



## Fifth Sunday of Easter C May 19, 2019

- ◆ **What was new about Jesus' New Commandment of Love?**
- ◆ **Five languages of Love.**
- ◆ **Reflection on Love - by Flor McCarthy**

### WHAT WAS NEW ABOUT JESUS' NEW COMMANDMENT TO LOVE?

In today's Gospel, Jesus says: *"I give you a new commandment, love one another"* (John 13:34).

What was *new* or *different* about Jesus' new commandment to love? It was a love without limits or borders. It was unconditional and embraced *all* people without exception. It was a love willing to die for others. It was this kind of love that enabled Paul and Barnabas in today's first reading to embrace the Gentiles, the hated enemies of the Jews. Asking the Apostles to open the door to the Gentiles was like asking us to open the door to the Taliban or to anyone whom we tend to despise.

When asked what does love look like, St. Augustine responded with these words:

*"Love has hands to help others.  
It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy.  
It has eyes to see misery and want.  
It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows."*

Mother Teresa once wrote:

*"Spread love everywhere you go, first of all in your own home. Give love to your children, your wife, your husband, to a next door neighbor... Let no one come to you without leaving them better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness. Kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting."*

### Five Expressions of Love

In his book *the Five Languages of Love*, Gary Chapman says that we give and receive love in different ways. We don't all have the same love language. In an article on Chapman's book, Sandra

Aldrich sums up his five languages of love in the following way and adds some of her own reflections.

**WORDS:** Folks who have the language of words need to hear things like "I love you," "Thank you," "I'm glad you're part of our family" and "I'm so glad I married you."

**GIFTS:** To those who have this language, a gift says, "I was thinking of you when I saw this on my trip." Are you always buying gifts for someone else, and you don't understand why she/he never buys you gifts?

**QUALITY TIME:** These folks see the hours spent together as a special expression of love. When I heard this, I suddenly understood why the men in my family insist that their wives go fishing with them all day—they're quality-time people.

**TOUCH:** Dr. Chapman said husbands understand this one best, but feel as though their wives often say, "No touch without the words." But touch doesn't have to be limited to sex. Even our teens who are too "grown up" to be hugged will appreciate a pat on the back when we go past them.

**ACTS OF SERVICE:** I remember one Saturday when I was running late for a meeting at church and then discovered that my car had a flat tire. My husband, Don, insisted that I take his car so I wouldn't be late. When I pulled into our driveway two hours later, he had not only changed my tire, but he was just finishing washing and waxing my car. Boy, that spoke volumes of love to me.

As you apply this idea to marriage, you need to know that people tend to express love the way they'd like to be loved. A friend of mine, Kari, spent several hours thinking up three pages of activities to offer her husband for his birthday. He wasn't impressed; he just wanted to spend a quiet day at home reading the Tom Clancy novel he'd found at a garage sale.

She was hurt because he so easily dismissed something she had put a lot of time into. She would have loved it if he had custom-made a gift like that for her. But that was the whole point; she gave something

that she would have loved rather than giving him what he wanted.

It's important to understand which languages you and your spouse favor so that you can express love in the way it is most likely to be understood and so that you can "hear" your spouse's expressions of love, even though they may differ from what you are looking for.

**WHAT GUYS WANT TO HEAR:** We women want to talk in great detail, but our men don't want the details. Here's an example: When I go to lunch with a friend, my husband only wants to hear, "Nina and I had a great talk. Thank you for staying with the children. I really appreciate that."

Unless he asks more questions, that's all he wants to hear. Do not say, "It was wonderful. But when we got there, we had to wait a while because the waitress dropped a tray of glasses, and it took forever to sweep the mess up. But finally Nina and I got a table, but remember how I always like to order the mesquite grilled chicken sandwich? Well, they were out of chicken and then they had to substitute the sourdough bread instead of the whole wheat bread."

### **It's all about love**

The following is a reflection by Fr. Flor McCarthy.

