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Love Has No Boundary Second Week of Christmas Wednesday after Epiphany
January 7, 2015 8:15 AM **1 Jn 4:11-18;** Mk 6:45-52 (St. Raymond of Penyafort,
priest) (The Christian Church is supposed to keep witnessing to that.)

“God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.”

One wonders whether the Christian Church has done a very good job of witnessing to this teaching. I wonder whether the phenomenon of modern atheism would have ever taken off if indeed culturally the conviction had become established that God is love, not only the conviction, but the experience. **If when people experience the Church, they experience a community of people loving each other and loving those outside of the community,** which is exactly what John is talking about, especially the first part: loving each other, **then I don't think atheism would have ever started.** In fact, if you listen to what atheists say and you read what they write, **the god they speak of has nothing to do with the God revealed by Christ.** That's the first part.

The second part is if you read what atheists say about Christ, you can see there is a subtle, sometimes subtle, sometimes not so subtle, mockery. Well, therein you get something else. It's not simply a lack of belief, but mockery, which is the work of Satan. **Satan has always mocked God.** That's the basic strategy: mock what is good, mock God, mock holiness, mock justice, make fun of people who are sincere and innocent. So that's another aspect of modern atheism that there is this mockery, which is really the work of the devil. You see in the passion of Christ. People often think in physical terms about everything, so they think what Jesus really suffered most was maybe the nails in his wrists or the scourging, but no; what Jesus suffered most was the mockery because Jesus made it very clear in his life that he is really one with the Father.

He talked about the Father as one he knew very well. Now either that is true or he is a most horrible fake. When he argued with the Pharisees, he didn't argue on their level. He wasn't quoting some other rabbi. **He was saying I know the Father; I know the Lawgiver.** So he took it upon himself to connect everything together, all the Law and the prophets, and say it's all very simple; it all is “love God with your whole heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.” Where did he get the authority to do this? The knowledge he had

of the Father. It wasn't based on some authority outside of himself. **But for him to have authority in himself, he had to know the Father**, which he claimed he did.

In so many different ways **he revealed the Father**. He says at one time, **“Father, Lord of heaven and earth, to you I offer praise because what you have hidden from the learned and the clever you have revealed to the childlike.”** Who are the childlike? What does that mean? **The childlike are those who are humble and obedient in their very intuition.** They can know the Father in a way that the learned and clever cannot, because with the learned and the clever it's all about words and concepts and definitions, which could be completely bereft of any understanding. But the intuitions of the humble and the obedient are **full of understanding**. So the God of love reveals himself in Christ, and the spirit of evil mocks that and hates that and wants to derail that. **The passion and death of Christ was the attempt of evil, the greatest attempt of evil, to do just that, to derail this revelation of God's love,** and of course it failed. In the resurrection we have the victory of divine love.

The Christian Church is supposed to keep witnessing to that and never get tired of it, to realize that **this love has no end**. We could never get to the bottom of it. **It has no boundary**. We can never get to the end of it. And to witness to that and to be faithful to that is the calling of every believer, everyone baptized into Christ. But of course it opens us to the mockery of the evil one; it sure does! We have to share in that suffering of Christ for the sake of the name.