

Love Your Enemies!

The Sacrament of the Eucharist we celebrate is the Sacrament of Love, which fills us with God's love and empowers us to be children of love who are always called to love, even to love our enemies. The invitation by Jesus for us to love our enemies is one of his most challenging teachings. Enemies, for us in our human understanding, do not deserve any good because they have not treated us or others kindly or fairly. Thus, we can ask ourselves, who are our enemies? We can classify our enemies into those who have done wrong to us to an extent we try everything to distance ourselves from them, people we don't like either because of what they do or have done or who they are, and people we perceive that hate us. Jesus's invitation and the examples of David in the first reading would help us to harken to this invitation, love your enemies!

The story of the encounter of David with Saul leaves us with heart-warming examples of the love of enemies. David had a death warrant of Saul, who saw himself as an enemy to David because of jealousy and wanted to kill him. David chose to love than to hate. He decided to forgive than to get revenge. He decided not to be influenced by those with him to be revengeful. He became a living example of these scriptural words, "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Do not take revenge. Vengeance is mine" (Romans 12: 17-19; Deuteronomy 32:35) and an invitation that Jesus gives us in the Gospel, "To you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

The love of enemies is easier said than done. It might look impossible or unattainable in our human understanding, but we know that nothing is impossible with God. God's Spirit that dwells in us makes it possible as St. Paul reminds us in the second reading, "The first man, Adam, became a living being, the last Adam a life-giving spirit." Jesus is the last Adam and his Spirit within us, especially the one we receive through the Eucharist, animates us to live after his own heart. Just as God showers his love upon each of us despite ourselves, he wants us to love and forgive others despite themselves. Let us continue to ask him for the strength to love our enemies, both real and perceived. Amen