

HOMILY 4th Sunday in Ordinary time "Love" 2016 'C' year

"LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND. IT'S 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 WRONGDOING BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH. IT BEARS ALL THINGS, BELIEVES ALL THINGS, HOPES ALL THINGS, ENDURES ALL THINGS..... LOVE NEVER FAILS.

FROM St. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

ONE OF THE MOST POETIC PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE....ONE THE MOST RECOGNIZABLE SCRIPTURES IN THE BIBLE....WHY.....BECAUSE WE HEAR IT OFTEN....AND WHERE DO WE HEAR IT.....??????

AT WEDDINGS OF COURSE. ...MARRIAGE IS A SACRAMENTAL UNION BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN....DECLARING THEIR "LOVE" TO ONE ANOTHER...PLEDGING THEIR FIDELITY AND COMMITMENT TO ONE ANOTHER! SURE MARRIAGES ARE ALL ABOUT LOVE.....AND SAINT PAUL TELLS US EXACTLY WHAT LOVE IS....AND WHAT IT IS NOT, AND IT FITS PERFECTLY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF MARRIAGE.....

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BUT IS THIS WHAT SAINT PAUL WAS TALKING ABOUT TO THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN CORINTH. WELL YES.....AND NO! SURE IT WOULD APPLY TO MARRIAGE THEN JUST AS IT DOES TODAY, BUT THERE IS A MUCH BIGGER PICTURE.....THE LOVE HE'S WRITING ABOUT IS NOT JUST BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.....HE'S TALKING ABOUT LOVE FOR ALL PEOPLE....THE LOVE OF NEIGHBOR.....AND....LOVE OF GOD.....IT'S WHAT THEY CALL IN THE BIBLE "AGAPE" LOVE.....A SELFLESS.....SACRIFICAL.....UNCONDITIONAL LOVE...THE KIND OF LOVE JESUS CHRIST LIVED OUT HERE ON EARTH.....LOVE FOR ALL HUMAN KIND! **SAINT PAUL SAYS** WE SHOULD SEEK OUT ALL SPIRITUAL GIFTS.....BUT "I SHALL SHOW YOU A STILL A MORE EXCELLENT WAY.... HE'S TALKING ABOUT THIS AGAPE LOVE....AND I FOR ONE, NEVER SAW IT THAT WAY... IN ALL THOSE WEDDINGS I ATTENDED.....I NEVER GOT IT.....BUT LISTEN AGAIN.....WITH THIS BIGGER PICTURE IN MIND.....IF I SPEAK IN HUMAN AND ANGELIC TOUNGES, BUT DO NOT HAVE LOVE, I AM A RESOUNDING GONG OR A CLASHING CYMBAL, AND IF I HAVE THE GIFT OF PROPHECY, AND COMPREHEND ALL MYSTERIES AND ALL KNOWLEDGE, IF I HAVE ALL FAITH SO AS TO MOVE MOUNTAINS, BUT DO NOT HAVE LOVE, I AM NOTHING.

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HE COULD BE TALKING ABOUT MARRIED LOVE, SURE....BUT THINK ABOUT IT.....ON A MUCH BIGGER SCALE..... IT MEANS WITHOUT THE LOVE OF GOD.....WITHOUT LOVE FOR GOD.....WITHOUT GOD AS THE CENTER OF OUR LIVESALL GIFTS.....ARE AS NAUGHT.....NOTHING.....AND EVEN IF WE POSSES THE MOST DESIREOUS OF HUMANKINDS GIFTS.....WEALTH, SUCCESS, FAME, EVEN FAITH....AND KNOWLEDGE.....WE WILL NOT BE IN TUNE....WILL BE OUT OF SYNCH..... WITH GOD.... WITH HIS PLAN FOR US.....A RESOUNDING GONG OR CLASHING CYMBAL.....

AND PAUL CONTINUES,(WITHOUT LOVE) ALL WILL BE BROUGHT TO NOTHING; ALL WILL AMOUNT TO NOTHING.... IF TOUNGES, THEY WILL CEASE; IF KNOWLEDGE, IT WILL BE BROUGHT TO NOTHING. AND WHY?

FOR WE KNOW PARTIALLY..... BUT WHEN THE PERFECT COMES, THE PARTIAL WILL PASS AWAY..... AND WHEN DO WE THINK THE PERFECT WILL COME.....HERE ON EARTH???? I DON'T THINK SO!

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WHEN I WAS A CHILD I USED TO TALK AS A CHILD, THINK AS A CHILD,
REASON AS A CHILD; WHEN I BECAME A MAN, I PUT ASIDE CHILDISH
THINGS. AT PRESENT WE SEE INDISTINCTLY, AS IN A **MIRROR....**

BUT THEN FACE TO FACE.

AT PRESENT I KNOW PARTIALLY;

BUT THEN, I SHALL KNOW FULLY, AS I AM FULLY KNOWN.

THIS IS THE REVELATIONWE CAN APPLY IT TO

OUR LIVES HERE ON EARTH....THIS IS THE BIGGER PICTURE.....IF WE

LOOK....IF WE LISTEN....EVERYTHING WE KNOW ON THIS EARTH IS ONLY

PARTIAL KNOWLEDGE....ALL WE HEAR NOW, PARTIAL PROPHECY....

