

## THE GIFT OF LOVE

(John 15:9-17)

Even though life is complex we nevertheless are quick to judge and place people in different categories. We can become too familiar with those who are insiders and too distrusting of those who are outsiders. With our categorisations come different ways of treating people. Our own we treat with love and respect. The outsider we tend to ignore and neglect.

In this Gospel Jesus calls us to a whole different way of seeing people and responding to them. It challenges us to treat outsiders, even our enemies, as if they were insiders. Martin Luther-King faced this challenge when his home was bombed by a protester. He said, "It is very difficult to love someone bombing your home – but Jesus says love them". He recognised the radical nature of Christian love; a love not only for friends but also for enemies.

Mother Teresa spoke of love's ways in finding opportunities to serve others. She said, "Love has a hem to her garment that reaches the very dust. It sweeps the stains from the streets and lanes". She was speaking of a love that has moved beyond self-interest to serving Christ among those living on the margins of society.

To those who are sensitive to the needs of others, life offers many opportunities to practice the commandment of "Love one another". It is not a question of doing big things. It is more a question of the giving of one's self in little ways. The giving of one's time, energy, and love. Imaginary love yearns for an immediate heroic act that is achieved quickly and seen by everybody. Real love recognises hard work and patience, and often goes unseen and unrecognised. It is not a sporadic thing. It is a way of life. It is the way of the Cross.

Amen.

### *Reference:*

*Flor McCarthy*  
*Mother Teresa*  
*Martin Luther-King*