

October 31: Inseparable from God's Love

Today, as the Church completes Pope Francis' Extraordinary Mission Month 2019, we hear Saint Paul's message to the Romans inviting us to contemplate the enduring, unfathomable love of God: "Nothing [even death or life] can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord." "If God is for us, who can be against us"? Note the profound certainty with which Paul speaks about Christ's enduring love.

Recalling God's rich love poured out on humanity ["God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all"], we are drawn into a deeper reflection on the very origin of the Church and her mission. *Ad Gentes* (2), the Vatican II document on missionary activity, asserts that the Trinitarian design of mission emerges from the "fount-like love" [*fontalis amor*] of our Trinitarian God. God is truly a "fountain of love," an "endless source of charity," flowing out through the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We owe our very existence to God's "surpassing and merciful kindness." He has "graciously called us to share with Him His life and His glory," which he "does not cease to pour out still" through "His divine goodness" (AG 2). Here we find a deep theology of mission: all is rooted in God's love, nothing more and nothing less. Mission is, at heart, relishing God's love and then making God's love visible through concrete words and deeds.

Saint Paul also asserts (2 Cor 5:14) that "the love of Christ impels us" [*Caritas Christi urget nos*]. We engage in missionary evangelization, not because of external mandates; our mission motivation flows authentically out of the Trinitarian love we have received in Baptism. Mission is, at heart, an overflow of God's life of love from deep within our souls. Because we have encountered and been transformed by God's love; we become "missionaries of God's love"!