

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, May 5, 2024
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Cycle B

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, “How many women can a man marry?” “Sixteen, the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. “Wow! How do you know that?” “Easy” the little boy said.” All you have to do is add it up, like the priest said; 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer.”

One of the most amusing statements about love that I have found was on a billboard several years ago. It says, “Love is like a ghost; everybody claims to have seen one but nobody had truly experienced it.” Funny but true, because love is something we don’t just see or think of but experience and feel. Love is a reality, something beyond logic and reason, and perhaps the most used, overused, and abused word in the English language.

Jesus, in our Gospel today used the word “love” nine times in nine verses to teach us its deeper reality before He ascended into heaven. He said to His disciples: “As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love”.

Love can only be from God and rooted in God. The ancient Greeks and Romans were right – humans are not capable of loving that they had to invent gods and goddesses of love who would enable humans to love. But with the coming of Jesus Christ, the God who became Man, we have come to know and experience that love is not only from God but is God Himself. Love is a gift freely given by God which unites us to Him and makes us share in his life. Thus, to live is to love, and to love is to live. Whenever there is a breakdown in our life, most likely it is when we do not love, which is also when we sin. When we do not love and we sin, our life fails to be in order.

Love brings joy, no matter how painful and trying life may be. It is always outward-bound and self-emptying, and this gives God the opportunity to fill us with more of it. That is why love is more than a feeling – it is a decision we make to give and offer our very selves for God and others. The Trappist monk Thomas Merton said, “The surest sign that we truly love is when we have learned to love somebody more than ourselves.”

So, how’s your love life right now? The amount of love that we have shared is also the amount of how much we have lived up to our purpose as children of God. Jesus reminded us today, “This I command you: love one another.”