**“Love of God”**

All our readings point us to the love of God. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The one true God without Whom there is no other god has unfathomable love for us. He has loved us even before the foundation of the world. He loved us when He knitted us in our mother’s womb. He never stops loving us even when we disobey His commandments. Because of His love for us, at our repentance He forgives us and welcomes us back into His abundant love.

In our first reading, we heard how the early Church was growing by leaps and bounds. Phillips, who was one of the seven chosen Deacons from our last weeks readings, was preaching in Samaria. He brought joy and hope into the lives of the Samaritans by saying and doing things in the name of Jesus that touched their hearts and they believed in God. They were mesmerized by his words and captured by the miracles God was performing through him.

Phillip was full of God, and when you are full of God, you are full of love; Because God is love, God will fill you to the brim with His love. When you are full of love, you want the whole world to know about it. You would want to share your affection with others. That was how Phillip felt. He could not contain himself, he wanted to share the source of his joy with others.

Phillip wanted to share the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift of love with others and that love radiated to others. It is a gift that lets you know you are the apple of God’s eye. When we have good news in our hearts, we want to shout it from the roof top and let the world know about it. That was exactly what Phillip did in the presence of the Samaritans. So, they said to Phillip, they wanted the same love for themselves. Phillip then baptized them.

We too must always share our love of God with others. We must not keep it to ourselves. As we live our lives as Christians, we must let our love for each other show so as it was said of earlier Christians, see how they love each other; So, it should be said about us. Loving each other means putting others’ needs before ours. It means dying to self. When we die to self, that is when we are touching others with God’s love.

In our second reading, St. Peter asks us to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts. It is through loving Christ as the way, the truth and the life that we can sanctify Him in our hearts. He tells us to love Jesus and desire to know all about Him. When we love someone, we would desire to know everything about them and we want to do things that please them. That is the way Peter is telling us to love Jesus.

Saint Peter wants us to learn and know the reason for our hope and spread that knowledge to others lovingly and with reverence to God. It is when we do these, that others would be attracted to what we have and also desire what we makes us so joyful. He reminds us that we will suffer in our desire not to keep the good news of the Gospel to ourselves.

Peter tells us that even though we might suffer, we should spread the Good News with joy because Christ Himself was vilified and persecuted when He preached His Gospel. As Jesus said, **“If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you”** (Jn 15). The main point is for us to keep our chin up and not be frustrated about how the message of Christ would be received by the world.

In our Gospel reading, Jesus stressed our need to obey His commandments of love. He tied the commandments to His desire for us to love Him. Which means, to love Jesus is to keep His commandments. When we reflect on this statement, we would realize that God created us out of love and we are created to love.

To those who obey His commandments, Jesus made a promise to ask His Father to send them the Holy Spirit who is another Advocate who will remain with us, and in us! Jesus also promised that He will come to us and not leave us as orphans. He also said because of His resurrection, we also would live. What profound promises our Lord has promised us! By His leaving us, He promised us that He and the Holy Spirit would be in us.

Jesus then brought God the Father into the picture by saying He is in the Father and the Father is in Him. When we reflect on this concepts, we realize that we not only have Jesus and the Spirit within us but the Holy Trinity! The Father, the Son and the Spirit! Jesus also said, if we love Him, He will be in us! These are mysteries we cannot fully comprehend! All we have to do is, know His commandments and obey them and God would be madly in love with us. We will be the apple of His eye and we would become intoxicated by His love.

When we reflect on what Jesus said and connect it to the Eucharist, we would come to realize that the Eucharist is the Sacrament of unity. It unites us to the Son, the Father, and the Spirit. If the Father is in the Son and the Holy Spirit is in the Son, then the Trinity is in the Eucharist. However, since the Father and the Spirit have no flesh, we receive them in their Divinity. While because of the incarnation, we receive Jesus in His body, Soul, and Divinity.

Since we all receive the same Eucharist, we all also receive one and the same Christ. Christ by uniting each person to Himself, unites all of us with each other. That is why if we have His commandments of love, and receive Him worthily, we will receive His grace granted to us in the Eucharist. The grace of the presence of the Trinity abiding in us. Because of the presence of the three godhead. My brothers and sisters that is why the Mass is heaven on earth!

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask Him for more grace so we can love Him as He loves us.