

A man walking on the beach suddenly stops and prays, "Lord grant me one wish." The clouds parted, and a voice says, "Because you have been faithful to me, I will grant you a wish."

The man says, "Please build a bridge to Bermuda so I can drive over anytime I want." God answers, "This is a very materialistic wish. Now, stop and take another moment to think of a wish that will honor and glorify Me."

The man thinks and says, "Lord, I wish you could help men and women know and understand each other – how they each feel inside, what they are thinking, why they get mad or sad, and how they can make each other truly happy." After a few minutes God responds, "How many lanes do you want on that bridge?"

Wow that kind of sums it all up and Our Psalm gives us a hint of how to do that: "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Our Readings offer a familiar and timeless question: How do we reach each other's hearts?

In the Gospel "Jesus tells us, "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.

This would appear to be a simple and sound instruction. And yet, I wonder if it is not the least listened to instruction Jesus ever gave?

I would like to reflect on this from a different perspective. "If someone you love, hurts or does not understand you, open your heart and talk to them heart to heart."

Jesus give us a perfect example of this in Gospel of John in Chapter 21. Remember during Jesus' Passion, Peter denied Him three times. Can you imagine how Jesus' Heart must have felt when He heard Peter deny him?

After the Resurrection when Jesus appeared to the disciples in the locked room, He says, "Peace be with you," and did not mention anything to Peter about how He felt. On a later day after He had made breakfast for the disciples, He privately takes Peter for a walk on the beach and asks him, do you love Me 3 times.

Think about how Jesus interacted with Peter – Peter Do You Love Me – Peter says "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." And Jesus responds - "Feed my lambs."

When is the last time you and I have really taken the time to get to Know and Understand the Heart of those closest to us: Our Spouse, Child, Parent, Family, Friend, etc.?

Do we take the time to open our Heart to them, to Hear and Listen to how they feel inside, what they are thinking, why they get mad or sad, and what makes them happy?

Also, when is the last time you and I shared our heart with our love ones? Or truly shared our heart with the Lord, and asked and listened to Him tell us about His Heart?

Our Lord wants to draw us into Himself, so we become better able to Know and Understand His Heart, because He Knows and Understands our hearts? He wants us to come to know both His Loving and Merciful Heart but also His broken Heart so will be aware of how we hurt Him as well.

But How can we come to know and understand the Lord's Heart, when we are not aware of the Hearts of those we love and who are closest to us?

One of the worst things we can do is brood over our feelings. This can make it more difficult to go directly to the person we love. We only get to know and understand someone's heart by doing it face to face and heart to heart.

Going to someone to get to know and understand their heart, is a vastly different then going just to talk. We go to them in an honest, loving way and we listen with great openness to their response.

We are alone and their and our dignity is respected. It often happens during these discussions we will gain an understanding about the other person and ourselves that we never knew. And in turn we become more aware of Jesus' Heart as well.

So My Dear Friends, if we are looking for some area of our lives to improve, we should take today's instruction from Jesus very seriously.

Let us take St. Paul's words today to heart, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law.

So Remember by Dear Friends, Love seeks the good of the other. So let us open our hearts to our love ones.

Finally, Jesus tells us, "if two of you agree on earth about anything for which you pray, it shall be granted to you by My Heavenly Father... for I am in your midst."

Praise be Jesus Christ, Now and Forever, Amen!