



St. Paul

A Reflection

During this year of St Paul (29th June 2008– 29th June 2009) it might be good to take some time out of your busy schedule and reflect on one of his most inspiring extracts from his letters to the Corinthians (1 Cor.13) This passage is the foundation of the three theological virtues of faith hope and charity and it challenges us to live out the Gospel every day of our lives.

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Lectio Divina (Divine Reading) An Explanation

Is a simple form of prayer that involves praying with the Scriptures. It involves four steps.

Reading : What is happening?

Read the text and ask:

- What is happening?
- What strikes you about this passage?
- Details? Actions?

Reflection: What does it mean for us?

- Read the text again,
- What phrase do you like in the text and why?
- What word attracts?
- How does the text speak to you about your life?

Response: Making some prayers.

- We have heard God's Word and we have tried to see what it means. We can talk to Jesus about this message. It can be a prayer you know or one you make up.

Rest: Enjoy the text.

- Read the text again.
- Pause a minute or two in silence
- Take away a few words or a phrase from the text.

We should realise that we are not alone in reading the Scriptures, we have the Holy Spirit to help us. If we allow the Holy Spirit to help and guide us into the depths of the Word of God we avoid bringing too much baggage to the text. We are best with the text in openness to the Holy Spirit.

*(Adapted from "With the Word of God– Lectio Divina" (2003)
Grodén & O'Donnell)*

1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

(New International Version Translation)