

**Infinite Energy**    Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time    Friday, August 19, 2016    8:15 AM  
**Ez 37:1-14;**    Mt 22:34-40    (St. John Eudes, priest)    (As you love God with our whole  
being we become more full of God and we have infinite energy left to love our neighbor and  
ourselves and serve the world to do what God is doing.)

In the first reading from the prophet Ezekiel we have a **prophecy that God's Spirit would come** to inspire, which means **to give life to his people**. Now there are parallel prophecies in Jeremiah on the same line, that God's Spirit would come and because of God's Spirit they would know God. **Knowing God they will know what is the will of God**; they would no longer have to ask anybody; i.e., they would no longer need any instruction. That's the idea.

Now you see in this gospel story that Jesus took up that idea. His answer to the very legitimate question, which is the greatest commandment? his answer to that was devastating to the one who asked it and to the whole group. Now you have to remember the setting. Jesus had just silenced the Sadducees; he had brought them to silence. He had confounded them. So now the Pharisees, a different party—Sadducees were a priestly group. Their prime concern was the Temple and temple worship. Pharisees, their prime mission was Torah, the rules, the rules of the road if you want be a good, holy Jew. **So having put the Sadducees in their place**, and we don't know what it was, we don't know what the conversation was, **now the Pharisees want, as it were, a turn to get the better of him**.

**But this statement is devastating because we don't need any more scholars of the Law. If indeed the whole Law and the prophets depend on only two commandments, well everyone can learn that.** Nobody needs any explanations or teachings, so that was why it's a devastating answer to the question. And the originality of Jesus does not lie in the actual statements themselves. He is just quoting the Old Testament: first part Deuteronomy, second part

Leviticus. But the point is that he says that's the whole thing. That is where Jesus comes in with his word from God.

**That's where the Spirit that Ezekiel talked about is now breathing through him giving life, because this is life-giving to know that life is not about rules,** that we don't honor God by following rules. But we honor God by love. We begin with God, but loving our neighbor as ourselves is just like it, that when we love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul that whole heart, mind, and soul is not exhausted. It doesn't exhaust us at all because **as you love God with our whole being we become more full of God and we have infinite energy left to love our neighbor and ourselves and serve the world to do what God is doing.** So this is a new source of energy, this law, this whole law and prophets, as opposed to what it was always understood to be: requirements, commandments, obligations, duties: no, **a new opportunity to be filled with infinite energy and to spend it in the service of God, and thus sharing in God.** This is something totally new; no one had ever heard that before to my knowledge.