

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER; Cycle – C; May 18<sup>th</sup> 2025**  
**Acts 14: 21-27; Revelation 21:1-5; John 13: 1, 31-35**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Once Mother Theresa said, **“The greatest disease of the world today is not tuberculosis, leprosy, cancer or even AIDS; it is being unwanted, not cared for and unloved. She continues, we must grow in love and to do this, we must go on loving and loving and giving and giving until it hurts – the way Jesus did.”** I think the greatest hunger of the modern world today is not for food but for love. The entire teaching and actions of Jesus described in the gospels can be summarized in one word, **LOVE**. Among the founders of religions, Jesus is the only one who spoke at length on love and did so much for people out of love. St. John’s gospel begins with love and the last commandment of Jesus to his disciples at the Last Supper was of love.

In chapter 3 John explains the purpose of Incarnation in these words, **“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.”** In John Jesus concludes his instruction to the disciples with the commandment, **“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (Jn. 13: 34-35).** This passage is part of Jesus’ farewell speech to his disciples. The word "love" appears **57 times** in the Gospel of John, more often than in the other three gospels combined. Additionally, it appears 46 times in the First Epistle of John. **The very Christian identity is love; love is the Christian uniform and love is the Christian habit.**

During his three years of public life Jesus did everything out of love and compassion for the people. He never worked any miracle for his name and gratification; but out of love for his people. **Jesus is the only religious leader who could love the sinners and the righteous equally.** Jesus is asking us only one simple condition to remain as his disciples, **“Love one another as I have loved you.”** It looks to be simple. But it is hard to love somebody as Jesus loves him/her. **Of course, for centuries Christians have been known for their love and charity towards mankind irrespective of caste, creed and religion.** Mother Theresa never checked whether one was a Christian or Hindu or Muslim before she picked up a dying person from the street. She didn’t force anyone to become Christian either. **But she preached the gospel of love by her deeds not by words.**

**Love is the only language understood by the young and old and even the babies.** This is the only language all 8 billion people in the world can understand.

Thousands of books are written on love; thousands of love songs are available in every language. Everybody wants to be loved. Unfortunately, in the modern age people are showing less generosity in love. **In a way love is becoming an endangered species. Love is fast reseeding from the families, communities and nations.** More and more people are becoming so self-centered that they don't see anything or anybody beyond themselves. The places where love prevailed once are being taken up by hatred, bitterness, anger and selfishness. In a way, slowly the Christians are losing their identity and uniform which they kept for centuries.

Once somebody asked St. Augustine the question, "What does love look like?" He answered, **"Love has hands to help others; it has feet to hasten to the poor and the needy. It has eyes to see the misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of others. That is what love looks like."** This was the same love Jesus showed and this is the love pursued by great men and women. **St. Paul describes the nature of true love in 1 Cor. 13, "Love is patient, love is kind, love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice in wrong doing."** This is the same love what Jesus expects from his followers. There are many who claim that they believe in God and love Him. But they don't care for others. To such people St. John asks, **"If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen."** It is John who says, **"God is love."** So logically it follows that God remains in a heart where there is true love.

The author Emmet Fox writes, **"There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; no disease that enough love will not heal; no door that enough love will not open; no gulf that enough love will not bridge; no wall that enough love will not throw down; no sin that enough love will not redeem."**