

3 keys to the mission of love

St. Mother Teresa, founder of the Missionaries of Charity, dedicated her life to serving “the poorest of the poor,” providing homes for orphans, care for the sick, and comfort for the dying. Her mission was rooted in the belief that every person, no matter how destitute, deserves God's dignity and compassion. Not only was she declared a saint, she received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for her humanitarian work. St Mother Teresa's life was a mission of love.

I want to talk to you today about the **mission of love**. The bible readings today talk about the greatest commandment to love: God and neighbour.

The mission to love is so important. The bible says that “God is love.” Also, that God created human beings, you and me, in His image and likeness. We are made out of, and for, love.

God comes on a mission of love to you. Maybe there is someone who needs to hear this today. Maybe someone is feeling unlovable, and unloved. God comes on a mission of love to you, through Jesus. You can be filled with God's love today.

This parish is called to God's mission of love. What would it look like if this parish were even more a place where your non-churchgoing loved ones would be welcomed into a family of faith, that's looks and feels like Jesus, where they are at home, loved, make friends? Where they gain even greater purpose, meaning, and hope? For this new way of life to transform their families, friends, work, neighbourhoods, the city, and the world?

There are 3 keys for this mission of love in the parish: evangelisation, leadership, and the Holy Spirit.

1. Evangelisation - Hebrews says Jesus' “*power to save is utterly certain.*” (Heb 7). Parishes on God's mission of love evangelise: help people to meet Jesus and come into a relationship with him as an utterly certain saviour. In

our parish, evangelisation is primarily an invitation to try *Alpha*. Alpha is a space where non-religious especially can get curious about the big questions of life, faith, and meaning. We are doing our 4th alpha now. We are already seeing younger and older people's lives transformed by faith in Jesus.

2. Servant Leadership - In Deuteronomy, Moses didn't go to the Promised Land alone, and say, "look what I found, come visit me." He journeyed with the people. All the people of God had to play their part in the journey. A parish on a mission of love has servant leaders. In the mission of love, you can find a part to play in our journey. You don't need a title. God calls us all to leadership in some form, whether it's within our families, our work, school, or here in the parish. How might God be calling you to serve? I want us to create an atmosphere where everyone can try serving, according to your gifts and availability. See the service sheet on the noticeboard and website. Pray and think about trying a ministry or service team.

3. The Holy Spirit - The scripture readings today command us to love God. But 1 John says that God loved us first. We need God's love to love! Romans 5:5 says "the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit." Without the Holy Spirit, faith can become boring and irrelevant. Filled with the Holy Spirit, our parish can become a place of joyful love! My vision is for non-churchgoers to be invited to our Sunday worship experience and be transformed by a spirit of love: through our hospitality and welcome; through hymns and music; through inspiring and relevant homilies. Pray for the Holy Spirit each day to renew you, our parish, the whole church, and the world!

Practical Ways to Join in This Vision

1. **Engage in Community Life** – attend parish events, join a small group, and build friendships that encourage and strengthen faith.
2. **Try Alpha** – alpha is about 3 L's: Love, laugh, listening. Invite friends, family, or colleagues. It's a simple, welcoming way to engage with faith, ask questions, and encounter Jesus.
3. **Prioritise worship** – make prayer a daily habit, and Mass a weekly habit. Download a free bible or prayer app, e.g. Hallow. Pray for our parish, for one another, and for renewal in the Church. Try a prayer group: legion of Mary or Divine Mercy for example.
4. **Commit to Serve** – consider joining a ministry or service team: welcoming people on Sunday, helping with hospitality, music ministry, or youth ministry, SVP. Service gives us greater meaning, and builds our community.
5. **Join a Faith Explore Group** – these monthly groups for both adults and youth are a place to learn, share, and explore faith together.

This parish is on the cutting edge of a new chapter in the history of the Church. Around the world, many parishes are embracing these 3 principles of evangelisation, leadership, and the Holy Spirit. They are too are committed to God's mission of love. Join in this mission!

Prayer

Father, come to your mission of love to me today, through Jesus.

Jesus, make me utterly certain of your power to save.

Help me to play my part in serving your mission of love to all people.

Come, Holy Spirit. Fill me with God's love to go out to all people this week in love.

Amen!