



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 1: The Essence of Franciscan Spirituality

Chapter 5. Our Love for God—how do we show it?

How does being committed to the Franciscan way of life help us to love God?

Among other expression used in common speech, he [Francis] could not hear 'the love of God' without a change in himself. As soon as he heard 'the love of God' he was excited, moved, and on fire, as if these words from the outside were a pick strumming the strings of his heart on the inside...he kept until his death the resolution he made while still entangled in the things of this world: he would never refuse any poor person who asked something 'for the love of God.'

Francis of Assisi: early documents Vol II Celano: *Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul* cap 148 (p 373)

Some Useful Scriptures

Deut 6. 4-5

Matt 5. 4

I Cor 13. 3

Phil 3. 8b-9

What is charity?

Charity is the divinely given disposition of the will by which we are friends with God: by charity he enables us to love him in friendship to share in his enjoyment of the divine life [Cf. II Pet 1.4] and to love others as he loves them.

What is it to love God?

To love God is to seek union with him more than any other good and to reject sin by which we separate ourselves from him.

What is it to love our neighbours?

To love our neighbours is to seek their good when that is possible and never to seek their ultimate harm, because they are fellow members of human society, but more fundamentally because they are beloved of God and made, like us, for the kingdom of God—brothers and sisters 'for whom Christ died' (Rom 14.15)

Herbert McCabe *The Teaching of the Catholic Church* 194, 201, 203 (p 36-37)

Witnessing to the good yet to come and obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters. Rule 12



## Scripture—

### **I John 4. 15-21**

God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, ' I love God ', and hate their brothers and sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is those: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.