

Pastoral Reflection
Fifth Sunday of Easter
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Today's reading from the Book of Revelation reiterated God's covenant revealed in the Book of Jeremiah, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer. 31:31-33). The author of Revelation expresses this overwhelming love of God in the words: "Behold. God's dwelling is with the human race. God will dwell with them and they will be God's people and God will always be with them as their God."

So one would think that we would be awe-filled to live within this promise of fidelity and love, totally aware of the presence of God dwelling in and among us. From this Good News our lives would flow into respect and care for all creation, including our sisters and brothers. We would respond fully to Jesus' command to love one another so that "all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Given the many communities to which we belong, this love for one another can present quite a challenge. We question, what does love mean in this particular context I am facing now? The command sounds easy when we stay in the realm of rainbows, butterflies, hearts, and candy. Few of us can stay in that realm – nor should we. That is not the kind of love Jesus reveals. His love took him to the cross and to resurrected new life. We come to the brilliant light of Easter through the day to day loving in difficult situations – situations where we feel like banging our heads against a wall. I have wondered often if God has this same feeling of frustration and even despair with us and our world - with our jealousies, lust for power, pettiness, consumerism, violence toward one another, and selfishness – to name just a few.

What challenges me especially is that God continues to love us, to be our God, in spite of who we are and what we do to one another and to our multiverse. God with steadfast love calls us to love as God does. Our celebration of Easter calls for no less than our effort to live resurrected life, to be the seed of new life breaking forth from the dirt, and to be Eucharist for one another.

