

HOW TO LOVE GOD.

DO YOU LOVE GOD? All of us may answer that we love God. What determines whether we really love God or not is our actions. I strongly believe in what this English adage says, "Actions speak louder than words". When Jesus asked Simon Peter three times if he loved Him and Peter responded three times that he loved Him, Jesus told him to feed His sheep, feed His lambs and tend His sheep. Jesus simply told Peter to love Him by feeding His sheep and lambs, and by tending His sheep. **True love is expressed through good or charitable actions and words.** WE LOVE OURSELVES AND OTHERS BY WHAT WE DO FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS. **We love ourselves by taking good care of ourselves;** by eating well, sleeping well, staying safe, distancing ourselves from what makes us sad, and so on. We, also love ourselves or take good care of ourselves by taking good care of our spiritual lives; having faith in God, praying, attending Mass, making use of the Sacraments we have, trying to please God, and so on. WE ARE A COMPOSITE OF BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT. For us to truly love or care for ourselves, our body, soul, and spirit must be taken care of. **We love others through our good actions or our good deeds.** Jesus commanded us to treat others as we would like to be treated. This is a summary of how to love others. **Today, Jesus brings to our awareness how to love Him.** In the Gospel reading today (John 14:23-24), Jesus pointed out to His disciples and us to love Him by keeping His words and by holding to what He taught. HE IS TELLING US TO LOVE HIM BY DOING WHAT HE COMMANDED US, TAUGHT US, AND REQUESTED FROM US AS REVEALED IN THE GOSPELS. Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He instructed His disciples and those who will believe in Him through their words to make disciples of all the nations by baptizing them in the name of the Trinity and to teach them all He taught (Matthew 28:19-20). THIS IS THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH. All the things we do in the Church today are in response to Jesus' instructions and requests. In the Church now, we baptize in the name of the Trinity as requested by Jesus, our sins are forgiven in the name of the Trinity through the ministry of the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit as ordained by Jesus (John 20:21-23), and the Holy Mass is celebrated in commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper celebration as demanded by Him. The Church, since her inception, has been loving Jesus by keeping His words. AS AN INDIVIDUAL, HOW HAVE YOU LOVED JESUS OR RECIPROCATED HIS LOVE? Remember that we love Jesus by keeping His words and holding onto what He taught us in the Gospels. We are supposed to know the things Jesus requested from us in the Gospels or what He taught in the Gospels. In the Gospel reading today, Jesus pointed out that the Holy Spirit would teach and remind us of all He said. The Holy has been reminding us of what Jesus taught, commanded, or requested through different means or agents. **If you truly love a person you will try to know his or her likes and dislikes.** Some people study the Gospels to know Jesus better and try to please Him. Most of us have a favorite food, clothes, shoes, colors, flowers, and so on. How would you feel if someone gives you one of your favorite things? Of course, you will be very happy and appreciate the person. In one of my homilies during the Advent, I pointed out that Jesus, sometimes, is not happy on His birthday because of some of the birthday gifts He receives from us. TO MAKE JESUS HAPPY ON HIS BIRTHDAY, WE MUST GIVE HIM THE BIRTHDAY GIFTS HE LIKES OR CHERISHES. To love Jesus, we must know what He likes or cherishes and do them. Jesus pointed out that to have seen Him is to have seen the Father, that He is one with the Father (John 14:9). WE LOVE THE FATHER THROUGH JESUS. ALSO, WE LOVE JESUS AND THE FATHER BY LOVING OTHERS. A child once asked her teacher how she can love Jesus because her parents and siblings are the only ones

that receive Jesus, that is, Holy Communion. For this child, Jesus is far from her. She pointed out that she was taught to love her parents by being respectful and obedient to them and to love her siblings and classmates by sharing what she has with them. The teacher told her to love Jesus by attending the Holy Mass and by praying. When I heard about this child's question, I told the teacher to tell her that she loves Jesus through her parents and classmates since Jesus commanded us to love others. WE LOVE JESUS BY DOING WHAT HE WANTED US TO DO. MAY GOD HELP US TO LOVE HIM BY KEEPING HIS WORDS, AMEN.