

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER YEAR B

(Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48; 1 John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17)

Theme: The Form and Foundation of Love

The theological virtues of faith, hope, and love, bestowed upon us by God's grace, are not mere concepts but powerful forces that shape our spiritual journey. When these virtues are fully embraced, our connection with God becomes unwavering, leading us to act in ways that align with His will and bring us closer to the ultimate reward of eternal happiness.

The greatest of these virtues is love. Charity or love enables us to desire the good in and from God and share the good acquired in God's love. Thus, our Lord Jesus says in today's gospel, "*What I command you is to love one another,*" St John notes in today's second reading that the inability to love as God loves indicates **a lack of God's awareness**.

In other words, **because God is love, one who truly lives in and works with God fears Him and does what is right for himself and his neighbours**. **Hence, one who truly loves God cannot but love as God loves because The law of divine love drives him. That law is the standard for all human actions, and whoever fails to follow its dictates remains in death.**

Thus, in today's Gospel, **our Lord Jesus urges us to remain alive in the circle of God's love by seeking the good He offers and sharing its fruits and blessings with others**. In other words, our actions must conform to the standard of love rooted in God's supreme act of love.

This supreme act of love is not *Eros*, a romantic or passionate love that never lasts. It is not *Filia*, a friendship and brotherly love that is intentionally made but fails when challenged. God's love is not *storge* or family love, and it is not *filautia* or self-love.

Although these are reflections of God's love, **they are insufficient without their form, or the kerygmatic notion of love called Agape**. Agape is God's self-emptying and sacrificial love. **It reveals the very nature of God manifested in the self-giving love of our Lord Jesus, which was His humble service to humanity**. Thus, our Lord Jesus' outpouring of love on the cross is the standard for loving God and neighbour.

Those who strive to attain Agape and practice it gradually become **witnesses to their neighbours of God's fidelity and loving kindness (CCC 563)**. **In other words, Agape strengthens our love of God, helps us keep God's commandments, overcome life's challenges**, and offers us the path to happiness and joy. So, our task is to strive to love God, who helps us not to be indifferent but to love, forgive, protect, and bless as He does.