

Love is the Answer to the Questions in Our Heart

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Human mind asks so many questions that demand answers. Sometimes we get answers, some other time, nothing comes to us. When we do not get answers, we are truly frustrated.

- When we turn to the story of Job in the Bible, we are able to console ourselves. He went through a lot of human condition that he could not explain why he should and yet he posed questions that some were not answered either. But it is not every story that we will have a happy ending like that of Job. Even if we get no response at all, we should still be close to God.
- Our readings today, ask us to live a life of holiness and love. The first reading asks us not to bear grudges; the second reminds us that all of us are God's temples; while in the Gospel, Jesus asks us to love everyone, even our enemies.
- We cannot fulfil all the demands of the readings without a constant renewal of our hearts. Pain is real, life may sometimes not treat us fairly, people we trust so much may disappoint us, but If we continue to brood on the negative things done to us, we will never move forward in life.
- To have these readings before we begin Lent this year, is a Divine arrangement. They make us think about the reality of pain, hurt and disappointments. However, there is always a joyful end if we trust in God.
- We give our concerns to God who has given up His Son on the cross to redeem us. We let go so that we can let God.

1st Reading: Leviticus 19:1-2,17-18; through Moses, His messenger, God challenged His people. "Be holy, for I, the Lord, Your God, am holy."

- Our goal in life is to have a participation in the joy of eternal life. If this is to be fulfilled, the process must start in the way and manner in which we emulate the ways of God.
- God is asking us to live the authentic life as His children. He has set us apart for Himself and wants us to remain set apart for His kingdom.
- Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus gave us the beatitudes. That is a way of holiness for us. In this passage from Leviticus, we are told the things that we are to do and those that we should avoid.
- As children of God, we are to avoid sin and evil behavior. We are set aside to love and serve the Lord. And this we can only do when we love and serve our neighbors because they are the image and likeness of God.
- We should do our best to avoid anything that will make us sin against the Lord who loves us so much.
- "You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart. Though you may have to reprove your fellow citizen, do not incur sin because of him. Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against any of your people."

- There is the saying that: “The character of a people reflects the character of who they worship.” Our life should portray a people walking in the holiness of our God.

2nd Reading: 1Corinthians 3:16-23; calls us the temple of God. Being the temple of God, we have Him inside us, we should then become what we carry in us.

- “Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy.”
- God created us out of love. There is always a great power in love. God has bestowed such power in us so that we can use it to His glory.

Gospel: Matthew 5:38-48; Jesus has come again to challenge us to a higher standard than that of the world.

- “You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for He makes His sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.”

Loving a person who has done you wrong is not easy. It is difficult to love your enemies. It requires a lot of efforts to do so.

- To begin with, ask God for courage to forgive those who have wronged you. Let us know that it is easy to remember those who have offended us, but difficult to know those we have offended.
- Knowing that we too can offend others should give us the strength to forgive others.
- Romans 14:19: “Let us then pursue what leads to peace and to building up one another”.