

Daily Devotional, March 9, 2021 The Greatest Form of Flattery

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children, and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV)

Were you one of those students who could do a good impersonation of your teachers? I remember a classmate of mine, Tony Luizo, who would have us in stitches as he excelled at the gift of impersonation. This guy had it down: the voice, the facial expressions, the mannerisms, everything he did was spot on! You would swear he sounded more like the teacher than the teacher! Maybe you enjoy some of the comedians who effectively imitate a politician, an actor, or some other famous figure. A favorite of mine over the years was Rich Little, and more recently, Frank Caliendo. Not only is it good to laugh...they say imitation is the highest form of flattery!

You'll notice in reflecting on these verses in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians...and they're good ones, that these verses invites us to imitate God! They encourage us to take literally Jesus' invitation to his disciples when he said, "follow me." To follow Jesus is to do as Jesus said, and to do as he did. It means to have "the very mind of Christ" as Philippians2:5 puts it. We believe the love of God is evident and available to the world in and through Jesus Christ. He gave himself for us so that we can give that love to others. That's what sacrificial love does, it gives itself away to bless the other.

As children created in God's very image and deeply loved by God, we are asked to share that love with others. We do so by offering our gifts and our care, through our prayers and our time, by our efforts and our talents to be of benefit and to bless each of them. Do you know that every call you make, every card you send, every dessert you give, every gift you offer, even every smile or prayer you offer does exactly that. For all of us, a meaningful and joyful life is made not by means of accumulating, but by means of giving. If you continue following in the way of Jesus, I assure you, you will find many important ways to help, to heal, to give and to serve our many neighbors in need.

Remember that following Jesus, by mimicking His every way, is the highest form of flattery!

Prayer: In response to Your great and saving love, dear God, I give you thanks and praise for being ever present and ever faithful, modeling for us the love and care that we are called to mirror to this hurting world. Help me to do what I can to share your love with others as a splendid, most fragrant offering to You. In the name of Your son, Jesus Christ, who you sent for us to model in all that we do. Amen.