

## Share Jesus Love

Seventh Week of Ordinary Time – February 19, 2017- Matthew 5: 38-48

**“Share Jesus Love”** is the Mission Statement for the Archdiocese of Dubuque. It is Archbishop Jackels call for us to be disciples who share the adjective “Jesus” love with all those we encounter. In a way this is very simple. In another way it is very difficult as it calls us, as disciples of Christ, to seek out what this love looks like. The essence of the readings for this week, call us all to holiness. Holiness, Jesus says, must reflect the perfection of God, not out of just obedience to law, but out of a radiating love of the other.

From the book of Leviticus we hear, **“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy.’** This call to holiness has often been couched in adhering to a strict moral code of conduct or an extreme self-righteous piety that can lead us into a judgmental approach to other people.

Jesus is calling us to understand the commandments with an attitude that leads us to witness Jesus in all that we do. Jesus reflects on the old law of justice by saying, **“You have heard that it was said, *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.* But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well.”** To understand this old way of approaching the law is to understand that these codes were set as a limit on retribution. Jesus is saying that if we respond to wrong doing with hate and vengeance, how are we different than anyone else? However, if we respond with love we are responding in holiness to the commands of God. Retribution has no place in the Kingdom.

Ultimately, the challenge to us living holy lives lies in Jesus’ command for us to love our enemies. This is a stark contrast to a violent form of revenge. It is the call we have in this Archdiocese, from our Archbishop, to share this radical way of living in the midst of persecution, suffering and conflict. This is the gospel message. This is what we are bound to in our baptism and what must radiate out from our hearts to transform and evangelize a broken world.

To **“Share Jesus Love”** calls us into an on-going role of being an intentional disciple of Jesus Christ. To do so, we must form our lives around the gospel through reading scripture, personal prayer, communal worship, devotion and practice of our Catholic faith. The tools necessary to live out this notion of “Jesus Love” is all there for us. We, on our part, must make the effort to know and love Christ every day of our lives, transforming, first ourselves, and then the world.

Blessings!

  
Sue Schettler, PLC