



Faith and Light International Letter to chaplains

June 2017

Dear friends,
The theme of the guidelines for the month of June invites us to reflect on love, the love of God, of Jesus and of our neighbor. It is out of love that Jesus came into the world, it is out of love that we relate to one another, and it is also out of love that we are saved. Here are therefore a few reflections about the love of Jesus that can help us deepen our commitment as disciples of Jesus, of Faith and Light.

Saint Paul tells us : *“If I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”* Therefore, if we do not have love, we are nothing. So, in order that our mission, as missionaries of vocations, be effective, we must have love above all, we must love one another, we must have the same love as God the Father, we must love the way Jesus loves.

To love like Jesus, by giving up our own life. He tells us: *“No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”* (Jn 15,13). He therefore loved us to the point of giving his life by dying on the cross for us. We know this, he loved us to the very end, by the total giving of his life.

To love like Jesus, intensely, profoundly. Jesus loves so intensely, so profoundly that all persons who approach him are transformed. Jesus invites us to love, like him, intensely and profoundly. It is the intensity of love that heals wounded hearts, gives us the strength to love, to transform others, society and the world. Moreover, the intensity of love strengthens the life of the family and of the community, fortifies the bonds between persons, peoples and nations, intensifies friendships, fellowship and communion.

To love our neighbor like Jesus. Saint Paul recommends to love our neighbor, *and live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God...*” (Cf. Eph 5,1-2). But, with a love that excludes hatred, vengeance and rancor (Lv 19, 17-18). *“All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice.”* (Eph 4,31) With love that makes room for patience, kindness and understanding. A love that bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1Co 13,4-7)

To love like Jesus, without limitations, without conditions, without borders, by following the example of God the Father *“who shines his sun on the wicked and the good and sends rain on the unjust and the just”*. God our Father whose love is without limit, is a Father who flouts walls and barriers and who makes no difference or distinction between persons. The perfection of love is lived by loving everyone. It is not about loving those who love us or

greeting those who greet us, it is by surpassing and eliminating all that prevents us from loving and even by loving our enemies. It is this radical love that will make us participate in the construction of the civilization of love that we so ardently desire. It is this radical love that will help us live in a world that is more united and fraternal.

To love the little ones and the poor like Jesus. Blessed be God who, through Jesus, shows us His preferential love for our masters: the poor, the destitute, the rejected, the non-loved. Jesus came into the world so that the blind might see, the lame walk, the lepers cleansed, the deaf hear and for the dead to rise (Lk 7,22). In other words, to bring consolation, joy and happiness to those living in sorrow, pain and suffering.

Finally, **to love like Jesus by being faithful till the end in the mission that was given us.** While he never ceased proclaiming peace, love, forgiveness and reconciliation, and continued to do good, Jesus underwent rejection and persecution. So, let us not fear persecution, conflicts, nor criticisms because of Jesus and the Gospel. The proclamation of the death and resurrection of Jesus has always encountered difficulties. This is the case today, it will also be tomorrows. Presently, men and women are suffering and have difficulty in living their faith in many places. May this not prevent us from ardently proclaiming Jesus, the only Master, the only Saint, the only Lord. On the contrary, when we encounter problems, difficulties and persecutions, our proclamation of Jesus must be stronger and more vigorous with the assurance that we are not alone, the Spirit is at work in us, in our lives, in our community, and in the world.

Let us therefore continue on every occasion to proclaim Jesus and the Gospel without fear. Let us love like Jesus, by giving our lives; let us try to love our neighbor, the little ones, the poor and the weak, intensely and profoundly, unconditionally, without limitations or borders. Let us remain faithful to our commitments in our ministry, for great will be our reward in heaven. And the Lord will tell us: *"Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy."* (Mt 25,21)

United in Jesus,

Father Isaac
International chaplain