

in 15:9-17, "Geese and Love"

world and all that is in it, God left a divine fingerprint on every creature. And so, even today, if we look very carefully,

we can see this divine mark on every creature.

"Have you ever watched geese fly in a V formation? It's a wonder of beauty to see, and if you *listen* you might hear the beat of their wings whistling through the air all in unison. It's a quiet sound. And, it reveals the secret of their strength: the lead goose with his flapping wings cuts a swath through the air's resistance, and creates a lift for the birds behind it. **They, in turn, as they flap their wings, ... create a lift for those coming behind them.**

And so it goes through the whole formation: those who go before give a lift to those who follow. The tired ones fan out to the far edges of the V to take a breather, & the rested ones surge toward the point of the V to pull the flock along. Each one takes its turn. If a goose grows too weary or too sick & has to drop out of the formation, it is never abandoned. **A stronger member follows it to a resting ... place, and waits till it is ready to fly again.**

Sticking together, taking turns at giving one another a lift, watching over and taking care, and leaving no one behind. It is not clean and mean - quite the contrary. **But it works! It doubles their range, it cuts their work in half**

and it sees every one of them safely home. (*Sunday Mornings*, Clark, Easter 6B. Love That Lasts)

I see that divine "fingerprint" in the natural behavior of these geese.

You might say that they represent the *true friendship* Jesus speaks about today,

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."

If we have the "sense" of a goose, we will stand by each other like that,

... we will love each other like that.

Jesus tells us in the gospel what the geese have been telling us for millions of years: ***if you want love that lasts, you have to give love that lasts***, love that watches over and takes care, love that takes turns at giving one another a lift,

love that sticks together and leaves no one behind.

It has been said that

A friend is the first person who comes in when the whole world goes out.

Henry Durbanville.

And isn't that what we, as Christians, as *the Living Body of Christ*, are called to do? We are called to be there, just as John's Letter tells us, **"God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him."** In his name we

continue that same mission of *reaching out* with divine & human love.

Jesus is quite clear, **"This my commandment: love one another as I love you."**

This "As" is a small word with **BIG** consequences.

tion by Jean Vanier that tells us how to *fulfill* this
Communion of Hearts”

2 To love people as Jesus loves them is to wash their feet, to serve them in humility; it is to help them rise up in truth and love. Here Jesus is revealing something more: *to love is to lay down one's life for others*, to place their interests before our own. **It is to give them life.**

That can mean accepting difficulties, danger & even death so that they may live and grow in love. **To love** is to live in communion with others, to transmit to them the life and love of Jesus.

It is to reveal to them that they are loved, loved by Jesus.

In this way we become their friend because we are a friend of Jesus. In this friendship nothing is hidden or secret. Jesus has shared everything he has heard from the Father; **all is given**. The barriers that separated the finite *from* the Infinite,

the temporal *from* the eternal, the human *from* the divine, *have disappeared*. At times it is necessary for us to live an austere life, like John the Baptizer, and to seek a certain separation from our bodies, to strain to reach God through our efforts. But God has appeared in the flesh, has become vulnerable in the flesh. He has come to offer us his friendship, to invite us to become his beloved. He has

í become little and vulnerable, to live a communion of hearts with us
... and to join him in giving life to others.” (Give Us This Day, 5/6/18)

By Baptism we are empowered to love, to give life **as** Jesus does!

But let's be clear í .

Real Love is not a romantic ideal or a passing fancy. Real Love is hard work.

Real Love is blood, sweat, tears & laughter and joy all at the same time.

This is Mother Teresa's insight into Real love

õAt the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by ó **“I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless and you took me in.”** Hungry not only for bread, but hungry for love. Naked not only for clothes, but naked for human dignity & respect.

Homeless not only for want of a room of bricks,

í but homeless because of rejection.ö -Mother Teresa

At this Resurrection Liturgy of Divine & Human Love, may we **“remain”** in the love of Jesus by showing **“no partiality”** in giving & receiving real love that lasts.

After all, we're probably as smart as the geese!!!