

Reflection for the 5th Sunday of Easter

“Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.” 1 John 3:18

These words found in the 2nd reading this Sunday taken from the First Letter of St. John, has a message that can and should speak to all peoples and all generations. These words are a challenge for all humanity to embrace the two Greatest Commandments, to love our Lord and to love our neighbor as ourselves. In this season of Easter and for that matter in anytime of the year it is easy for us as followers of Christ to focus on the Sacraments, the lives of the Saints, or the documents of the Church. Today, on this 5th Sunday of Easter we have a simple sentence that is found in our 2nd Reading this Sunday that should provide us with food for thought. It is so easy when reading scriptures to discover the history of a verse and who it was written for and why. But this verse 18 of chapter 3 in St. John’s First Letter could be and maybe should be looked at in the different way.

St. John’s 2nd and 3rd Letters were written to a particular Church, but the 1st Letter was written to a group of Churches, it was written for the Universal Church. This 1st Letter has more in common with the Gospel of John then it has with the 2nd and 3rd Letters of St. John. What this information is telling us is that we should see the 1st Letter of St. John has not speaking to the Universal Church through a local Church but rather to see it was speaking to the local Church through the Universal Church. This Letter was intended from the start to inform all who read it of how one should live as a follower of Christ. In these Letter St. John is placing much more value on ones actions in comparison to ones words.

In this year of St. Joseph we can turn to him as an example of how to live out 1 John 3:18. Be it St. Joseph taking our Blessed Mother into him home and caring for her and the child Jesus, Joseph through his actions shows his love for Mary and the child Jesus. St. Joseph can be described as the “strong, silent type.” He has an inner strength that enables him to act on beliefs and to demonstrate his love and what is important to him. Also St. Joseph does not see a need for words it is his actions that speak for him. This truly can and should be refreshing, how often do we hear people speak of what is important to them and what they are committed, then we have to wait and see if their words lineup with reality. St. Joseph does not worry about providing the words, he just provides the actions that shows what the reality truly is.

This past year with the pandemic we have seen actions show what the reality truly is. I think we can be impressed and inspired by our Parish for our actions have shown our concern for our neighbors and our desire to walk close to our Lord. It has been wonderful to see our Parish Staff step forward and provide many ways for children, youth, and adults of our parish to continue to embrace the opportunity for Religious Formation. It was wonderful to see the many options that were provided and embraced to experience the sacraments and attend Mass. I would not of imagined that we would of used Zoom for everything from praying the Rosary daily to Theology on Tap. This past year our actions as a parish have shown our love for God and Neighbor. The pandemic is still a part of our lives, hopefully things in our community and in the world will continue to improve and things will continue to open up and get back to normal. But this normal will be a new normal due to the experience that we as a community and a world have gone through and may we all be better for it, following the example of St. Joseph and embracing 1 John 3:18.