

Love ... what is that?

I think we are all familiar with the term Love and we all have an idea what we understand when we hear the word Love.

The bible knows different words for Love; like the love between friends and siblings as we find in the name Philadelphia. Or the love between family members or the love between parent and child.

In English we have to make due with one word .. so what I want to do today is to have a closer look at one particular type of Love .. the one Paul talks about in the second reading from Corinthians and I think it is familiar to all of us.

It is one of Paul's masterpieces:

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

What a beautiful ode to Love!

What a beautiful jumping point/spring board to all sorts of romanticized notions about how beautiful life and love can be.

The problems usually start when we have a closer encounter with reality.

Let's be honest and look at the list:

Who of us is truly patient?

Who is truly kind?

Who has never been envious or boastful or arrogant or rude?

Who has not insisted on his or her own way?

Who of us has not been irritable or resentful?

And the list goes on ... and onand on!

Guilty on all accounts ...says the inner prosecutor.. and that was, I think, part of the purpose why Paul wrote this to the Corinthians.

The Love Paul is talking about here is nothing else than Christ.

The Love Paul speaks about does not come from us humans ... it is a Love that comes from God and God alone .. it is not something we can make or achieve or live up toit is the Love that walks through the cross to the resurrection loving the enemy!

The standards are divine, too high for us.. God is always more than we; God is always more!

You see the Corinthians had some issues with leadership and theology .. There were different factions and each one was convinced that they were right and correct in what they did and believed. So Paul, levels the playing field telling us about True Love .. the love that comes from God!

Paul makes it abundantly clear that talent, all gifts of the Spirit and all Glory, all successes and all abilities are nothing without this particular Love.

The body of Christ has no other leader than this Love ...which is God's word that became flesh!

But what Is this Love we can not create .. we never can live up to? How do we get there? – or is it just beyond us?

We actually cannot get there or achieve it or make it! It is that simple .. the best of us will fail, because we are not God.

And as much as we see that God is with us in Christ we see here that God is also very different.

The Love Paul speaks about is the Love of God ...it is an eternal Love from God, for God and in God!

That love .. like God, is not something we make or create .. it is given by God .. free for the taking we freely take it when we celebrate the Eucharist, we can ask for it and God will freely give it!

It is always our choice how much of this Love we allow to enter our life's.

But its not something we can actually have like a commodity or something we own .. God's Love is a dynamic, active, alive force that affects us .. that changes us. It is not a deposit in an account .. it is rather something that needs to be given away, that needs to be used.

It is God's Love, that flows through us to love others including ourselves, Paul speaks about. It is God's love flowing through us returning to God.

So when we pray: Almighty God pour Your Love for You into our Hearts, We ask to become instruments / channels of God's LOVE!

And in the process of God's love flowing through us we change and become more and more part of this divine love!

Almighty God: pour your love for you into our hearts!