



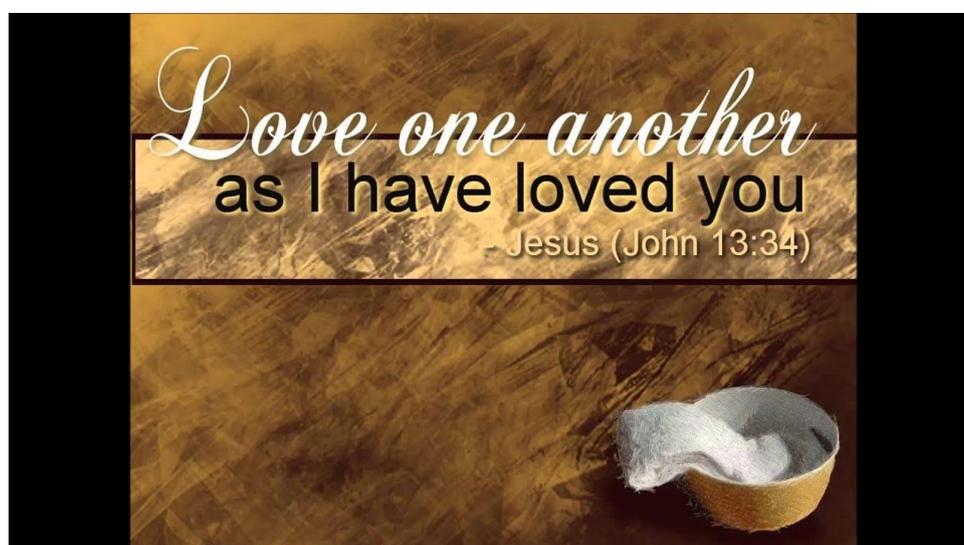
Our readings this Sunday speak to us once more about love: God’s love for us and our response of love to God. Real love is not easy as it entails sacrifices.

The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles reminds us that in the early church, the friends of Jesus were willing to “*experience many hardships*” in order to “*enter the kingdom of God*”.

The psalm reminds us that, “*the Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in love*”.

In the second reading from the Apocalypse, John describes the new heaven and the new earth. God will dwell with us, which will bring us great joy. God’s love will make all things new.

The Gospel takes us back to the Last Supper – an event in which Jesus showed his great love for his friends. Having shown them how to serve by washing their feet, Jesus gives them a new commandment. “*Love one another just as I have loved you*”. Jesus asks us to be generous in our love for God and for one another. It may hurt at times, but Jesus asks us to love from the heart and this means making sacrifices, just as he did on the cross. However, we are people of the Resurrection. We are people who show that we are Christians by our love, because love is the only true mark of a Christian.



John's Gospel does not present a sentimental view of love. This is a type of love that is shown in service and sacrifice. Jesus tells the disciples that all will know that they are his disciples because of the love they show for one another. This description of the early Christian community will be repeated in the Acts of the Apostles: *"See how they love one another."*

We are truly blessed if we have people around us who love us.... even one person....because it helps us understand the unconditional love that God has for each one of us.



*Love, love changes everything  
Hands and faces, earth and sky  
Love, Love changes everything  
How you live and how you die  
Love can make the summer fly  
Or a night seem like a lifetime*

*Yes, love, love changes everything  
Now I tremble at your name  
Nothing in the world will ever be the same*

*Love, love changes everything  
Days are longer, words mean more  
Love, love changes everything  
Pain is deeper than before  
Love will turn your world around  
And that world will last forever*

*Yes, love, love changes everything  
Brings you glory, brings you shame  
Nothing in the world will ever be the same*

*Off into the world we go  
Planning futures, shaping years  
Love bursts in, and suddenly  
All our wisdom disappears  
Love makes fools of everyone  
All the rules we make are broken*

*Yes, love, love changes everyone  
Live or perish in its flame  
Love will never, never let you be the same*

*Songwriters: Andrew Lloyd Webber*

May we find strength in following the Shepherd who Guides us,  
the friend who walks with us, the love which surrounds us, our Good God.