

**St. Frances Cabrini - Lebanon, TN**  
**Fourth Sunday of Lent – Year B**  
**March 11, 2018**

*2 Chr 36:14-16; 19-23*

*Eph 2:4-10*

*John 3:14-21*

Today's theme is very simple. One word. Love. For us, we have the one word that can mean many things. In the Greek, love has multiple words with, of course, different meanings. We will focus on three; Philia, Eros, and Agape. Philia is the love you have for a friend or thing. Eros is the love that is shared between two, which is romantic love. Both of these can be self-serving with elements of serving others. Then we have Agape love. This is with the sole purpose to serve others.

So what do you love? Do you love your spouse? Do you love your kids? Do you love your family and friends? Do you love your job? Love your house, your car. All of these can be either Eros or Philia. When it deals with people, these types of love should lead us to Agape love.

God is love, plain and simple. It is the only thing he can be. We as humans have chosen a different path, which is sin. We no longer trust God and his love, so we turn from him. Think of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. They ran from God when they heard him coming. We have been running away from God ever since Adam and Eve.

I have said before, God does not push us away; we push him away. Yet God is always working to repair the relationship whether we want to or not. How did he do this for the Israelites? God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son.

I want you to think back when you were in school. Remember counting out to determine which team, you were on. Count one, two, and then three. Do you remember doing that? Now, let us count as if we are participating on the greatest team of all. When God looks to you, there is only one number. One, one, one, one. God loves each one of us individually. In addition, he did this in a way that we ought not to be afraid.

Through the incarnation, God became man. We know the story. God became man in the form of a baby. Who is afraid of a little baby? Look at this child? Anything to be afraid of? Or look at Mary here. Mary is rather petit. However, when she smiles, the whole world smiles. We are not afraid of them. So God started out humbly as a baby, not as some major figure.

Secondly, Jesus was approachable to all. Look how he reached out to the marginalized. Look how he reached out to us sinners; the tax collectors, prostitutes. Look how he reached out to heal people. Look how he reached out to feed people. He fed them with food. He fed their souls with the gospel. Jesus was approachable. He did not act like a king throwing his authority around.

God so loved the world, he gave his only Son. During Lent, we reflect on how much God loves us. We reflect on how much Jesus loves us. During his Passion, Jesus did not put up a fight. He did not respond to Pilot's questions. He humbly accepted the cross for us. He humbly accepted the cross for you. You, you, you. One, one, one.

God so loves the world he gives his only Son. Notice I am not using past tense. We have Christ, who transcends time. How much does he love us? Look at the cross. What do you see? How much does Jesus love us? See how his arms are spread out? He loves you this much.

What is it that you love? What is it that you have agape love for? You may not give yourself up on a cross. Give love with a servant's heart. What do you want to change in how you love? God so loves the world. He loves it this much. What do you love?