Writing about his experience in Auschwitz, Elie Wiesel said that the Germans told them that if they wanted to survive, they should forget relatives and friends, think only of themselves and tend only to their own needs. That is what they kept telling them day and night.

But Wiesel says that what happened was the opposite. Those who lived only for themselves, had less chance of surviving, while those who lived for a parent, a brother, a friend, an ideal, had a better chance of getting out alive. In other words, it was through what they gave that they survived.

Selfishness confines us and keeps us shut in. It erects barriers between us and others. On the other hand, every deep and serious affection for others frees us from this captivity. Being friends, being brothers and sisters—that is what opens the prison. Love frees us from the prison of selfishness.

Brian Keenan spent four years as a hostage in Lebanon. Later he wrote, 'It is only when we reach out beyond ourselves to embrace and to understand the suffering of another that we become whole in ourselves. We are enlarged and enriched when we reach out to the sufferings of another.'

Love always demands the best of us, and brings out the best in us. Being loved by others gives one a surprising courage and energy. So also does loving others. They say: love and the energy will be given to you. Where there is great love, there are always miracles. 'Love is the flame that warms our soul, energizes our spirit, and supplies passion to our lives. It is our connection to God and to one another'' (Elizabeth Kubler-Ross).

Ongoing into prison Oscar Wilde said, 'At all costs I must keep love in my heart. If I go into prison without love what will become of my soul?'

Without love what are people? Those who do not love have a poor life. But those who love have a more abundant and fruitful life. What's the purpose of life if not to love? 'We are put on earth a little space that we may learn to bear the beams of love' (William Blake). Freedom from selfishness and the ability to love others - that is what life is about.

A doctor, who has been privileged to share the most profound moments of people's lives, says that people facing death don't think about what degrees they have earned, or what positions they have held, or how much wealth they have accumulated. At the end, what really matters is who you loved and who loved you.

Those who opt for love open themselves to the possibilities of a greater happiness than they have ever known. Love is well being. Love makes us fruitful. To refuse to love is to begin to die. To begin to love is to begin to live. While faith makes all things possible, love makes all things easy. Love heals everyone - both those who receive it and those who give it.

It has been said that if you do a good deed, but have an ulterior motive, it would be better not to do it at all. The only exception is charity. Even though it is not as good as doing it with a pure motive, it is still a good deed, and benefits the other person, no matter what your motive.

### **Two Stories of Love**

1. Another wonderful thing about love is this. It enables us to be instruments of God's providence in the lives of others. Our love becomes the channel through which they will experience the love of God. The theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx, put it like this: 'The lamp of God's love burns in this world only with the oil of our lives.'

An American journalist, watching Mother Teresa as she cared for a man with gangrene, remarked, 'I wouldn't do that for a million dollars.' To which Mother Teresa replied, "Neither would I. However, I do it out of love for God.'

2. A five-year-old boy, Johnny, loved his big brother Tommy very much. One day the doctor told Jonny that Tommy was very sick and needed a blood transfusion. On hearing this Johnny began to cry.

Then the doctor said to him ‘Johnny, would you be willing to give some of your blood to your brother?’

Johnny hesitated for a moment, and then said, ‘Yes, doctor.’


The doctor took the blood from him. Afterwards Johnny continued to rest quietly on the table. As a certain point he looked up at the doctor and said, ‘Doctor, when do I die?’

It was only then that the doctor fully appreciated the extent of this little boys love for his brother.

Jesus spoke about love at the Last Supper. He said to the apostles, ‘*Greater love no one has than the one who lays down his life for his friends*’ (Jn 15:13). But it probably was only later, when Jesus had actually done that, that the apostles appreciated the extent of his love for them. Then they knew the greatness of the challenge facing them when they remembered those other words he said to them on the same occasion: “Love one another, as I have loved you.”

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Have a blessed week,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Aaron". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Have a blessed week,".