

6th Sunday of Easter

Act 10:25-26

1 Jn 11:7-10

Jn 15:9-17

Harold Hughes was a hopeless alcoholic. He reached a point where he had no control over his life. His wife and children left him, and he lost his job. His desperation drove him to the brink of suicide. He describes in his book how he climbed into a bathtub with a shotgun and was ready to pull the trigger, when he experienced what he calls a spiritual enlightenment. That became the turning point in his life that led him to deep spiritual commitments. He began to study the Bible diligently and developed a strong prayer life. He got his life back in order and became the 36th governor of Iowa in 1963 and a senator in 1969.

We are all precious in the eyes of God. He does not want anyone to be lost. It is sad when we are faced with stories like that of Whitney Houston who died losing her battle against her own demons. There is nothing impossible with God's help. It is He who created us. In the Gospel, Jesus tells us, "You have not chosen Me. I have chosen you." In the second reading, John tells us that God is love and that Jesus came to reveal God's love for us. Jesus says, "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you." So all of us are called to love.

John's letter tells us that God the Father's sacrificial love is shown through Jesus, His Son: "*God's showed his love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.*" Jesus has often been called "*the man for others,*" and he showed that generous love for us supremely on the cross. "*Love one another, as I have loved you.*" Jesus is calling us to live that love for others: that love that we saw demonstrated when he washed the feet of his friends; and then supremely when he offered his life on the cross. This is the love in which we are called to remain all our lives. Jesus calls us to love as he did. That means a love that does not concern itself with our own wants, our own desires, our own emotions; it means a love that is willing to give of ourselves, a love that does not count the cost, a love that is extended even to those we would not normally want to love. This is, truly, a love that is stronger than death.

A lamp that gives no light is useless. A fruit tree that produces no fruit is worthless. A Christian who doesn't love his neighbor is in the same category. Through love, God has put at our disposal the greatest power there is in the world. It's a power all the money in the world doesn't give. And what is more, love is a power that every human being has, no matter what sex, no matter what religion, no matter what nationality, no matter what educational achievement. Love isn't reserved for the healthy. It isn't reserved for the wealthy. It isn't reserved for the wise. It isn't reserved for the famous. Love is for everyone. Love is the one thing that makes all of us equal before God and before each other. Because God is love, love should characterize God's human family. God's love is the why and the how of our love for one another. It is love that gives wings to our freedom, a love that is serving, seeking the welfare of others, and being a channel of God's grace in the world. To express our love is not something that should wait for our tombstone. It is our mission in life—an action that should take the initiative toward all others. Let us ask God to help us to express in our lives the love we celebrate. "*In the evening of our lives, we shall be examined on love*" (John of the Cross).