



In today's Gospel Jesus is talking of a very special kind of love, love that does not think of oneself but sacrifices for the sake of the other. To make sure we would not confuse this very special type of love with other types of love, which often are more lust than love, the writers of the New Testament used a very special word to describe the love of Jesus for us and the love of God for us. They said Jesus loved us with agape love. That is love that does not think of oneself but sacrifices for the sake of the other. Jesus is our model for loving with this sacrificial love, agape love, loving the other for their benefit without putting ourselves first. When does Jesus show us that agape love most of all? When he died on the cross for us. That is why in the Gospel today Jesus also says: *"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."*

Every Mass is a celebration of this special love of Jesus giving himself for us on the cross. In the second reading today, John says: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God."

John uses the word (agape) for love; let us love one another with this agape sacrificial love of Jesus because this agape sacrificial love comes from God. Then John says something very challenging. He says: "Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love."

If we do not love with this agape sacrificial love we do not know God because God is this agape sacrificial love. We have seen this agape sacrificial love most of all in Jesus on the cross.

***"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."***



God's love has power to transform and change us so that we can be like him – merciful, kind, gracious, and forgiving. In God's love we find the fullness of grace, peace, life and joy. That is why Jesus came to give us abundant life through the gift and working of the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment – a new way of loving and serving one another. Jesus' love was completely directed toward the good of others.

**So let us love one another since love comes from God and anyone who fails to love can never have known God because God is love.**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FIRST COMMUNION CLASS! BE WELL. DO GOOD. GOD BLESS. OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAIN PRAY FOR US...**

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***The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the the heart of a mother. St. Therese of Lisieux***



Motherhood involves a special communion with the mystery of life, as it develops in the woman's womb. The mother is filled with wonder at this mystery of life, and "understands" with unique intuition what is happening inside her. In the light of the "beginning", the mother accepts and loves as a person the child she is carrying in her womb. This unique contact with the new human being developing within her gives rise to an attitude towards human beings - not only towards her own child, but every human being - which profoundly marks the woman's personality. **St. John Paul II.**

**A Happy Mother Day to all our Mothers! We honor all Mothers today as we remember them with prayer and thanks at Masses. May Mary our Mother, guide and bless all Mothers with her gentle mantle of peace and love.**



The Month of May is dedicated to Mary and so as we celebrate Mother's Day today we crown our Blessed Mother, the Queen of our lives! Saint Pope John Paul II reminds us of the importance of the May Crowning. He states: "The queen symbol was attributed to Mary because she was a perfect follower of Christ, who is the absolute 'crown' of creation. The maid of Nazareth consented to God's plan; she journeyed on the pilgrimage of faith; she listened to God's Word and kept it in her heart; she remained steadfastly in close union with her Son, all the way to the foot of the Cross; she persevered in prayer with the Church. Thus, in an eminent way, she won the 'crown of righteousness,' 'the crown of life,' 'the crown of glory' that is promised to those who follow Christ."

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Next Saturday, His Excellency, Bishop Kevin Sweeney, will administer the sacrament of confirmation to a group of some 40 plus children of our parish at 7:00pm. This will be an Easter day to witness the profession of faith of our young people and to pray that they, like the Disciples, will witness to Christ publicly.

I am grateful to their parents and catechists who have supported them and instructed them in the ways of our faith. These young people will continue to need our guidance and good example so that they may remain strong in faith in the secular world in which we live. I ask all members of our parish to say one HAIL MARY for the intention of our confirmation candidates on Saturday. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the most perfect disciple of Jesus. Let us ask through her intercession that our young people will follow her example to say YES to Jesus, YES to being His faithful disciple.

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### **THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION THIS YEAR**

The Bishops of New Jersey have agreed to transfer the celebration of the Solemnity of the Ascension from a holy day of obligation observed on Thursday, May 13, 2021, to the Seventh Sunday of Easter, May 16, 2021, replacing the Mass and readings of the Seventh Sunday of Easter.

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