

"You Shall Love the Lord Your God...& ...Your Neighbor as Yourself!"

In the name of the father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Once upon a time ...there was a movie. It was entitled, "Little Lord Fauntleroy." It was about a seven year old boy, who went to live with his fabulously, wealthy grandfather. The grandfather had, what seemed to the boy, hundreds of staff and employees to run his gigantic estate.

The old man was, basically, a very selfish, stingy, cruel, old man. But, the little boy idolized his grandfather so much that he saw none of his bad points. He thought his grandfather was kind and generous. Repeatedly, the boy would say,

"Oh, Grandfather. How people must love you. I'll bet they love you almost as much as I do!"

To make a long story short, the boy's genuine love for the old man gradually softened his heart, and, in time, the old man becomes everything the boy thinks him to be.

I share this story with you because it is, like a parable of Jesus', ...about us! It shows how His love for us can soften our hearts...give us the power to become the kind of people He sees we can be!



Love is at the core of everything about Jesus, his teaching, his life. Of all the deeds of Jesus' life, none is more expressive of his love than...the crucifixion.

**What makes the crucifixions such an eloquent testimony of Jesus' love, you ask?
I am glad you asked that question!**

1st --the crucifixion acts as a dramatic SIGN of Jesus' great love for us.

"The greatest love a person can have for his friends," said Jesus **"is to lay down his life for them."**
Jn. 15:13

It is terribly important that Jesus gave us that **SIGN** ...because we need to know that are lovable. You see, if we don't see ourselves as lovable, we can't, truly, love others. Why? Because, true love is a self-gift ...a gift of self. If we don't see ourselves as loveable, of value, we won't give ourselves to another. After all, who gives something of no value, like garbage, to someone we love and admire? We will always withhold our whole self. The crucifixion tells us we are so valuable, so loveable, that Jesus, Himself, gave His own life for us!

2nd --the crucifixion is also an **INVITATION** to love. It says in a visual way, what Jesus, so often, said in a verbal way, **"Love one another, just as I have loved you!"** Jn. 15:12 Besides telling us that we are valuable, it teaches us that we can help others by our love, just as He helped us by His love.

3rd --the crucifixion is also a **REVELATION** about... **love**. It tells us how love --mature, adult-love...not glorious & wonderful 'puppy love'...but that mature, adult-love...entails suffering! e.g.,

It is painful to be patient, when a loved one shouts at us.

It is painful to be forgiving, when a prodigal returns after throwing everything away, nearly dying.

It is painful to be humble and to admit that we were wrong...so many times!

You know, there's a law that certain packages carry a warning:

This product may be harmful to your health. Use with caution!

I think every marriage license should carry a warning:

This relationship entails suffering. Enter with caution!

So, in summary: the crucifixion of Jesus is...

a **SIGN**...that He loves us to death,

an **INVITATION**... for us to love others, and

a **REVELATION**... that love entails suffering.

And, besides all that, **it**...

(the crucifixion) takes away all our sins and reconciles us to the Father.

It is the **Sacrifice** that we will soon offer on our altar, during the Consecration,
which will, then, become ...
.....the **Sacrament** of our soul.

I now close with this prayer:

*Lord,
Teach us to love you, as you deserve;
Teach us to love others, as you have loved us;
Teach us to love, even when it hurts.
For it is in loving you that we give you glory.
It is in loving others that we give happiness.
And it is in loving ...that we find meaning in our own lives!*

May Almighty God, our Abba, bless you...
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.