

Reflection Wednesday Week 31 – 2021

Love is the theme in Paul's letter to the Romans. The Urban Dictionary offers 36 meanings for love; other dictionaries also suggest many meanings. The scriptures we use are translated particularly from Greek and Hebrew so we have to be cautious in understanding the word *hate*. Those listening to Jesus understood it to mean *prefer* or *put before*. Jesus clearly calls for a radical commitment. He also called us to love God and love your neighbour that would include your family. We can also love God radically with our family especially when they make the same commitment. Like Wisdom, Love is a power beyond words, confining it to a definition implies little understanding of its power and how it works which is often beyond rational control. Even when unable to follow Jesus because of our failings and lack of commitment, Jesus would want us to keep trying. As St Paul wrote elsewhere, *the Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*.

The Synod, just started, is calling us to speak about our love for the Church, for each other, for oneself. As with all great gifts from God, the more we share God's gifts the stronger they become, especially when we journey together. COP26 reminds us that creation is calling for our love, so too are the poor and destitute. Care and healing are true signs of love. The healing of the earth and of its peoples demands a radical commitment by us but also by the governments of the world; a commitment that is ongoing.

Lord God, our hearts break at the devastating impact the climate crisis is already having on those living in extreme poverty. We pray that this injustice will not be ignored, that more will be done to protect those left vulnerable and that governments will take action to protect those most vulnerable around the world, not just those in their own country. Amen.