

## REMAIN IN GOD'S LOVE

Today's crises, challenges, and problems have made some people doubt God's love. A certain widow became angry because she was told that God loved her. This widow doubted that God loved her and pointed out that anyone who had tasted life challenges as she did, would not agree in God's love. She asked how God could love her by allowing her husband and three children to die in an accident. For her, God is not supposed to allow His loved ones to suffer. Do you agree with this widow? The widow was gifted with her husband and children. The giver (God) can also take the gifts any time He wants for reasons best known to Him. To understand this life and travel in this journey called life with ease we need to accept that anything we have or that comes our way is a gift from God and that we can lose the gift at any time. **EARTHLY LIFE IS A PRECIOUS GIFT FROM GOD AND GOD CAN TAKE THAT GIFT FROM US TO GIVE US THE BEST GIFT, CELESTIAL LIFE.** However, when God interferes or fails to interfere in our crises, challenges, or problems, it is an act of love. When God fails to interfere in our crises or challenges, it is meant to strengthen us, teach us some lessons, or for good. Whatever God allows to happen to us is for a good reason. Whatever God does whether we understand it or not is an act of love. Our second reading today (1 John 4:7-10) made these two interesting points about God: "Love is of God" and "God is love". Whatever God does is an expression of love and to know God is to know what love is. The fact is that God loves us, and the problem lies in whether we love God or not. In the Gospel reading today (John 15:9-17), Jesus asks us to remain in His love. We remain in God's love by accepting His will and loving others as He loves us. Jesus emphasized in the Gospel reading today that we remain in His love by keeping His commandments. The commandments are to love God and others. Jesus loved the Father by accepting His will, that is, to save us through His paschal mystery. The will of God is not all the time comfortable or a bed of roses. Likewise, Jesus loved us by laying down His life for our salvation. Love requires some sacrifices. To love us Jesus sacrificed His comfort and earthly life for our good. **WE LOVE GOD BY ACCEPTING HIS WILL THE WAY JESUS DID.** Some people today are not doing what they wish for themselves or are not living the lives they wanted but they accept what they are doing now or the life they are living now to please God. Priestly ministry is not a lucrative job on earth, but most priests accepted to work for God as priests to please God. Likewise, most people who volunteered to serve in our churches, did that to please God and not for any material gain. It is pertinent as Christians always to ask ourselves what God wants from us at any moment. In today's Gospel reading, Jesus pointed out how we should love others. Jesus says, "Love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:12-13). "We lay down our lives at times, by being moved by, respecting, honoring, and reverencing the legitimate needs of others as just as important as our own needs, especially the needs of children, of the poor, the outcasts, the suffering or those who are different than us" (Fr. Jerry). Jesus commands us to love everybody. **LOVE MAKES SOCIETY BETTER.** St. Oscar Romero said, "the real power is love. And if we haven't already seen a world transformed by love, then it's because we haven't really tried out the power of love." In the first reading today (Acts 10), Peter a Jew visited Cornelius a Gentile. The Jews regarded the Gentiles as ungodly people. It is unlawful for a Jew to associate with a Gentile,

but Peter violated the law because it is not the will of God and such law divides people (Acts 10:28). In this visit, the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles, and they received baptism too. God gifts us with His Spirit and loves us without partiality or discrimination. Jesus died for the salvation of anyone who believes in Him. PLEASE LOVE EVERYONE IRRESPECTIVE OF THE PERSON'S GENDER, RACE, STATUS, AGE AND BACKGROUND. May God help us to remain in His love, Amen.