



Lent / Carême / Cuaresma 2021
Fourth Sunday of Lent
14th March

“God sent His son so that through him the world might be saved.”

John 3: 14-22

The readings for the fourth Sunday of Lent remind us of God’s unconditional love.

For human love to be genuine, it should be motivated by God’s self-giving and overflowing love. This love is not self-gratifying, but unconditional and unselfish in all aspects. We are all invited to imitate and participate in this same love, by first being aware of our own human condition and being in touch with our experiences of hurt and forgiveness, disappointments and uplifting moments, disharmony and efforts at reconciliation — and allowing love to take the first place in all this.

We are living in a world where love has been overtaken by betrayal in so many ways. Around the world, people face disappointments and pain, suffer fear and uncertainty, or are confronted with conflict and even violence. Yet, it is still in this same world that God is with us, and asking us to love unconditionally and sincerely. Such an unconditional love has power to restore harmony, create warm relationships, and reintroduce God in different aspects of our lives.

LOVE UNTIL IT HURTS!

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Let us take a pause, enter into the silence of our hearts, and ask ourselves:

When did I experience being hurt in one way or the other by someone or by a situation?

How have I been invited to look at this person or this situation with love?

How am I called to pray for this person or situation? What word of blessing am I asked to speak to this person or situation?



To love is to be able to give oneself for the sake of the other. Because love is sacrifice, we have to choose to die to ourselves so that others may have life. Though difficult, we are invited to love without expecting anything in return. We love even as we know that not everybody we love will love us back. When Jesus died on the cross, he did not only do so for those who loved and believed in him, but even for those who never accepted him or believed in his message. Love is painful, but when we love with the love of God, we are graced to bear the pain.

Our JPIC document *Being Artisans of Hope in Our Blessed and Broken World* reminds us “to follow the example of Jesus, who call us to love one another and wash one another’s feet” (p. 6).

*How then do we demonstrate this same love that we have learnt from God?
How are we to love one another?*



Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, offers us the symbol of the rainbow — many colors in beautiful harmony — and an invitation:

“... remember the **rainbow** in the Bible is the sign of peace. The rainbow is the sign of prosperity. We want peace, prosperity and justice and we can have it when all the people of God, the rainbow people of God, work together.”

The Rainbow People of God: The Making of a Peaceful Revolution

“We can be human only in fellowship, in community, in koinonia, in peace. Let us work to be peacemakers, those given a wonderful share in Our Lord’s ministry of reconciliation. If we want peace, so we have been told, let us work for justice. Let us beat our swords into ploughshares.”

Nobel Lecture 1984

Indeed, when we love one another, we work towards unity and create harmony.

*What does this mean for us today?
How are we called to love, to work for peace, for justice, and for integrity of creation?*

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