

Love is the Guide

This Week's Readings at Mass

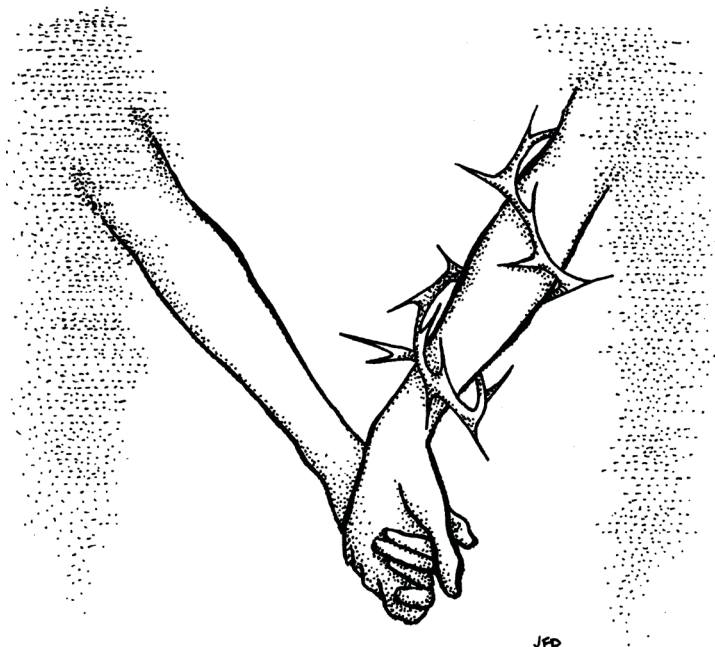
- ▶ Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48 - Peter in Caesarea
- ▶ 1 John 4:7-10 - God's love and ours
- ▶ John 15:9-17 - A disciple's love

This week, we hear a Gospel reading with Jesus' invitation to "remain in my love" and to "love one another as I love you." He doesn't spell out endless rules ("Do this." "Don't do that.") which we need to memorize and follow in order to do what is right. Instead, his invitation is simply to focus on remaining connected to him ("remain in me") and letting all of our actions flow from a commitment to loving others as he loved us.

It is an invitation for a mature follower. Just as we need to spell out many simple rules to help younger children understand right from wrong, with "younger" disciples more rules or "commandments" are helpful. Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Pray for your enemies. Forgive those who have hurt you.

There is nothing wrong with following a list of religious commandments as we learn how to be faithful disciples. At a certain point, though, our faith needs to mature to take into account more complex situations—the gray areas between the black-and-white, or simple right and wrong. Jesus is asking us to go beyond what the rules say and *commands us to respond in love to everyone*, just as he did.

Jesus gives us a lot of respect here, insisting that we are his friends, not his students, his servants, or his slaves, when we love one another as he does. Often



LOVE... IS... PA... PAATI... PAATIEN...T...

LOVE IS PATIENT LOVE IS KIND IT IS NOT JEALOUS IT IS NOT POMPUS IT IS NOT INFLATED

IT IS NOT RUDE IT DOES NOT SEEK ITS OWN INTERESTS IT IS NOT QUICK TEMPERED IT DOES NOT BROOD OVER INJURY IT DOES NOT REJOICE OVER WRONG DOING BUT REJOICES IN THE TRUTH I'M GLAD THAT'S OVER WITH!

IT... BEARS ALL THINGS... BE... LIEVES... ALL THINGS... HOPES ALL THINGS... EN... ENDURES ALL THINGS...

LOVE NEVER FAILS.

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"This I command you: love one another."

Sheepish Question:
When, lately, have I acted on God's love for me?

Christians fall into the habit of relating to God or Jesus as a child to a parent, but Jesus suggests a more equal relationship. God will always be God, and we will always be human, but Jesus still invites us to be in friendship with him.

Questions of the Week

- 1 Think of a situation in which the difference between right and wrong might be blurred but you are asked to respond with love rather than holding strictly to what a law or commandment says. How does it challenge you to be more Christ-like?
- 2 Have you ever thought of yourself as being friends with Jesus? How so? If not, what is your reaction to this invitation?

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