



# Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 7, 2021

Third Sunday of Lent (B)

Ex 20:1-17 or 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17

1 Cor 1:22-25

Jn 2:13-25

While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing.

JOHN 2:23



## The Long Arm of the Law

**E**ventually you're going to get caught. That's what this expression means. And that is pretty much how most people understand law—as something that hems them in and, if disregarded, will get them in the end. But that is not how Israel understood its law. The psalm verses for today insist that the law refreshes the soul, rejoices the heart, enlightens the eye, is more precious than gold, and is sweeter than syrup or honey from the comb. The people cherished the law because it outlined for them how they were to live as God's Chosen People.

People who want to run a marathon, learn to fly a plane, or join a club are eager to take on the directives that will enable them to accomplish their goal. That is how Israel viewed the law outlined in today's first reading. It's as if God said: "If you want to be my people, this is the way you should live."

Whenever the law of Israel seems to be criticized (as is often the case in St. Paul's writings), it is not really the law itself but the inappropriate attitude toward it that is censured. As important and precious as the law might be, it is only a means to an end. It is not the end itself, any more than the directives for flying a plane are what are uppermost. From the Bible's point of view, the long arm of the law is meant to direct and support us, not intimidate us.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

### For Reflection

- ★ *The laws in today's first reading deal with basic living. Which ones seem to be the hardest to live by? Why?*
- ★ *Which laws give you the most support as you try to live with integrity?*

