

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter B  
*Power of Love*

(Sung) “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.” Do you believe that Jesus loves you just the way you are? The power of love is our theme this weekend as we continue our Easter Message Series.

As the scripture readings today make clear, love is a core value of Christianity. The love that these readings are advocating is not the type of love we have for friends, nor is it the type of love we find in our sexual attraction for others; rather, it is the type of love that reaches out to people who are in need. All humans have some sort of need.

Take for example the second reading from the first letter of St. John. John offers us a challenge: “Beloved,” he says, “let us love one another, because love is of God... for God is love.” God’s love is found in his Son Jesus who died on the cross for our sins. God loved us despite the fact that we were sinners. Sinful humanity had a need for a savior. God responded in love to that need through the suffering, death and resurrection of his Son. The love of God and the life that God gives us through Christ are both present and future realities.

In the gospel reading, also from St. John, Jesus gives us a commandment “Love one another as I have loved you.” Note, that Jesus does not command us to “like” one another since liking is an emotion or feeling that spontaneously occurs when we meet others. As such it cannot be commanded. Love, however, since it is an act of the will can be commanded since it is the type of love that reaches out to people who are in need. Jesus is a model of this type of love.

I would like to give an example of this type of love from my own life. After the birth of my brother Wayne my mom was unable to have any more children. So she and my dad contacted Catholic Charities about adopting a child. They waited ten years, during which time my brother was completely spoiled, when they finally received a phone call from Catholic Charities. As my mom tells the story the person from Catholic Charities asked her if she was willing to adopt two children, twins, a boy and girl, rather than just one. Without hesitation she said yes. My godmother once told me that when they went to pick us up when we were about a month old that they only had one baby basket and so one of us had to ride home in a laundry basket (There were no car seats in those days.)!

We both weighed about three pounds when we were born though my sister was a few ounces less than me. Shortly after we were adopted my sister developed some health problems to the point that my mother was crying and my brother went to church to pray for her. There wasn't any question of returning her to Catholic Charities since she wasn't perfectly healthy. She was one of the family.

Our 17 year old single birth mother was in no position to raise twins in 1950. She demonstrated the type of love that is talked about in the scripture readings today when she gave us up for adoption. My parents demonstrated this type of love when they accepted us into their home. We were doubly loved and blessed.

How about you? What is your experience of being loved? Have you experience God's love in the midst of that love?

