

A Time for Faith, Hope and Love

I. I CORINTHIANS 13:4-13

⁴ ...[Love] is patient, is kind: charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up;

⁵ Is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil;

⁶ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth;

⁷ Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

⁸ ...[Love] never falleth away: whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed.

⁹ For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

¹⁰ But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.

¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But, when I became a man, I put away the things of a child.

¹² We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know I part; but then I shall know even as I am known.

¹³ And now there remain Faith, Hope, and... [Love], these three: but the greatest of these is... [Love].¹

¹ 1, DRA, I CORINTHIANS 13:4-13. "Love" is the equivalent of "Charity" in this Text.

II. What Are These 3 Virtues – Faith, Hope and Love?

Faith means “to believe in GOD and believe all that He has said and revealed to us, and that Holy Church proposes for our belief, because He is Truth itself. By Faith man freely commits his entire self to GOD...”²

Hope means “we desire The Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in CHRIST’s Promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of The Grace of The HOLY SPIRIT...”³

Love means that “...we love GOD above all things for His Own Sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of GOD.”⁴

Saint Augustine says that until we behold Him face to face, let us believe. Faith does the earning. Seeing The Lord is our reward. We want to see GOD. The price of such a tremendous Good as that is Faith. We can not arrive Home without the hard work of the journey, a labor of Love. The sustenance for the journey is then Faith, Hope and Love.⁵

Faith is that which we have Hope for, yet do not see it in full. We experience its shadows, evidence and effects. We have Hope in being with GOD in all His Glory and dwell with Him in Heaven forever. Until then, we trust in His Revelation, given to us in His Love.

² 2, CCC, # 1814, p 498. Faith.

³ 2, CCC, # 1817, p 499. Hope.

⁴ 2, CCC, # 1822, p 501. Love.

⁵ 3, Saint Augustine of Hippo, “The Faith of The Wise Virgins.” Magnificat, Volume 11, Number 6, August 2009, p 384-385.

III. A Time for Faith, Hope and Love

On 9/01/2009, a 70 year old lady was dying in the ICU as I passed by her room. She had cried out several times in a weak voice, "Help me!" NG could not talk much. She was in obvious distress. She was alone. I sat with her as the Nurse came in to give her medication to make her more comfortable. I held her hand and prayed for her. After a time, NG fell asleep. I left my card behind.

The next day I was paged by a Nurse to meet the patient's husband, WG. We spent an hour together. I met him at first in a private conference room. He shared many burdens with me. He blamed himself for his wife's fall, which led to gangrene of her leg and an above the knee amputation of one leg. He shared his feelings of failure in knowing he could not possibly care for her at home. He shared his regrets that he was distant from his 5 stepchildren. And he shared his heartache that his beloved wife was dying.

But he took comfort in knowing I had prayed with his beloved the previous day. He asked me to pray with him. Through his tears, he then shared how he once sang in his Church's choir. He loved many old hymns, some of which he use to sing with his wife. I asked him what his favorite hymns were. His top two were "Abide With Me" and "Stand Up, Stand Up For JESUS." I offered to sing them with him to his wife at her bedside.

I printed off copies of both hymns and met him at his wife's bedside as planned. The Nurse stepped out and closed the doors. He picked the stanzas, two from each hymn. He led and I melded my voice into his. His Faith gave him Hope to do the hard work of being with his dying wife and saying good bye to her in presence, prayer, story and now in song. His Hope sang out in Love for his wife because of his Love for GOD. And there I saw once again that "Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not."⁶ Mr. G's despair was overcome by The Three Christian Virtues: Faith, Hope and Love. And the greatest of these is Love.

⁶ 1, DRA, HEBREWS 11:1.

IV. A Hymn, “Abide With Me.”

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou Who changest not, abide with me.

I need Thy Presence every passing hour.
What but Thy Grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like Thyself, my Guide and Stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight, and tears not bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom and point me to The Skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.⁷

AMEN.

⁷ 4, Hymnsite.com, “700. Abide with Me.” Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793-1847. Music: W.H. Monk, 1823-1889. Tune: EVENTIDE, Meter: 10 10.10 10.

V. References

1. “The Douay-Rheims American Edition (1899) [Bible].” Bible Works 7. Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2006.
2. “Catechism of The Catholic Church.” United States Catholic Conference. Doubleday of Random House, Inc. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland. 1995.
3. “Magnificat.” The Catholic Herald, Ltd. Yonkers, New York.
4. “Hymnsite.com – Featuring MIDI Hymns and PSALM Tunes from The United Methodist Hymnal, 1989 Edition.” <http://www.hymnsite.com/>.