

Agape the Key to God's Presence, Part 3

Peter Kreeft

C.S. Lewis ends the greatest sermon I have ever read outside the Bible, "The Weight of Glory," with this insight: "Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses," for in both Christ is truly hidden. Though He is hidden, agape still can see:

"It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption which you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations... There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit immortal horrors or everlasting splendors"

And that leads us to Paul's capstone: the eternal destiny of agape.

The deeper we look, the closer we approach Ecclesiastes' terrifying truth about this world: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

In fact, Pascal says, 'Anyone who does not see the vanity of this world must be very vain indeed.' In other words, nothing here "under the sun" can wholly win our hearts.

But God can, and God is love (*agape*). And love is right here under the sun.

"Agape" love is eternal because it's the very stuff of which God is made, just as sunbeams are the very stuff of the sun. That's why it is the only thing in life that never gets boring.

Even other loves get boring. Selfish loves get boring because if I love you to fill up my needs, then I am eventually filled, and bored. Or else I'm not filled, and therefore frustrated. In neither case can I be happy. There is no possible escape from the dilemma of boredom vs. frustration within the framework of egotism. Only the breaking of that framework by agape can ever solve the problem. Only agape can ever make us happy forever.

We've tried everything else, and every one of our billions of experiments with life has failed. Yet so incredible is our foolishness we keep trying, hoping that the next wife or husband or job or vacation or dose of drugs will bring us the inner peace we long for. That's why today's psychiatric couches and divorce courts are filled.

All 15 features are things we deeply desire. But only agape has them. Take, for instance, the first: How can we get patience? Despite good intentions, we find ourselves continually losing patience even with those we love most. The natural loves, valuable as they are, are not enough. They are like a garden, but they need a gardener. That is the role of agape: it perfects the other loves. When we have agape toward someone, it becomes not only possible but natural to be patient with them, for "agape is patient."

Try being patient without agape. It just doesn't work. It works only as long as you feel patient. So you try substituting hard willpower for soft feeling: "I'll be patient with so-and-so if it kills me" and it almost does. You discover (1) that your will is ridiculously weak, and (2) that even when you succeed in repressing your impatience, it's still there, and your "love" is cold and formal. Patience has to come from the heart, not from feelings or "iron resolution." The heart the center that's the ballpark where agape plays.

Agape is the catalyst not only for other virtues, like patience, but also for other loves, like affection. When we have agape we find that we can begin liking the people we used to dislike. If this seems impossible, reflect that you do it to yourself all the time. You love yourself even when you do not like yourself; and the more you love yourself, the more you like yourself. All you have to do is to apply this love of self to your neighbors. In other words, exactly as Jesus said, love your neighbor as you love yourself.

If you follow this vast crowd of false prophets who dominate our age, you will, quite simply, lose your soul. A recent poll revealed that of all the sciences, psychology has the lowest percentage of religious believers. (Astrophysics and theoretical neurology were among the highest.) But if you let your will die and be replaced by a love that does not insist on its own way, you'll find yourself reborn. Give up what you think is yourself and you will find what God designed as yourself.

The modern West affirms both self and selfishness. The traditional East denies both. The common premise of both philosophies is that the two must always go together. Christ comes with a sword and divides selfishness from self, sin from sinner. We must love sinners passionately, as the East does not. But we must hate sin passionately, as the modern West does not.

Jesus kills the cancer by nailing it to the cross; and the patient survives because there is Resurrection. He exchanges selves with us: We are in Him, crucified; He is in us, sanctifying. He is the love that "does not insist on its own way." That love can be in us only because He is in us. We attain it not by trying a little harder, but by faith, by letting Him invade us and possess us.

Finally, what does Paul mean by saying that agape bears, believes, hopes and endures all things?

Jesus does this. He is agape incarnate. He bears all things, like Atlas bearing the world on his shoulders. He does not only bear His own cross, He bears the crosses of the whole world. He bears His cross to the world and He bears the world to His cross. They meet, the patient and the cure, on Calvary's operating table.

Agape believes and hopes all things because Jesus' faith and hope are as infinite as His charity. Jesus always believes in us more than we do in ourselves. Look how God believed in Job even when Job hardly believed in God or himself any more.

