

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost IV Honouring Families at Holy Trinity Church

Only love lasts and only love subdues hate and draws out the best in humanity. When we try to describe the essence of God we are drawn to I John 4:16, "God is love, and those who love live in God and God lives in them."

The word for "love" here is *agape*. Eugene Peterson's translation of I Corinthians 13: 4-7 brings out some of the meanings attached to this deep word in the New Testament.

*"Agape never gives up.
Agape cares more for others than for self.
Agape doesn't want what it cannot have.
Agape doesn't strut,
Doesn't force itself on others,
Isn't always "me first".
Doesn't fly off the handle,
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn't revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end."*

As the very nature of God is claimed to be love and we are made in the image of God, then love is a constituent part of being human. The words above remind us of the outcomes of being shaped in this way by God and by our need to honour God. We all commit what the poet Marguerite Wilkinson calls the "the sin of unattempted loveliness." But I would prefer to hold up the challenge and example of Christ to live a lovely luminous life than to castigate people for their sins. After all, sin brings its own punishment. People who "keep score of the sins of others" deceive themselves and brush off the forgiveness offered by Christ at the Cross. They need it for their own sins, for we have "all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" as our own Apostle to the Gentiles reminds us.

John 3:16 resounds in the Gospel reading today from John 3:1-16. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." The Divine Society of the Trinity is pictured at work in this text because though it does not include the Holy Spirit, that "same Spirit" is part of the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus that precedes this text. At the heart of Father, Son and Spirit is love, and our own societies fall apart without disciplined love. Without God's love there is no soul, and without love we too fall apart because we deny the core of our being, diminished though it is by all that is contrary to love, which we know in our heart to be sin and offensive to the God of love.

With loving care and prayers for your families,
Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10:00am.
- Group Discussion, 7:00pm, Parish Office

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Psalm 112; 2 Corinthians 8:1-9,13-15; Mark 5:22-24,35b-43

COMING UP:

SEA SUNDAY, JULY 12, 9:30AM
