

Reflections While Walking

Gifts

- Deacon Bob Salvestrini –



Jesus said, "This is my commandment: Love one another as I have loved you." (Jn 15:12). There is a tendency to interpret Jesus' commandment almost too literally and feel He is asking too much of us. Although throughout time many have indeed taken Jesus' words literally and accepted the gift of martyrdom, most of us do not envision or own martyrdom as a desirable path to heaven. In the gift of life God gave us He did not ask us to be exact replicas of Jesus. When God created us, He said, "Let us make man in our image after our own likeness." (Gen 1:26) It is quite clear that God did not intend us to be clones of His divine being or of that of His son Jesus for that matter. What is clear is that we are meant to be, in some manner, reflections of the Godly persona – of His goodness. In the brokenness of our humanity, we can only hope to be imperfect reflections of the divine image and likeness. Thankfully, through His many examples Jesus showed us that there are many ways to be reflections of God's goodness and His love without becoming martyrs.

When He fed the thousands with a few loaves and fishes He showed us that providing for others from our resources is an act of love. Through His many healings he taught that compassion and caring for the sick, lame, deaf, and blind is an act of love. By Jesus', many days in the temple and synagogues spending time in God's house praying we learn that worshiping God is also an act of love. And with the miracle at Cana Jesus showed us that it is good to take time to celebrate and enjoy God's creation and the life He has given us.

Compassion, providing, worshiping, and enjoying are some of the gifts that God has given us through the Holy Spirit. When we use the gifts God has given us to benefit others we are loving as Jesus commanded. In this new year, how will you use the gifts God has given you to love as Jesus asked?