

(Food for thought)

Gospel: John 15: 9

“Remain in my Love”



The Gospels speak of Jesus giving his disciples *a new commandment*: that they love one another as He has loved. But we cannot share what we have not first received. After the Resurrection of the Lord the great news that the apostles proclaimed was very simple. Peter puts it all into context in today's First Reading, "*God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him.*" Love is not something we create; rather it is a gift from God to which we respond. It is a gift given; but once given it remains a gift only if it is shared.

It is not easy to love. It is not easy to put another's needs before our own. And His command to love one another takes on a communal character in our lives as we struggle each day together in our journey of faith.. We are challenged to love all people regardless of whether we like them or not; regardless of whether they have hurt us; regardless of whether they share our beliefs, or customs, or way of life.

The message of Jesus started out as quite simple one: *Love God and love each other*. Moving beyond our entrenched thinking and the images we have of how things are and should be is possibly the most difficult conversion for any of us. We may think that it is beyond our own limited capabilities. But the Lord asks us to go beyond our human limitations: to go beyond ourselves as we experience the mystery of His love in our lives; and to move toward others as we accept the challenge of incarnating God's presence in this world just as He did.

This is the work we are to do. This is the kingdom that this resurrected and now-ascended Jesus has promised to all of us.

