
My Sermon from Friday April 2, 2021 'Good Friday' ~ "I Love, Therefore I Am"

In the name of our crucified Christ. Amen.

In 1226, St. Francis of Assisi wrote his testament. He said:

We adore Thee, most holy Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all Thy churches that are in the whole world, and we bless Thee; because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the World. Amen.

(IN LATIN) ~ *Adoramus te, sanctissime Domine Iesu Christe, Hic (heek) et ad omnes (om-nehs) Ecclesias tuas, quae sunt in toto mundo, et benedicimus (benedichimus) tibi (tibby); quia (key-ah) per (pair) sanctam Crucem (cruchem) tuam redemisti (ray day mist ee) mundum. Amen*

Je pense donc je suis. French philosopher Rene Descartes originally made this philosophical statement in French but it is best known in Latin ~ *Cogito ergo sum.* "I think therefore I am."

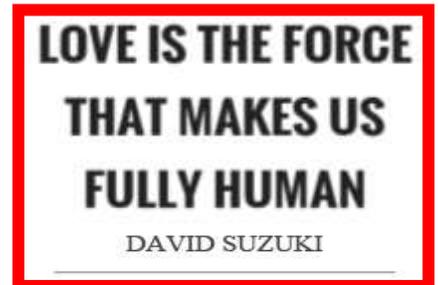
This statement was made by Descartes in the 1600s. Descartes focused on the power of rationalism and the power of logical thinking and reason. His premise is that if a person is thinking then that person is alive. That person exists. What Descartes is saying is that what it means to be human is to be able to think. He says that this is proof that we exist and are alive.

I began by speaking the words of Francis of Assisi. St. Francis and all disciples of Jesus live by a different standard.

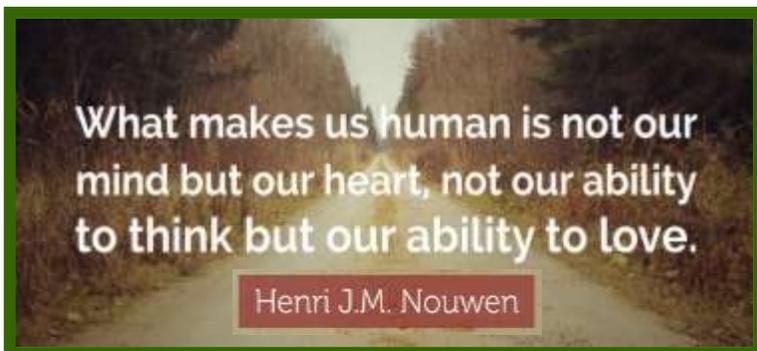
I love, therefore I am. It is through the power of love that Christ redeemed the world. It is through the power of love that we worship God and adore our Lord and Saviour Jesus.

I love, therefore I am. And in Latin "*Amo ergo sum.*"

Sister Joan Chittister is an American Benedictine nun, theologian, author, and speaker. She is currently in her 80's. Here is her spiritual wisdom for 'Amo ergo sum.' In her book *The Sacred In-Between*, she begins by writing about Descartes' phrase, "*I think, therefore I am.*" In Sister Joan's written words,



"No, thinking does not make us fully alive. Love is the great definer of life. Those who love, live. Those who live and never learn to love are already dead of soul. Love something; love anything, and everything in order to release the best of yourself. No doubt about it. It is love that makes us human."



I agree with Sr. Joan Chittister. The ultimate goal of our humanity is to live a life of love. And look at the ultimate gift that God gave us through the crucifixion. Through the incarnation, God became a person in Jesus. And Jesus took on the sins of the whole world and died for us so that we could live an eternal life filled with love and meaning. And why did he do this? Because God loves us.

Our eternal life begins now when we practice *Amo ergo sum.*

God is defined as love in the Bible by the Apostle John ~

“Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.” 1 John 4:8

This capacity to love comes from God and is God.

William Blake was a poet in England in the early 1800s. Here is one of his most famous quotes that is on plaques posted in many gardens around the world:

*“To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an Hour.”*

And here is what Blake said about love:

“If a thing loves, it is infinite.”

“Man is love.” (Today we would say ‘Humanity is love’ or ‘People are love.’)

May *amo ergo sum* be a cry that carries us from the cross of Christ through to the resurrection. Today we are in the second day of the **Triduum, the holy 3 days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.**

(Note to Readers: I then showed a slide presentation prepared by Archbishop Anne with pictures of health care professionals showing love and kindness during the past year of the pandemic.)

It is love that brings us here and love that will carry us through. Love is the greatest gift that we can offer another person and this gift goes into eternity.

(I paraphrased the following from 1 Corinthians 13) ~

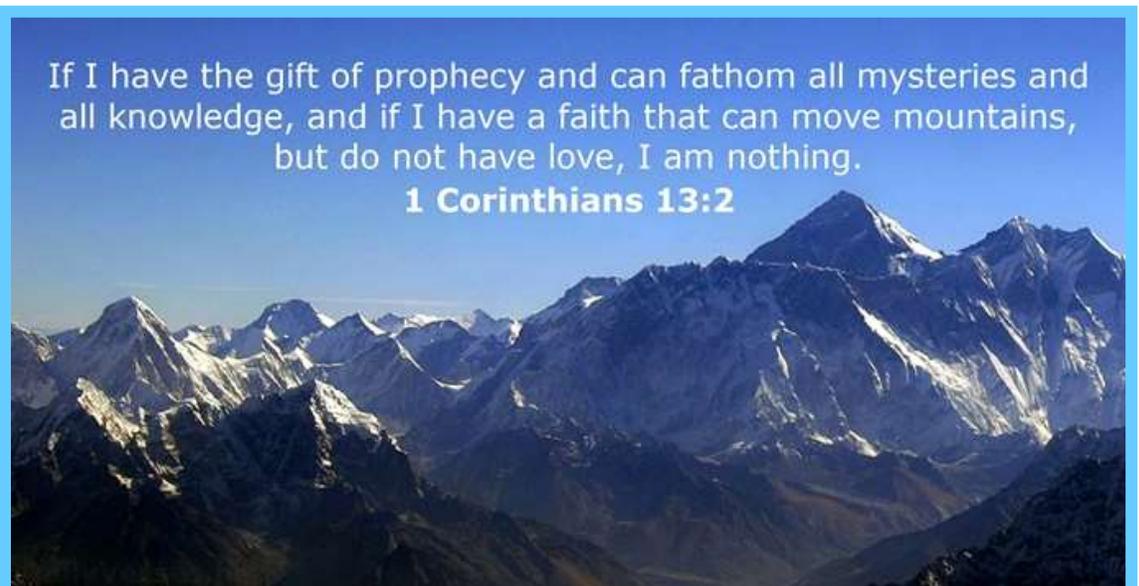
*If I speak with the golden voice of a world-famous Shakespearean actor but do not have love,
I am just a noisy gong.*

*If I have many scientific papers to my name and am respected for my knowledge
but do not have love, I am nothing.*

*If I say I have the faith to move mountains but do not have love,
I am nothing.*

*If I am a generous philanthropist and give away all of my estate and do not have love,
I gain nothing.*

*God gave us
Jesus in order to
teach us how to
love. Love bears
all things,
believes all
things,
hopes all things,
endures all
things. Love
never ends.*



I love therefore
I am.

Amo ergo sum.

That is the message of the cross to us today in 2021. The message is profound and meaningful and the most important one we will ever need to know.

Amo ergo sum.

Archdeacon Deborah+

