



Reflection on the Scriptures of the Day
by Fr. Manohar Salla
of Holy Cross and Immaculate Conception Parish

Thursday of the Fifth Week of Easter

One day a man asked God, what is the difference of your love and our love? God smiled and said, "a Bird in the sky is my love and a Bird in a cage is your love".

During the Last Supper time, Jesus instructs his disciples about love as the seal of Christians and the criterion of discipleship, and he teaches them how love should be practiced.

Jesus says: "As the Father loves me, so I also love you, remain in my love," (v. 9). Through these words, Jesus tells us that He loves us because the Father loves Him first. He loves us very much because the Father loves Him very much as well. His Father's love for Him is everlasting, selfless, and undying and so also His love for us is everlasting, selfless and undying. As the Father loves Him, so does Jesus loves us in the same measure of His Father's love for Him.

God's love for us, as shown by Jesus through his unconditional, self-giving, sacrificial love expressed in his obedience to his Father, must be the criterion of Christian love. We express our love for Christ by obeying his new commandment of love. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." The old commandment was to "love your neighbor as you love yourself." But Jesus insisted that the criterion of Christian love must be the same as the one for his love. So, our love also must be sacrificial, forgiving, unconditional, selfless and self-giving. The highest expression of this love is our willingness to lay down our lives as Jesus did, for people who do not deserve it.

Jesus invites us to live in the inner circle of his friends by obeying his commandments, including the new commandment of love. Such friends abide in Jesus, and Jesus abides in them, and their prayers in Jesus' Name will be answered promptly by God the Father.