

Two weeks later he took his eight-year-old daughter and five-year-old son shopping. Driving past a small zoo the children cried out "Daddy, Daddy. Can we go? Please. Please. Can we go?"

Taking them in he gave them each a pound. They then both ran towards the pens so that they could pay to smooth the animals.

A few minutes later, the dad turned around and saw his daughter walking behind me. "Why aren't you in the pen with your brother, you love animals"

Dad, it cost two pounds to smooth the animals and so I gave Brandon my pound just as you gave mum your steak.

The family motto is in "Love is Action!"

Today we have reaffirmed our love for each other be that to our spouse, our companions ourselves, our friends and parents with our words.

In the Eucharist which is our family motto- Jesus proved his love with action and he reaffirms that love for each of us in this meal...

How I wonder will we put our love for him and for each other into action.

Amen

St Mary's Back to Church Sunday 2019 A Celebration of Love

"Do you love me" 1 Cor. 13/ John 21:15-19 Fr. Grant Cohen

Carolyn, an eight-year-old girl, said to her nan "Mummy says I'm to look for a man who is kind.... so that's what I'll do.... I'll find somebody who's kinda tall handsome and rich.

At the end of the film *Marvin's Room*. Bessie, played by Diane Keaton, has cared for her ill dad and aunt for 20 years. After learning that she has leukaemia, she receives a visit from her estranged sister Lee, played by Meryl Streep. Bessie tells Lee, "I've been lucky to have had so much love in my life." Lee says yes, her father and her aunt really do love her. Bessie seems taken aback for a moment because her sister has misunderstood. What Bessie doesn't mean is that she's been lucky to be loved. What she means is that she is lucky to have had so much love to give to others.

In life, to be loved is one of the most desired human needs. Love can cause us to do the unthinkable and yet deny someone love and they will almost give up.

if you ask were to ask me; do I love you, I might say yes but my response needs interpreting because while I might love you in one way, I may certainly not love you in another.

Where we only have one word for love the Greeks had four.

Philio Love...a love that desires good things for another, its responsive and involves giving as well as receiving. It's a love that good friends will have for each other.

Storge (Storgay) this is the kind of love that is natural and instinctive its a familial love, the feeling you have in your inner being for your family.

Eros love...is erotic love, a love of passion, it's a love that is emotional and based on body chemistry.

And finally....

Agape love...This is the type of love keeps on loving even when the person its directed towards is unresponsive, unkind, unlovable, and unworthy. It is unconditional love.

Joseph Parker was a popular preacher in London in the late 19th century. One Sunday as he was going into the pulpit a woman in the balcony threw a piece of paper at him, picking it up Joseph read the one word on the paper... 'Fool' He then announced that he had received many letters in his life where the person had failed to write their name, but this was the first time he had received a note signed by their name but where they had failed to write a letter.

Mother Theresa once said "I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world.

I wonder how our lives display love...

Today we are celebrating what it means to love, to love our spouse, our family our friends and companions, as well as those we see no longer. It's a gift that is and has been given to us by God, and which is reflected in another.

Before he died Jesus told his disciples that they would all fall away on account of him. To which Peter responded: "Even if all fall away, I will not!" and yet just hours later as the cock crowed, he denied in front of his friend and master 3 times that he even knew him. Jesus knew that Peter would fail him, he knows that we fail each other, and yet in our gospel reading we see that at the heart of Jesus is the desire to restore that which is broken. While Peter's love for Jesus was a Philio love, the love that Jesus felt for him was Agape, it was totally unconditional, it didn't matter what he had done, his love remained the same...and yet that love still demanded a response...Jesus doesn't say to Peter Its ok I still love you.... He doesn't dismiss what's happened, he asks Peter to make a decision.... And three times he asks him, Peter do you love me...and 3 times Peter says yes Lord I love you...

It's the only place in scripture where God asks someone outright if they love him...

For Peter his love will cost him his life...

I wonder what our love for Christ costs us...

There is an odd verse in Luke's gospel which if not read in context appears to contradict everything Jesus stands for... its says "If anyone comes to me and does not hate their

father and mother, their wife and children, brothers and sisters--yes, even their own life, such a person cannot be my disciple. Matthew's gospel puts it a little less harsh although the meaning is the same ... "Those who love their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and those who love their sons or daughters more than me is not worthy of me. In the same breath that Jesus asks Peter if he loves him, he asks something of him which will reflect that love, will prove that love...If we love our spouse and yet never show it, eventually they will doubt the genuineness of what we have said...

If we say we love our family and friends and yet constantly disrespect and mistreat them they will eventually doubt what we have said...

Love is.... Love is something its tangible, its an action.

Jesus asks; "Do you love me?"

If we answer yes, Lord as Peter did, that love will be expressed somewhere or else it is not genuine... If my mum rang me and said grant, I need £50, I would go without to make sure she had it...If my sister rang me and said grant, I need you to come now, I would drop whatever was doing to be there.

We will fail and often, but if we truly love, we do something about it.

To prove you love me Peter; tend my lambs, take care of my people, watch over my sheep.

Our love for Jesus must express itself in love for each other. Isn't that what Matthew 25 is all about when Jesus said, "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you came to visit me."

A man took his family out for dinner, and he ordered for himself a steak. It was his favourite and he didn't have it very often. As he turned his back his wife took the opportunity to cut off a chunk and eat it..." Its ok" he said "I love you...."