

Sermon Notes - AS 10 May 2020

John 14:1-14

In the Name of God Father Son & Holy Spirit.

**“the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do .....**

**<sup>14</sup>If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”**

What are these works? The gospel of John is referred to as the *gospel of love*. From the opening chapters of the gospel, we read ***God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. Indeed God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him*** we hear that God’s motive, from the beginning, is a motive of love. This morning we are gathered via the internet for our Eucharist. - Like the first disciples gathered in the Upper Room, in that first Eucharist. And Jesus says to us , ***I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.***’

We gather together, on what the rest of the world calls MOTHERS DAY. Only this year it is a very different Mothers Day. Far less extravagant spending with Lockdown / and no fancy bookings at restaurants for most Mothers today.

Talking of mothers, there is a great story about a brother and sister who are scheming about ways to earn more pocket money. Like some children these days they each were assigned chores to do in the garden by their Mom. You know the sort of thing. Setting tables, cleaning up their rooms, taking out the rubbish, picking up after the dog in the garden - that sort of thing...

So they hit on an idea to write out a bill that charged for these services they were required to do. They listed each one and billed their mother for each; times the number of days, adding up to a weekly total for both of them.

Mother was a bit surprised when they gave it to her, but she just turned their bill over, and started to make her own bill, listing all the chores she did. What do you think that list looked like? Well it read:

Taking care of you 24 hours 7 days a week, in sickness & health - No Charge

Making and providing 3 meals a day every day -No Charge

Buying your clothes and washing and ironing for you -No Charge

Seeing that you have a lovely home to shelter in -No Charge

Providing toys and books, TV and games -No Charge

Sending you to school, church & camps and your after school coaching and lessons -No Charge

Taking you on treats and holidays - No Charge

And so on and so on. That's good Mothers /and I dare say Fathers/ for you!

Where would we be without them?!

This love, is kind of like God's love for us. As we read in the lesson today from 1Peter 2:3 "***As Scripture says 'You have found out for yourselves how kind the Lord is'***" And all at no charge! God is like a perfect Mother! A perfect Father!

As Wayne reminded us on Friday, in the 14th century, Mother Julian of Norwich Lived through the black plague where 1 in 3 people died. She was one of the first to write about seeing God as our Mother, as well as father. As such God is motherly in Kindness, provision, nurturing and Love. We see this clearly in the opening verses of our Gospel reading to day which talks about God providing for us shelter - "***In my Father's house are many dwellings - I go to prepare a place for you...***" Our eternal home!!

This love which John's gospel portrays and Jesus has commanded, is no sweet, sentimental, romantic love. It compels Jesus to the cross. It is love which is self-giving, self-offering, and self-denying.

We remind ourselves of this fact. Jesus, His Son, for our sake, "***who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human***

*likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.”*

Now we as disciples of Jesus, we are called to show that love: a love which gives all for the sake of others. A well-known hymn, by Isaac Watts - *When I survey the Wondrous Cross* puts it this way: *Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.*

The call to love as Jesus loves is a call to self-giving, self-offering, self-denying love SELF-SACRIFICING LOVE .... the cross. We recall that for Stephen in our first reading, this was death by stoning.

For many of us, these days of physical distancing and social isolation are such a cross. But by our love for each other, we keep our distance; / keep apart;/ stay away. For some I know, this is breaking their hearts. It seems like a heartless act, and yet for their sake, and ours, and for others whom we may encounter, it is necessary, in order to ensure our safety - it is a sign of our Godly love for them.

That night so long ago when Jesus gathered his disciples in the Upper Room for that first Eucharist, and commanded them to love one another as he had loved them. But how shall we do this? How do we love as he has loved us?

In our Gospel today, God gives us clue: **“the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do .....**

Impossible? Absolutely impossible surely! To love like God? To be a good mother? To be a good Father? To be a faithful Christian? Even if called, - God have mercy upon us, to Die for Christ- like Stephen ?

Yes indeed, impossible! But not on our own ----for it comes with a promise.

<sup>14</sup>**“If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.” X2**

Ask. Ask now. Ask in this service.

Every time we love as Jesus loves, in acts of self-giving, self-offering, and self-denying love, we hear him say to us *love one another as I have loved you.*

This is not easy to right now to love as Jesus does, yet in so doing we fulfil Jesus’ command to love, recalling his word to us today:

**“the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do .....**

<sup>14</sup>**If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”**

Amen.