, Jesus’ response is the actual correct answer: “**Hear**, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” Jesus begins with the words “**Hear**” or “**Listen**”. The first commandment is to unblock our ears and soften our hearts and be ready to receive God’s word. How beautiful it is to listen to God’s word from the prophet Hosea: “Return, O Israel, to the Lord you God!” “I will heal their defection,” says the Lord, “I will love them freely.” It is almost as if God is begging us! We should be the humble beggars, asking God for forgiveness! The Good News is that God always initiates the movement toward us but we need to be open – both our ears and our hearts – to listen to Him! “If only my people would hear me, and Israel walk in my ways, I would feed them the best of wheat, and with honey from the rock I would fill them.” The rock is Christ, our sweet Savior, who allows Himself to be crucified, annihilated on the Cross like wheat that is crushed to make Jesus truly become the Bread of Life for us!

God Love You!

Fr. Jim Starasovich



Sh'ma Yisrael (Shema)
Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!
עֲקֹשׁ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶחָד
You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your might.
תְּבָרָא יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶחָד לְכַבֵּרְכֶם לְכַבֵּרְשֵׁפֶנּוּ לְכַבֵּרְדָּמָה