



## *Reflection from Deacon Candidate Andre Fontcha*

When we read the Bible, we discover a God who has seen the misery of his people and wants to save them. He constantly takes the first step towards us. In today's readings, he shows us the answer he expects of us: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy." We are all called to holiness. This means that we must cast off all thoughts of pride and hatred. In God, there is no place for revenge or rancor. Our God is love. This is what we are all called to. We can clearly see that we are far from the mark. We find it difficult to make peace with the one who hurt us. Yet, the Lord is there to lift us up and help us move forward. Pope Francis tells us that God never tires of forgiving us.

In the second reading, Saint Paul addresses Christians who had not understood. If we look closely, we find that his letter is very controversial: there were many divisions in the Corinthian community. It is to answer these problems that he writes them this letter. He reminds them and us today that we are "the temple of God". And since God is love, we can say that we are the "temple of love". If we are inhabited by this presence of God, it changes everything in our life. This is how we will be recognized as disciples of Christ. In the Gospel, we hear Jesus reminding the disciples: "You have heard that it was said: An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth..." God wanted to teach his people to limit revenge: a single tooth and not the whole jaw. We live in a world that suffers from escalating violence and hatred. How can we love those who persecute us and make us suffer?

Jesus invites us to go a step further. If we really want to resemble our Heavenly Father, we must forbid ourselves any riposte, any revenge and any hatred. We have to allow God to transform us by his love.

This Gospel joins us in a difficult world: to love our enemies, to pray for those who persecute us, this is what is asked of us; it is on this path that Christ has embarked; there are many who followed him to the end: they forgave, they prayed for those who persecuted them; they have been artisans of peace and reconciliation. On this day, we take the time for prayer to draw from the source of Him who is Love.

The Eucharist shows us all about Christ's love for us. May it help us remain in His love and live it every day.

*Peace,  
Andre*