

Reflection Tuesday 5th January Christmas season 2021

Isn't it interesting that once a disciple chose to follow Jesus, he went off to find a friend to join him and meet Jesus too? This must reflect the warmth, welcome and friendship Jesus showed them. He must have had an air of authority and purpose that also inspired them. The meeting with Nathaniel suggests the Jesus knows us better than we know ourselves even before we encounter him.

John, in his letter, spells out in no uncertain terms the importance of love. John speaks about this love as the ability to remain open to others as well as ourselves. Love expresses a positiveness about life and an optimism that continually searches for the good, the beautiful, the benefits of every encounter and experience. John then says that doing the opposite would be negative and pessimistic. Rejecting and hating people is just self-destructive. Medically we are more likely to heal if we approach illness with confidence; confidence in God, confidence in ourselves to stay positive, and confidence in the medical staff who treat and care for us. Everyone benefits. This is the kind of love that Jesus showed knowing that he reflected the Father's love for us.

In his New Year's message Pope Francis, who radiates the love of God, said: *"the coronavirus pandemic has taught the world how important it is to take an interest in others' problems and to share their concerns, because this leads to peace. This peace is sustained through patience and respect in our encounters with others and built on an open collaboration with truth and justice."* The Pope's wishes for 2021 is *"that it be a year of peace, a year of hope. It is up to everyone to take by the hand those who need a comforting word, a tender gesture, and if we begin with peace in ourselves, it will spread to those who are near us."* In Jesus' words *"love one another as I have loved you!"*

There was once a surprise meeting between the +ve and the -ve sign. The positive sign was really intrigued and said; *"Well, I am better than you since I add something of value!"* *"What are you here for?"* it asked the negative sign. The -ve sign said *"I am here to make a difference!"*