

## Love God and Love Your Neighbor

*Fr Louis Fowóyò*

I always believe that truly loving yourself is a spring board for you to love your neighbor and God.

- A person who truly loves him/herself will value his/her life and that is the bases for which he/she will value human life. No one will voluntarily want to kill him/herself for no reason. Every person will like to give the best thing that he/she can afford for himself or herself.
- We all want to be in the best favorable condition of life. Simply put, nobody wants to suffer. There are times when we find ourselves in some condition that make us wonder how we are going to get the strength to go on. We may not be aliens, we may not be widows, but we will be somebody in need of the essentials of life at that moment.
- This is the time when other people become our consolation and comfort. God has created us for relationships. For God in Holy Trinity is a relationship of love. God has invited us to a relationship of love from birth.
- In his Synodal Exhortation of 2016, Pope Francis started by saying: “The joy of love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church.” The Holy Father teaches that the family must be understood as operating within a much wider network of relationships (paragraph 187).
- It is also the wish of God for us, that we have the best that nature can bring. This can only happen when we express love to our neighbor and God.

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Exodus 22: 20-26; God ordered that we should be compassionate to strangers.

- It is always very easy to treat our own flesh and blood well, but God commands us to have a concern for others especially strangers.
- “You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt. You shall not wrong any widow or orphan. If ever you wrong them and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry.”
- While someone has a right to be treated well, the same person who is a stranger should also make sure that he/she takes permission before venturing into an alien environment.

Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40; the purpose of creation is relationship. Laws are supposed to guide us towards living well with one another. The presence of love is a presence of joy with one another. Relationship is very important.

- “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” This is the question to Jesus. Jesus’ answer shows that love is a decision that we make. It is a choice and what we allow to be important to us. Love is something we do. It is an action that when it is done, it benefits the giver more than the receiver.

- In a loving relationship, we must give attention. When we are in the presence of the one that we love, nothing else matters. That person or thing becomes the most important person or thing in the world to you at that time.
- Our paying attention enables us to listen to the person.
- Jesus is asking us to pay attention to things that are of God. We should listen to what God has to say to us and finally we should do what He asked us to do.
- This is what is expected of us this week and always.

This past week has been very eventful in our parish. I will like to express appreciation to you all for:

- Mission Sunday Support
- The celebration of the feast of St Gaspar del Bufalo in which you generously hosted a lunch after me for my birthday. I thank you for all the gifts and good words expressed. I pray that God will give me the strength and good health to continue to serve Him in your midst. I am grateful for the gift of four communion chalices given to me by Rosary Sodality which we will be using in the parish.
- I salute all those who organized, arranged, and participated in the annual Fancy Fair which took place Saturday 28.
- I will like to remind you of our Eucharistic Adoration in the Parish from after the 10:00 am Mass on November 19<sup>th</sup> till 21<sup>st</sup>. Please try to sign up for a time of adoration. During this period, we shall have the Eucharistic Miracles posters displayed in our Parish Hall. There will also be a talk on Monday November 20<sup>th</sup>.
- The month of November is when we remember our beloved dead. There will be Masses both in the morning and evening of November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.