

Section 42  
THE WAY OF DAILY LOVE  
IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE  
Part 4: Love is humble, not selfish.

St. Paul's 'Hymn of Love' (1 Cor. 13) describes the qualities of God's love. God our Father showed the fullness of his love by sending his Son, who "*humbled himself*" (Philippians 2: 8), becoming human, while at all times accompanying us on our life's journey as "*servant*" (Philippians 2: 7) and "*friend*" (John 15: 14-15). This "*love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit*" (Romans 5:5). It is this Spirit, who "*gives a new heart and renders man and woman capable of loving one another as Christ loved us*" (AL 120).

During his public life Jesus revealed the special characteristics of God's love through his mighty deeds, his profound wisdom and obedience to death. However, the thirty long years reveal the qualities of God's love as well when Jesus lived in the modest conditions of Nazareth as son of a humble family. These were the years when Jesus, in the words of Pope Francis, "*earned his keep by the work of his hands, reciting the traditional prayers and expressions of his people's faith and coming to know the faith of his ancestors*" (AL 65).

During his whole life Jesus' love was marked by humility. He did not need "*to be the center of attention*" (AL 97; see Marcus 1:43-44;

5:43; 7:36; 8: 30). His whole life was *"focused on others"* (AL 97). He served his family and the people who needed his help, *"from the heart"* (AL 98). Accordingly, Jesus warns us that in a world where power and pride prevail, *"it shall not be so among you"* (Mat 20:26). Rather, *"whoever would be first among you, must be your servant"* (Mat 20: 27; AL 98).

### A Reflective Moment

*"The contribution of the Church in today's world is enormous.*

*The pain and the shame we feel  
at the sins of some members of the Church  
and at our own,*

*must never make us forget  
how many Christians are giving their lives in love.*

*They help so many people to be healed  
or to die in peace in makeshift hospitals.*

*They are present to those enslaved by different addictions  
in the poorest places on earth.*

*They devote themselves  
to the education of children and young people.*

*They take care of the elderly  
who have been forgotten by everyone else.*

*They look for ways to communicate values  
in hostile environments.*

*They are dedicated in many other ways  
to showing an immense love for humanity*

*inspired by the God who became human.*

*This witness comforts and sustains me  
in my own effort to overcome selfishness  
and to give more fully of myself.”*

(Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* n. 76).