**Acts 10: 44-48**
**Psalm 98**
**1 John 5: 1-6**
**John 15: 9-17**

**In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen**

We talk a lot about love in the church from the pulpit, the adult education hour, and the youth education; we talk so much about love you wonder how people cannot understand, and they show just the opposite to each other. There is something very unique about love and that why it does not occur naturally and flow freely. It just seems so easy and the Bible refers to love approximately 638 times; whereas Money is referred to only approximately 140 times. Jesus leaves us with his 2 last commandments, and both of them require love; "Love your neighbor as yourself, and love God above everything." Then what is so unique about love, and why is it not always given to each other?

The uniqueness of love and the reason for it sometimes being very difficult to obtain, is that it requires another person. You cannot love all by yourself; you must show that love to another person. Now you are thinking to yourself that; "sure I know that, what is so special about that?" If you want to really begin to allow love to be part of everything you do in life, try this experience and when you accomplish this, you are carrying out Jesus' last commandment.

**<u>If you are really ready to show love as the major ingredient in your life, begin by loving someone you hate.</u>**

Now you are thinking to yourself, "This is getting harder to accomplish than I thought it would be." You see when 2 people are involved in a loving situation; one is showing love, but the other difficulty can be that the other person must accept that love. You can continue as hard as you can to show love to another person, but if they are unwilling to accept that love, what did you accomplish?

This is where prayer and love are similar. If it seems that our prayers are not being answered, do we just quit praying? No, we continue our prayers until we are able to find the answer to our prayer. The same is true about love, if love is not accepted and you genuinely want love to be accepted, you continue to show God's love whether they accept it or not.

Jesus gave up his life to give us everlasting life and for the forgiveness of our sins, and in the Gospel lesson this morning Jesus says there is no greater

love than to lay down ones' life for another, which is a very strong statement. I don't think many of us are going to be given the opportunity to lay down on a hand grenade to save the other person's life, but I do think you are given an opportunity every day to give God's love to another person. When you cook or serve food at one of the shelters, help package food for the Stop Hunger Now program, attend an outreach ministry meeting; you have given up your time to help someone else.

This is what church is all about; "doing for others instead of doing for yourself." If you are not doing something for someone else on a regular basis, you are not obeying Jesus' last commandment.

So I began by saying love is unique and sometimes difficult to accomplish, but if you are going to be the Christian that God wants you to be and live a life of joy and satisfaction; you must take the time to help others and show them God's love. Attend the next outreach ministry meeting June 1st, Monday night at 6:30 in the evening or go on the web site, look at all the outreach opportunities and join others in this parish that show God's love to people in this community in an outreach project.

Amen