

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time



As we have over the past two weeks, we continue to hear from Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians which emphasizes themes of our unique spiritual gifts and value to the body of Christ. Saint Paul declares to the people of Corinth, whose culture was rooted in prosperity and pleasure:

*Brothers and sisters:
Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts.
But I shall show you a still more excellent way.*

*If I speak in human and angelic tongues,
but do not have love,
I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.
And if I have the gift of prophecy,
and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge;
if I have all faith so as to move mountains,
but do not have love, I am nothing.
If I give away everything I own,
and if I hand my body over so that I may boast,
but do not have love, I gain nothing.*

What is love? We will hear some characteristics in a moment, but in order for love to inform our behavior and attitude, we must uncover what it is and what it is not. As per Bishop Robert Barron, "To love is to break free of the black hole of our own self-regard and truly to want what is good for the other."

It does not mean to do good for another for our own sake or to cater to another's requests because they will, in turn, like us more. Love is willing to put aside our ego for the good of the other. Saint Paul continues:

*Love is patient, love is kind.
It is not jealous, it is not pompous,
It is not inflated, it is not rude,
it does not seek its own interests,
it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over
injury,
it does not rejoice over wrongdoing
but rejoices with the truth.
It bears all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things.*

This is the kind of love expressed in the rooms of recovery. We unite on equal ground as beloved children of God who *need* His grace each day. We are blessed with a fellowship rooted in humility, openness, and honesty. We bear the suffering of the newcomer whose shoes we have stood in. When a member takes a step back or acts out in their addiction, we welcome them back with love knowing that they have a chance to experience a new freedom and happiness.

Reflection Questions

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Catholic in Recovery Resources Online

Visit catholicinrecovery.com for a variety of resources related to addiction recovery and the Catholic Church

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Sunday Mass Readings this Week

First Reading: Jeremiah 1:1-10

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 138

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-13

Gospel: Luke 11:14-16