

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

*Acts 14:21-27    Apocalypse 21:1-5    John 13:31-35*

Easter is dominated by the Gospel of St John.

- I have great respect for John because he has “**unique things**” to say about Jesus
- And, John in actual fact, relates stories about Jesus which are not found anywhere else.

Our Gospel reading today is a case in point.

For instance, other Gospels have Jesus saying: “**Love your neighbour**”

- All three: Matthew, Mark and Luke speak about loving our neighbour

Again, all three Gospels report Jesus as saying, “**Love your enemies**”

You know, in both of these:

“**Love your neighbour**” and

“**Love your enemies**” semantics can raise further questions

- a) For instance, if you tell me to love my neighbour I am bound to ask: **Q: ‘Who is my neighbour?’**
- b) Or if you ask me to love my enemy, I am bound to raise a further debate and ask you, **Q: ‘How exactly can I love my enemy?’**

But what we hear from St John today is simple but a very profound command: “**love an one another.**”

This command from St John is

- i) free from semantics and
- ii) free from provoking further debate.

You can’t be lost in probing further questions and nor seeking further clarifications

To love one another is straightforward and

- it leaves no room for expansion,
- no room to raise further questions //no room for explanation,

- no room for negotiation

**Q: Who did Jesus intend this command for?**

- a) He intended it primarily for that team or community of the Twelve
- b) It means, for us today: he intended it for those closest to us in the Christian Community.
- c) It also hearkens to the family and the relationship we have with one another as a family.

That’s why I look at this as **a plea for siblings:** to do more than “getting along” and to actually “do things for one another!!!”

### DISPLAY OF ACTS OF LOVE

To get along is one thing but to love another is quite different and very challenging for that matter.

- It means that disciples should be known by their display of charity and **acts of love:** it is **this display** that will mark us as Christian
- It means that siblings should be known **by their own displays** of charity and **by deeds** of love

Thus, to be Christian is a call to that love that requires action and some doing!!! Christians do things for each other!

- ❖ In other words, “**Love is a verb**” and Christians know that love is a verb

The image of the family comes to mind again: You know it can be easier to love those on the outside or on the margins

- ❖ Q: But what about those most familiar to us?

We know their weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, annoying tics, and habits.

We have A history with them.

Today we are called and even reminded to be doing things for one another as family and as a community. “**Love one another**” is the challenge.