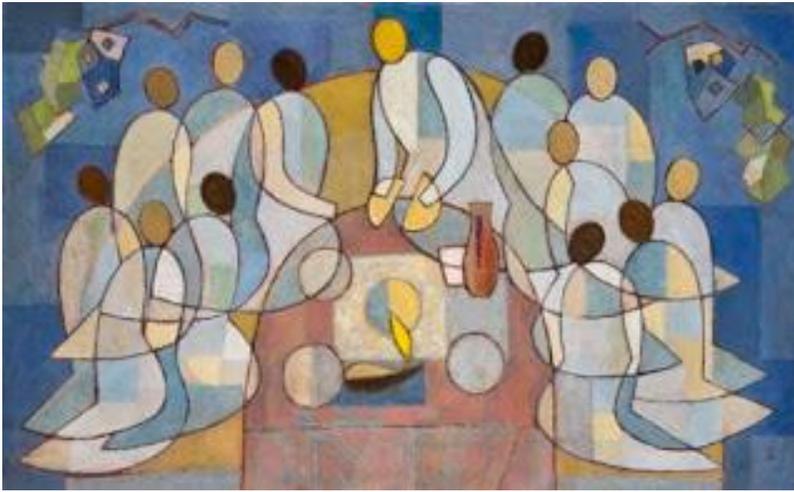




ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY January 12 & BEYOND

We Are God's Beloved Ones



In an era where modern technology has made communication with others so easy, there is more isolation, neglect and lack of real love than ever. The fact is people do not really post in social media who they are, but they try to present a fake picture of

themselves that is 'attractive' or at least 'acceptable' to others. People feel the need to be loved, but they have forgotten how to feel and share love.

The inability to show authentic love is closely connected to a feeling of not being loved. We have been made to believe that in order for others to love us, even the members of our own family, we need to make certain achievements that earn us that love. That leads us to compete with one another, to try to be the strongest, the ablest, the most popular and the most efficient. Then, and only then, we tend to believe, will we earn people's 'love'. So if someone is selected as the 'loved' one, it necessarily means that others are excluded from this 'love'.

When it comes to our relationship with God, we tend to believe that the same rationale applies here. We believe that we have to accomplish certain tasks and conform ourselves to certain prescribed behaviors in order to be worthy of God's love. And if it happens that someone is selected as God's beloved one, it means that others are excluded from that category. So according to this, God must have declared Jesus as His beloved one after He accomplished His mission on earth. And then, again, all others who could not live up to His accomplishment were excluded from this category.

But is that the way things happened?

Not at all. What we read in Matthew's Gospel is that God called Jesus His beloved one in whom He was highly pleased right before He actually started His redemptive mission on earth, at His baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. In fact, it must have been highly reassuring for Jesus to hear these words when we think about the magnitude and sacrificial mission He was to face. He had to pour out a tremendous love to all those surrounding Him, and He needed to be filled with this love from His father in order to be able to do so. We cannot give to others what we lack.

Jesus came so that we might get to know God's love for us all. That was the core of His teaching in words and in deeds. He showed us how real love is not diminished when shared, but simply multiplies infinitely as did the bread and the fish. He showed us how God's love for Him does not exclude but is intended to include us all. Not that we need to earn God's love, but simply perceive it, accept it, rejoice in it, and multiply it by sharing it with as many others as we are able to.

And the words that Jesus heard at His baptism are meant for each and every one of us. Simply because God loves us in spite of our disbelief in His love. So next time you have any doubts about deserving love, about being filled with love to share and multiply, remember these words, say them once and again silently or out loud, with absolute certitude and deep faith, to yourself: N, you are my beloved one, in whom I am well pleased!

Fr, Carlos Expósito, Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The First Sunday after Epiphany:
The Baptism of Our Lord

Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 89:20-29 Acts 10:34-38 Matthew 3:13-17

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The First Sunday after Epiphany: The Baptism of Our Lord

8:00am Low Mass (Church)

10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)

7:00pm Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue*—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary Chapel)

WEDNESDAY Noon Noon Prayer (St. Mary Chapel)
6:30pm Contemplative Prayer (St. Mary Chapel)

THURSDAY Noon Noon Prayer (St. Mary Chapel)

FRIDAY Noon Noon Prayer (St. Mary Chapel)
AA Meetings
8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

SUNDAY **The Second Sunday after the Epiphany**
8:00am Low Mass (Church)
10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)
AA Meeting
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)