

## Introduction to the 31st Sunday of Ordinary Time

This Sunday, our readings invite us to explore the essence of faith, love, and the call to community. They emphasize the importance of loving God and one another, revealing the heart of our relationship with the Divine and each other.

### The Guiding Light

Imagine a lighthouse standing tall on the shore, its beam of light piercing through darkness, guiding ships safely to harbor. This lighthouse represents the core teachings of our faith, illuminating the path for our lives.

- 1. First Reading (Deuteronomy 6:2-6):** Just as the lighthouse is built on a solid foundation, the Shema—"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength"—is the foundational commandment for the Israelites. It calls us to center our lives around loving God completely, much like the lighthouse is rooted in its purpose.
- 2. Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 18:2-4, 47, 51):** This psalm echoes the strength and protection found in God, similar to how a lighthouse offers safety to those navigating treacherous waters. It reminds us to recognize God as our rock and refuge, guiding us through life's challenges.
- 3. Second Reading (Hebrews 7:23-28):** The author of Hebrews describes Jesus as the eternal high priest, who intercedes for us like the lighthouse beacon continually shining. His sacrifice ensures that we are never left adrift, providing a reliable source of hope and grace.
- 4. Gospel (Mark 12:28-34):** In this passage, Jesus summarizes the law with the commandments to love God and our neighbor. This dual commandment acts as the lighthouse's light—guiding our relationships and actions. Just as the lighthouse illuminates the path for sailors, our love for God and others directs our lives toward fulfillment and community.

In summary, just as a lighthouse guides ships safely to shore, the teachings in today's readings guide us to a deeper love for God and one another. By anchoring ourselves in these truths, we can navigate our lives with clarity and purpose, bringing light to those around us.