Schedule of Events:

Monday

Tuesday, June 4

7:30 a.m. Confessions
8 a.m. Mass
6:30 p.m. Chapel Night

Wednesday, June 5

7:30 a.m. Confessions
8 a.m. Mass
7 p.m. KC meeting

Thursday, June 6

7:30 a.m. Confessions
8 a.m. Mass

Friday, June 7

8 a.m. Mass

Saturday, June 8

4 p.m. Vigil Mass

Sunday, June 8

7:30 a.m. Confessions
8 a.m. mass
9:30 a.m. Confessions
10 a.m. Mass



MASS INTENTIONS



For the Week of June 4, 2019 – June 7, 2019

8:00 A.M. – Tuesday June 4

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of:

Parishioners of St. Ann, Rai & Thaddeus Pellegrin, Macon Bascle family,

Remy Reulet family, Mark & Billy Pellegrin

8:00 A.M. – Wednesday June 5

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of:

Parishioners of St. Ann,

8:00 A.M. Thursday June 6

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of:

Parishioners of St. Ann, Gussie & L.E. Fletcher & Michael, Ruby & Merlin Bascle

8:00 A.M.-Friday, June 7

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of: Parishioners of St. Ann

Living & Deceased Members of LAS

4:00 P.M. Saturday, June 8

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of:

Parishioners of St. Ann, Rev. Clemens Schneider, Loyd Savin, Eldred & MayBelle Ellender,

Wilbert & Elsie Hebert, Linda Ann Hebert, Salome H. Matherne, Matthew S. Matherne,

Peter W. Hebert, Samuel Dominic Hebert, Michael Lee McGee, Wayne G. Cancienne,

Wilbert Dupre Sr., Jerry & Matthew Arceneaux, Kevin & Michelle Ward,

Eric, Joel & Frank Rogers, Kevin & Michelle W. (WA), Dolores Viteaux, Cynthia Charpentier

8:00 A.M. - Sunday, June 9

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of:

Parishioners of St. Ann, Lawrence & Eula Mazerac, Sue Bueche, Mary Eve & Vayne Bascle, Lionel Bascle family, Arthe' Breaux family, Arthur Lee Fabre, Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Fabre, Mr. & Mrs. Irby Petit, Aubrey Lee Boquet, Roland, Paul, & Eula Mae Rodrigue, Cindy R. Broussard, Clinton & Wilma Picou, Michael Falgout, Vin & Joyce LeBlanc family, Gilbert & Rita Bergeron family, Sterling & Mary Ellen Authement, Sterling Authement Jr, Mark & Randy Naquin, Marion & Irma Bascle, Norman & Eunice Falgout, Eugene & Leona Theriot, Israel & Mae Authement, Tel Meeker, Larry Falgout, Dean & Dot Bascle, David & Iris Bascle, Tessa Dupre, Allen Theriot, Craig Dupre, Butch, Eugene Theriot Jr., Earline Theriot, David Percle, Francis & Iris Theriot, Patricia Grabert, Becky Gautreaux, Phillip Theriot, David Massey, Jenna Theriot, Norman Falgout Jr., Chris Boudreaux, James Bergeron, Margie & Elton Thibodaux, Paul Jackson, Angela Authement, Meva Blanchard, Dawn Lirette (B) Clyde Pitre, Clyde, Elizabeth & Curtis Lirette, Matthew & David Naquin Sr, Andrew Sr., Edna, Elie, Morris, Bruce Pitre, Special intention, Marie Gaston, Ernestine Pitre, Linda Whipple Schouest, Wilma, Eugene & John Dusenbery, Veronica Trahan, Terry Lirette, Amelie Thibodaux, Ella Mae Guidry, Jesse Fanguy Sr. Ann Hebert, A.J. Theriot

10:00A.M. - Sunday, June 9

All Donors and Benefactors of St. Ann Church & in Memory of:

Parishioners of St. Ann, Lyle LeCompte & family, Geraldine Dupre, Keri Lynn Niette, Mrs. Ruth Franc Herbert, Celina, Joyce, Deborah & Ronald Belanger, Rosie & Richard Lafont Ruth Pinell, Maxine Christoffersen, Diana & Norris Bourg

MEMORIALS FOR THE WEEK OF June 2, 2019

The Sanctuary Light burns this week in memory of *Macon Bascle family & Mark & Billy Pellegrin* requested by Randolph & Kathie Bascle.

The Altar Bread is in memory of *Remy Reulet family* requested by Randolph & Kathie Bascle.

Vacation Bible Camp 2019:

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

St. Ann's VBS this year will be June 25-28 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

The Theme will be "Come to the Table"

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!

Registration forms are available in the back of church.

Adult Lift Conference:

If you would like to attend the Adult Lift Conference (18yrs & older) please contact

Mrs. Mindy Ard for more information at (985) 688-1872.

The conference is September 27-29.

There is a \$50.00 deposit that is due by June 1st.

CHURCH CLEANING: Week of June 9- Paula, Sally, Stacy, Cindy

MASSES	MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST	COMMENTATOR/ LECTOR	ALTAR SERVERS	USHERS
<u>June 8 & 9</u>				
SATURDAY 4:00P.M.	Yvonne, Adrian Marianne, Brian	Randolph, Connie	Grace, Rebecca	Steve, Dave, Ollie
SUNDAY 8:00A.M.	Doug, Jesse Monique, Carol	Nick, David	Lee	Doug, Numa, Claude
10:00A.M.	Cindy, Leslie, Lisa, Mindy	Sofie, Ashleigh	Henry, Anna, Peyton, Mason	Lanny

