**GOD HAS LOVED US IN JESUS BY GIVING HIMSELF UNTO DEATH AND WE ARE CALLED TO FAN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE POURED INTO US, SO THAT WE LOVE OTHERS AS GOD HAS LOVED US.**

Following Mother Teresa's address to a group of wealthy suburban men and women, a member in the audience stood and asked, “Mother, you have done so much to make the world a better place. What can we do?" Mother Teresa smiled and said simply, "Love your children." The questioner looked perplexed and seemed about to speak again. Mother Teresa continued: “There are other things you can do, but this is the best. Love your children. Love your children as much as you can. Love your children so that they know you love them. Show them that you love them. That is the best."

Jesus not only told his disciples what to do but also gave them a standard by which to measure their love. He said: “Love one another as I have loved you." This love knows no limits. This love symbolizes total self-giving.

Saint Jerome tells us that while Saint John was an elderly man in Ephesus, living in a cave with a few disciples, every Sunday his closest followers would bring him down to the community for Sunday Eucharist. And when it was time for him to preach, the crowds would huddle around him because his voice had by this time grown faint. Every week he would counsel them, “Little children, love one another!" Eventually one of his closest followers asked him, "Do you not tire of giving the same message every time you preach?" He said, "Son, I never tire of proclaiming it, because the Master never tired of proclaiming it. And if you keep it, you do all that is needed."

Perhaps one of the reasons why both the Lord and his beloved disciple constantly preached these simple words was because they recognized just how hard they are to keep. To love one another is, as we've experienced ourselves in the Christian life, not that easy. And love is the mark of Christians because it is the mark of Christ – who loved us so much to give his life for us – and the mark of God, who, as Saint John later tells us, is love.

Jesus himself said, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Hence, if we do not love one another, if we do not put this command of the Lord to love into practice, rather than show the face of Christ, we obscure it. As Gaudium et Spes wrote so movingly, one of the greatest causes for atheism in the world is the bad example of Christians, Christians who don't really love God and don't really love each other. And for this reason, the readings that the Church gives us today are a great gift, so that we, toward the end of this Easter season, might be able to take a hard look at how we love or whether we truly love.

Saint Paul, 1Cor 13:4-8 gave us a great index about how those who are in love behave. "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Perhaps the best way to evaluate whether we are in love, whether we love, is to substitute our name for the word love in that litany. Are we patient and kind or are we envious, boastful, arrogant, rude, irritable, and resentful? Do we bear all things or insist on our own way? Would those with whom we live, and work agree with our assessment?

May the Lord through this Eucharist fill us with that love that knows no bounds, so that we may love him with all we've got and love others as he loves them. May he give us his heart to love, so that others in seeing our concrete, tangible, visible and vocal love for them may be brought to the Source of that love.