

A reading from the First Letter of Saint John

Beloved, let us love one another,

because love is of God;

everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.

Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.

In this way the love of God was revealed to us:

God sent his only-begotten Son into the world

so that we might have life through him.

In this is love:

not that we have loved God, but that he loved us

and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

Beloved, if God so loved us,

we also must love one another.

No one has ever seen God.

Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us,

and his love is brought to perfection in us.

**The Word of the Lord.** *R. Thanks be to God*

**Commentary**

This passage dives deep into the Christian mystery and spirituality of love. Love one another, not because of anything we have done or felt or experienced. Rather, we love only because God has loved us first. In other words, love is not dependent upon us or our capabilities. Love depends upon God. God, who is unseen, has shown us what love is like – Love is his Son, Jesus. Most especially, love is his embrace of our sinfulness and the new life that follows in the resurrection.

The readings says nothing specifically about marriage. Yet, marriage has everything to do with love. Couples often believe that love has to do with the feelings and emotions they share with one another. That may be one piece, and this reading can help them see that their love is really gift from God and a participation in God.

The reading will help couples to see that authentically loving their spouse will at some point include a sacrifice, like the love seen in the actions of the Son. Yet loving each another is a way to experience God’s abiding presence, and trusting that God will perfect their love for each another.