

## **LOVE OF GOD MUST COME BEFORE LOVE OF FAMILY**

Some people idolise their family and neglect to love God, making them unworthy of Him (Matt10:37-42). Yet, it is God who makes it all possible. Without Him, we'd have no family. It is important that we practice the first commandment, to love God first, with all our heart, our soul, our mind and our strength, before we love anybody or anything else, including sport. St. Paul reminds us (Rom 6:3-4,8-11), that in Baptism, the mark of eternal death, caused by sin, is replaced with the mark of eternal life, caused by God's love for us. Out of gratitude, we need to return that love with our lives. Hence, He says, that those who lose their lives, in other words, those who replace their freewill with His Divine Will, obtain a new life on earth and beyond the tomb or the grave, with Christ in Heaven. Like Jesus emerging from the tomb cleansed from all the scourging marks of His Passion, so, we too, emerge from the waters of baptism, cleansed from the marks of original sin. To be a follower of Jesus is to belong to a new Christian family that should have stronger ties to God our Father, than our biological family on earth. The baptised become a heavenly Church family, which are bound in love and obedience to God as Father, to Jesus as Brother and to each other in the spirit of love, forgiveness and even the smallest charitable act of giving a glass of water to one in need. God is Love. Our lives should be committed to Him first and foremost. No member of our family will be waiting at the Gates of heaven to let us in, because only Christ has that power to give us eternal life. It is important to place Him first in our lives and to look forward meeting Him in Heaven before anyone else. The idea to go to Heaven should be to live with Christ. God bless, Fr. Brendan.

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### **ARCHBISHOP FARRELL PARISH NOTICE**

Archbishop Dermot Farrell is bringing together as partners, the parishes of St. Agatha's and St. Laurence O'Toole on Seville Place. This is done within the vision of the *Building Hope* initiative. He has asked me to become the Parish Priest of both parishes and I have willingly accepted this appointment for the sake of the Kingdom. The shortage of Priests and the faithful has led to these kind of changes. The Archbishop has asked that we all work together in building up a strong parish team and develop as one parish into the future. This year, I will "double-up" on all Masses, between the two parishes, but next year, through consultation, with yourselves, the Pastoral Parish Councils and the Partnership Parish Council, we will look to possibly alternate days for the weekday Masses. For example, Mon. Wed. Fri. Masses in St Laurence's and Tues. Thurs. Sat. Masses in St. Agatha's. Sunday Masses will be celebrated in each Church every week, as will the Vigil Mass. The Archbishop has asked me to place this notice in both parishes newsletters this weekend 1st/2nd July, and to inform parishioners that the customary way of assuming me to my new office as Parish Priest, through the Ceremony of Induction, will be dispensed from its normal means of taking

canonical possession, and, as a result, I will officially assume my office on the weekend of the 8th/9th July 2023.