

5th SUNDAY OF EASTER 2022:
THE NEW COMMANDMENT:

I give you a new commandment, love one another just as I have loved you, **you must love one another.* Jn.13:34

The scene is the Last Supper in the upper room. The traitor Judas had already left, Jesus was with His own.

Love is a very familiar word in the gospels, we have heard it many times. **Love God, love your neighbor, love others as you love yourself.** During this time Jesus stresses it with much emphasis, ****love one another as I have loved you!*** This is a new commandment. This is the way people will know that you are my disciples.

There is always a deep meaning when we hear about names and titles...like being a care-giver, teacher, actor, doctor, or priest... Kenyan, Mexican, Christians, Democratic, Republican, Azimio la umoja Wiper party or Hustlers (some political parties in Kenya). There is expectation with what you are being associated with and reactions are connected and often follow.

Christ is telling us today the expectation of being His **followers**, as **Christians** we are to **love one another as He has loved us**. Is this new commandment evident to others and obvious through us as Christians? What are the expectations other people have for us as Christians in return? (Is Jesus clearly displayed through our hearts and actions? Do our hearts show love?). Is our

Christianity apparent? ****This is how people will know you are my followers.*** This is the new commandment.

The new commandment will imply **telling the truth, treating people with respect, fairness, care, and concern, by following the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth.** If we practice this then the world will know we are His followers and His love will be available to **touch and heal the world** through us.

In the first reading Paul reminds us of **difficulties and challenges** in living a life of **Love.** It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God, but the second reading gives us consolation that there will be a **New Jerusalem,** where there will be **no mourning, no tears, no wailing of pain, and no death.** This will come from heaven, not of this world and human **imperfections.** We are supposed to be the agents and seedbeds (soil?) of Christ's truth and love in this world of imperfection.

We are called to rebirth through **respect for all human life, sexuality, marriage, human dignity, and honesty... by a brand new type of relationship...one based not on power, but on respect.**

We are called to reach out to the **imprisoned, the sick, the lonely, the poor, the refugees, the homeless, the hungry, and the thirsty (Corporal Works of Mercy - takes care of the physical "body").** This is the **mission of love after the Resurrection.** The Church must exhibit **the message it is called**

to give to the world through you and me as the living “body” of Christ.

People should be able to **spot us** as disciples of Jesus by **the love we have for each other**. We can give powerful witness to our world today, we have the choice to make and can bring people to Christ, but sometimes because of us and our actions we choose, we may also keep people away from Him. What role are you going to play today and what choices will you make? Will you bring others to Christ or keep them away?!

This is the fire from Easter we are supposed to keep lit. **We are the agents and carriers of that powerful duty and responsibility directly from Christ** to illuminate the world through our actions. ****You will know their fruits by their actions.***

We should not focus only on the **emotional and physical components of love**, which might be pleasant,... but also focus on the **commitments of love,...such as fidelity, sacrifice, unselfishness, patience, and forgiveness...**these can be challenging at times but are Christ’s call.

***Lord open our hearts when they are closed to love, and warm them when they are cold** so that we may produce fruits of Love (through Your Name Jesus) and the world will know we are your DISCIPLES!

