

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel According to John (*John 15:9-13*)

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy maybe in you and that your joy maybe complete. My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: that he lay down his life for his friends. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – God's love for us

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Though we are unworthy and sinful, Jesus loves each and everyone of us with the same intensity of love with which His own Father loves Him. Isn't this simply wonderful if we can meditate on it prayerfully and not take it for granted? Why do we sometimes allow ourselves to feel so unappreciated and unloved by people around us when we are already so treasured and loved by Jesus, our Lord and God? We need to regularly meditate on the love that Jesus holds in His Sacred Heart for each and everyone of us so that we can be enabled to live our lives in the love of God. The more we meditate on Christ's Sorrowful Passion, the greater our understanding and insight into His tenderness and mercy. When we have a deep conviction of God's unconditional love for us in our hearts, we are able to make a decision to trust Him more fully. We can fully abandon ourselves without reserve to God's merciful care and Providence for our lives. Whom can we really trust if not God? Likewise St. Peter had responded to Christ, "Lord, whom else should we go? We know You have the words of eternal life." (*John 6:68*).

Trust, the fruit of Love. Our trust in God is the barometer of the depth of our love for Him. Trust in God comes from making a life-changing decision to trust God no matter what situation presents itself. It comes from a deliberate movement of our free will. Unless willed and are committed to, trust will not simply happen especially in situations when God appears to be absent. How strong the trust is after a decision is made to trust God, will depend on the interior foundation of love for God and holy humility in our hearts.

We can trust in God because His love for us is undoubted and proven beyond a shadow of doubt. The Heart of our Lord is pure love and mercy, and His power is absolute in keeping all His promises made to us. *Nothing will be impossible with God* (Luke 1:37). The more we trust God, the greater His peace will be available to us. *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives...* (John 14:27). It is not a peace that the world or money can give, but one that lasts and that which we can bring to our next life in eternity. *For He Himself is our peace...through the Cross* (Ephesians 2:14).

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecuted you (Matthew 6:44). To remain in God's love entails loving our enemies as well. We can be sure God will never ask the impossible of us. God will never give us aspirations that are beyond us. However, He expects His beloved ones to do everything for Him, through Him and with Him. God knows that together with Him, we can accomplish anything that He requires of us. He only requires our "YES" in full trust of Him like an innocent child fully trusting in his father. Once we decide to say "YES" to God, our hearts will be opened to the graces that we need to accomplish whatever He commands or even to go in faith through the wilderness of a major trial that He may bring into our lives. Of utmost importance is the first step – our "YES", an unshakeable trust in God and a burning desire to do His will, acknowledging it as the best plan for our lives in view of God's infinite love and wisdom. Through Christ's example on the Cross when He prayed for His enemies with His dying breath, graces are earned for us to be able to forgive our enemies as well. Thus, even this yoke of loving our enemies that Christ has placed on us is sweet burden if we truly love Christ and strive to do everything with Him and for Him. Thus, St. Paul was able to say, "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:13). *If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed* (John 8:36). Yes, we will be free even to love our enemies!

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank you for Your unconditional divine love that is too wondrous for my limited human intellect to fully comprehend. Mother Mary, fill my mind with understanding, knowledge and wisdom so that I maybe able to recall with true love the Sorrowful Passion of my Jesus always. True love is sacrificial and it is only in understanding the extent of Jesus' Sacrifice for me that I am able to appreciate the depth of how He feels for me. Lord, I renew my consecration to You and I place all my trust in You unreservedly. With all my strength and heart, I will trust You even when I don't feel Your Presence in my life's situations, in sorrows and in pain. My love and commitment to You is for all eternity whether I am enjoying Your peace and consolation of the Holy Spirit or I am going through the dark night of my soul. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.