

Loving God

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5). This is known as the Shema, taken from the first word "hear" in Hebrew. Modern Jews consider the recital of the Shema both evening and morning to be one of their most sacred duties. It was cited by Jesus as the "greatest commandment in the Law" (Matthew 22:36-37). Yet, this commandment at times may seem very difficult to obey. In the natural state of man, it is very difficult. We are a sinful people. And we know that to disobey God is sin. But, as Catholics, we are cleansed from original sin through the sacrament of Baptism. When we are confirmed, we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus enters into our soul through Holy Communion. It is in these sacraments, we are able to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. It is through His power that we are called to do the impossible. Our love and affection for God grows more intense as time goes by. When all is well in our life, we know that God is there. But it is during times of struggle that we are given the opportunity to grow in His love even more deeply. Over time, we are able to see His compassion, mercy and love for us. This should be a great source of encouragement. Jesus is the one that fulfilled this commandment perfectly in our place so one day we may enter into Heaven. Our intense desire to love God with all of our being is the only response we need to give. *-Sherrie Clutts DRE*