



## **“Something very near to us”**

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In last week's Gospel Jesus sent 72 of his followers to proclaim the good news, assuring them that they had all they needed to complete the journey. He offers the same challenge to us. He sends us on our own journey of faith and gives us the necessary tools to travel our different paths: Love of God and Love of Neighbour.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus says clearly that the love of neighbour means that we must be compassionate. We must try to be sensitive to the pain of others. And we must try to respond to that pain in some concrete, personal way. Obviously, we cannot cure all the ills of society by ourselves; we cannot abandon our work

and our families to go physically to care for the homeless or the victims of violence and poverty. But the love of Jesus challenges us to keep trying, to keep reaching out, to keep caring.

Jesus calls us to be a compassionate people, not only celebrating our joys together, but also to take on the trials and sufferings each one of us has to bear. The mission of the Gospel is one that constantly reminds us that together all things are possible. No longer is our relationship to God a one-on-One proposition. God is our Father and we are His children - together we are a Family, a community. We relate to Him only in communion with one another. When one of us is hurting or in pain, we all hurt... we all cry out. When one has reason to celebrate, we are all filled with joy.

That is precisely the challenge of authentic love of God. It is as close to us as our dearest friend, or our worst enemy; we see it in the bright shining eyes of children on a summer playground, and in the dirty hands and faces of the poor and oppressed; it touches us in our greatest joys and in our deepest sorrow. It is never farther away than our next breath, or sigh, or burst of laughter.



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