

MAY 9, 2021
Sunday of the 6th Week of Easter
John 15: 9-17

“LOVE AS CHRIST LOVED US!”

“One time a Sunday school superintendent was registering two new sisters in Sunday School. When she asked them how old they were one replied, “We’re both seven. My birthday is April 8th, and my sister is April 20th.” That superintendent replied, “That’s impossible girls.” The other sister then spoke up and said, “No it’s true. One of us is adopted.” “Oh,” the superintendent said. “Which one?” The two sisters looked at each other, and one said, “We asked Dad that question a while ago, but he just looked at us and said that he loved us both equally, so much so that he couldn’t remember which one of us was adopted.” (from *God’s Little Lessons on Life for Women, Honor Books*). — That is a wonderful analogy for the love of God. God loves us all, equally. We are loved, not because we have earned God’s love or deserve it, but because of God’s grace.”¹

Our readings for today speak about love – specifically God’s love and loving one another. St. John speaks about love as ‘agape.’ “Agape describes a love which reaches out to others without expecting anything in return. Such is the love of God for his creation. God’s love is poured out in abundance on every single creature, and it continues to flow out whether there is a response or not. This is the love which the father in the story of the Prodigal Son shows to the wayward son who has gone far away and wasted all his father’s gifts on a debauched life. It may come as a shock to some to be told that the love of God for the Mother of Jesus and for the most immoral person you can think of is exactly the same! God is love; it is His very nature; He cannot not love. What then is the difference between Mary and some depraved person? It is in the response. Mary listened to Jesus. “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it,” Jesus once

¹ www.stories4homilies.co

said referring to His mother. Mary said an unconditional 'Yes' to God at her annunciation. She opened her heart to the agape of God."²

My brothers and sisters, we must have this love of agape, enabling us to love even those who are unlovable, unrepentant, our enemies that lead us to accept and be reconciled with them. To love them means to be forgiving, embracing them without any doubts or inhibitions. We want the best for them, to reform, change and be healed of any hatred, animosity, bitterness, and hopelessness. As Christ loves us, we must love others, even those who are not responding to our love. We need to be patient and understanding with them. The more we love, the more God lives in us. We love others not only to find love, but we love because God loves us first and we want to share that love with others. Loving your husband or wife, children, family members, neighbors, and enemies means God dwells in us and He loves us, and only in love that we will love.

Today we pray for all our mothers who are exemplar of God's love, who give and share their dedicated lives for their families, who never fail to love their husband and children, and serve others with humility and compassion. May they always be blessed by the Lord and reward them here and the next life.

I would like to end this sharing with this story: "It was a busy morning, about 8:30, when an elderly gentleman in his 80's arrived to have stitches removed from his thumb. He said he was in a hurry as he had an appointment at 9:00 am. While taking care of his wound, the doctor asked his patient if he had another doctor's appointment as he was in such a hurry. The gentleman said that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife. In answer to the doctor's question about her health, the old man responded that she had been there for a while and that she was a victim of Alzheimer's disease. When the doctor asked if she would be upset if he was a bit late, he replied that

² livingspace.sacredspace.ie

she no longer knew who he was, that she had not recognized him in five years now. The doctor was surprised, and asked him why, if his wife didn't know who he was, he went every morning faithfully for the breakfast. The old man smiled and said, "She doesn't know me, but I still know who she is." The doctor with tears in the eyes said to himself, "That is the kind of love I want in my life." — True love is neither physical, nor romantic. True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be."³ My brothers and sisters, Jesus commands, us to practice this type of sacrificial and selfless agape love as He practiced it. So, let us love one another as He loved us.

Let this be our prayer: "My God, Love is Your name and You ultimately revealed that by sending Your Only-Begotten Son into the world and be the sacrifice that took our sins away. Through Jesus Christ, who calls us His friends, make our love strong, let it always have the last word in us and be given for free, like Yours. Help us to remain in your love, be in love, and love our brothers and sisters as Jesus has loved us. Amen."

³ www.stories4homilies.co