



*From the Office of the President*

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REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

**Homily for the Seventh Sunday of Easter (B)  
Basilica of the Immaculate Conception  
May 13, 2018**

Acts 1:15-17, 20-26  
Psalm 103:1-2, 11-12  
1 John 4:11-16  
John 17:11-19

Will all the mothers, grandmothers, and mothers-to be please stand for a moment?  
Let's acknowledge their steadfast love for us!

"Love is not easily given. Nor is it easily received. And yet the mystery of love is the heart of Christian faith. Its basis is, as the First Letter of John tells us, God's love for us. This, for starters, is problematic. God's plan does not mesh with ours. Contrary to our hunch, our primary task is not to do good works but to believe in God's love for us revealed in Jesus Christ. Our faith in this love, the sixth chapter of John's gospel tells us, is our fundamental work. When we work to believe in this gift, we accept our salvation. And once we accept it, we are empowered and sent to love others" (Kavanaugh, *The Word Encountered*, 67).

This is what our parents have always taught. This is what our readings focus on today. The first step is to be loved; the second is to love others. We have a remarkable story from Acts to illustrate the point. Joseph called Barsabbas, the man not chosen to be one of the Twelve, was nevertheless a blessed person. Is it possible that he felt some disappointment when he was not chosen? How did he respond? We are left with his joy and continued salvific love.

Challenging but exciting beginnings are not new to the People of God. We human beings crave simple answers to complex questions arising from our lived realities. Our lived realities are so complex that "a fearful narrowmindedness," a version of fundamentalism, often articulate by both the religious right and the religious left can exclude others. We can be tempted to dismiss genuine and deep wisdom if we too quickly move to clarity and simplicity. That is why the Church invests so heavily in education, higher education in particular. In a sense, a very real sense, education continues the work begun at our mother's knee, which is to make our lives more complex, more difficult, even while giving us peace and moving us to wisdom. I am not speaking of research papers, juried presentations, or organic chemistry only. But rather the very hard work of becoming human and engaging the real world in all its wonders and horrors.



The problem is, of course this word "love." In so many ways we have studied this word and its meaning from our mother's knee. Is there a verb in our language that does more work, carries a heavier burden, or is misused more often? Can you think of a noun more often invoked as a prayer and as an excuse?

What we hear in today's gospel from Jesus is seemingly straightforward and simple; it's what we have heard in the last few weeks of Easter: "Love one another as I have loved you." Be loved first, be protected by my Father and the Advocate, my Holy Spirit. Now, go out and love others. But in this world the content the wisdom is wonderfully complex. You and I have already discovered that; it will take our lifetimes to learn it.

You are strong, loving and wise. Now go out and love.