WE ARE LIKE CHILDREN NOW...EVEN IF WE ARE ADULTS....WE BELIEVE

WE SEE ALL AND KNOW ALL... BUT WE KNOW... ONLY PARTIALLY.....

BUT THEN WE SHALL KNOW AS WE ARE FULLY KNOWN.....

YOU SEE IT NOW????? WHEN WE ENTER INTO HIS PRESENCE.....

IN HEAVEN.....WHEN WE SEE HIM FACE TO FACE.....THE BEATIFIC

VISION..... WHEN WE'RE FACE TO FACE WITH GOD... ..**THEN WE**

WILL KNOW.....FULLY KNOW....**AS WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN BY**

GOD. AND WHAT GETS US THERE??????? **LOVE!!!!!!**

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THIS IS WHAT ST. PAUL IS TRYING TO TELL THE COMMUNITY IN
CORINTH.....YES WE NEED FAITH.....THAT GIVES US THE DESIRE TO
KNOW GOD.....YES, WE NEED HOPE.....FOR IT IS OUR GOAL TO GET TO
HEAVEN....TO SEE AND KNOW GOD....**TO KNOW AS WE ARE KNOWN**.....
SO, HE DOESN'T DISCOUNT FAITH AND HOPE.....THEY REMAIN HE
SAYS.....**BUT WITHOUT LOVE FOR GOD**.....**LOVE OF NEIGHBOR**...
ON THIS EARTH..... **IN OUR TIME**.....**DURING OUR LIVES**.....THIS AGAPE
LOVE.... GOD SENT HIS SON TO TEACH US..... **THIS SELFLESS**....
SACRIFICIAL... **UNCONDITIONAL**.....**LOVE**.....**ALL WILL BE NOTHING**...
BRIDES AND GROOMS GET A GLIMPS OF THIS KIND OF LOVE ON THE
ALTER AT THEIR WEDDING....BUT THE REALITY OF IT IS....**THEY ONLY**
SEE DIMLY..... AS IN A MIRROR.....WHAT THEY THINK THEY
KNOW....WHAT THEY THINK THEY POSSESS.....**AS GOOD AS IT IS**..... IS
ONLY A FRACTION OF WHAT GOD PROMISES US IN HEAVEN.....

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SAINT PAUL IS TELLING THE CORINTHINS AND ALL OF US TODAY THIS IS
THE GOAL.....IN MARRIAGE, IN SINGLE LIFE... IN LIFE.....TO KNOW AS
WE ARE KNOWN.....TO HAVE FAITH IN GOD.....TO SUSTAIN OUR HOPE
TO SEE GOD.....BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY.....**TO LOVE GOD**....TO LOVE
OTHERS AS JESUS DID.....FOR **THIS IS OUR PATH TO THE PROMISED**
LAND....TO HEAVEN.....

WHAT ST PAUL DIDN'T SAYITS NOT EASY.....BUT HE DID SAY....
LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS.....BELIEVES ALL THINGS, HOPES ALL
THINGS AND ENDURES ALL THINGS...AND... **THAT LOVE NEVER FAILS.....**
IT'S A PROMISE WE SHOULD ALL REMEMBER.....BE REMINDED OF
EVERYTIME WE HEAR THIS SCRIPTURE.....BE ENCOURAGED BY IN OUR
LIVES EVERY TIME WE THINK ABOUT IT!

IN THIS WORLD ITS EASY TO GET DISTRACTED.....LOSE OUR FOCUS ON
WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT.....AND THE DEVIL CAN PLAY A PART
IF WE LET HIM IN.....

THE GOOD NEWS TODAY AND EVERYDAY IS.....GOD IS HERE TO HELP
US....HE ALWAYS WAS....HE ALWAYS WILL BE.....HE GAVE US THE
SACRAMENTS TO HELP US:

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IN SACRAMENT OF **BAPTISM**.....GOD CLAIMED US AS HIS OWN....HE
GAVE US THE **HOLY SPIRIT**.... WHO IS "ALWAYS"WITH US.... TO
GUIDE AND INSPIRE US.....

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.... WHICH WE CELEBRATE ON THIS
ALTER.....**DAILY**.....**TO STRENGTHEN US**.....

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION TO FORGIVE US WHEN WE
STUMBLE.... AND **MARRIAGE**.... IF WE CHOOSE IT AS OUR
VOCATION...TO SHARE THIS LOVE AS HUSBANDS AND WIVES....TO
SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER.

OUR JOB THEN.....**AS CHRISTIANS**.... **AS CATHOLICS**.....IS TO
ACKNOWLEDGE AND USE THESE GIFTS TO DO GOD'S WILL
HERE ON EARTH.....TO PRACTICE OUR FAITH.....TO HOPE FOR AND
STRIVE FOR..... OUR ETERNAL GOAL.....**THROUGH LOVE**
BY LOVE.....**LOVING ONE ANOTHER AS JESUS TAUGHT US**...

SO FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE REMAIN.....**THESE**
THREE.....**BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE.**