

## The primary importance of divine love

(Mathews Barnabas Metropolitan)

If we have whole-hearted, sacrificial and unconditional love, all other blessings will be added to us. On the other hand if we don't have it all other blessings will be lost. Let us therefore try to understand what real love is and how to achieve it.

What is love? It is the concern for the welfare of others. This implies mainly four things.

- 1) Helping those in need through self-sacrifice, as far as possible.
- 2) Forgiving others whenever they happen to hurt us.
- 3) Respecting all those who are in a low state as if they are better than ourselves (Phil. 2:3)
- 4) Submitting to each other as St. Paul says (Eph. 5:21) This means whole-hearted obedience.

This love means complete absence of self-centeredness and full centeredness on others.

We find all these in our Lord.

- 1) Our Lord's whole life was a life of service. He offered Himself as a sacrifice for the whole mankind.
- 2) He forgave those who crucified Him praying for them (St. Lk. 23:34)
- 3) He washed the feet of His disciples (St. Jn. 13:12) like a slave.
- 4) He obeyed the heavenly Father unto death, a death on the cross (Phil. 2:8)

Just imagine what an amount of love and re[eat we will receive from people when we love them whole-heartedly, sacrificially and unconditionally. Also imagine what an amount of joy we will have if we have a loving heart and we get an opportunity to love.

## How to achieve love

- 1) This kind of love can be achieved when we visualize people as children of God to whom we owe everything. It is in God that we live more and have over loving (Acts 17:28)
- 2) When we visualize people as fellow-beings like ourselves in every way, we can love them as we love ourselves.

The Holy Spirit has to help us to visualize people as God's children and as fellow beings and fill us with divine love. St. Paul says "While you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31) "Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Cor. 16:14)

The church is consecrated with Holy Spirit which is the symbol of divine love. St. Paul says "The love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us." (Rom. 5:5) May the consecration of the church be an occasion in which the whole congregation is once again filled with divine love.