

6th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B: 13 May 2012

All of our readings this 6th Sunday of Easter speak to us of love. Whether the word, "love", is used or revealed to us in action, it is quite apparent that the authors of our Scripture passages are infused with the desire to reveal God's love for his chosen ones. And note that his love is expressed to both Jews and Gentiles as recorded in our First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles; also, recall on "Good Shepherd Sunday" this past week, we heard mention of the sheep of another flock and the Savior's desire to have but "one" flock. And even our message from the 98th Psalm speaks of God being revealed to the nations through his saving power. And I'm sure that you will recall the encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, of Pope Benedict XVI teaching us that "God is love"

Now, how should we go about responding to this call of spreading the love of God to all the people that we encounter? Well, the answer to that question is as varied and personal as each of us assembled here. Our actions may differ but our desire should be the same and that is to spread the love of God as witnessed in the life of Jesus Christ to those around us. But prior to that, we need to stop and reflect upon our own personal and individual experiences of God's love in our lives. Regardless of our ages, we should stop and praise God for the gift of life, for our ancestors, for our nation, our family and friends and the list could go on and on as we let the circle of life that surrounds us expand ever outward.

Then, I believe that you will notice as I did that the "negatives" will disappear. If we would just focus on reflecting God's love to the world and those around us the "negatives" would seem to diminish or almost vanish from our mind set. It's amazing how a positive and loved filled focus can improve our relationships within our families and those that we encounter on a day-to-day basis. Notice that I'm not speaking of some fantasy world where there are no "negatives". What I would like to focus on is how we respond to those unpleasant things that intrude onto the loving world in which

we are trying to bear witness. Just let go of the trying to “get even” or go “one-up” on someone and see how much more pleasant your world becomes.

“Love one another as I love you”: that’s what we should be trying to express on a daily basis by our words and actions. Yet, we all know that the world isn’t perfect and we certainly, as sinners, are far from perfect, but the challenge is still out there before us. If we would but try and reflect God’s love, we might just end up bringing one more soul into the “flock” of which Jesus speaks.

Something is bringing new people to the faith as witnessed by our latest RCIA class. So let’s just slow down, open our eyes and become observant of God’s love, blessings and grace that are all around us. Once we see how much we are blessed, perhaps we can say “Thank you, Lord” and attempt to share that love with those around us.

The challenge before us is to minimize all of the aggravations that we encounter by our heart-felt expression of love, God’s love, which bathes the world and the entire universe. If we can become aware of the small part that we play in the “big picture” of creation, may be, just maybe, we can muster the courage to attempt to love as God loves, completely, and add our own small individual note to the symphony of life.