



# St. Leo the Great Parish

## February 2017 Newsletter



### *“The World State”*

*Oh, how I love Humanity,  
With love so pure and pringlish,  
And how I hate the horrid French,  
Who never will be English!*

*The International Idea,  
The largest and the clearest,  
Is welding all the nations now,  
Except the one that's nearest.*

*This compromise has long been known,  
This scheme of partial pardons,  
In ethical societies  
And small suburban gardens -*

*The villas and the chapels where  
I learned with little labour  
The way to love my fellow-man  
And hate my next-door neighbour.*

~ G. K. Chesterton

### *All You Need Is Love....*

My daughter and her husband are huge Beatles' fans and their three-year-old twin boys have caught their enthusiasm. They strum their kid-sized guitars and belt out the lyrics of many of the group's songs. One of their favorites is "All You Need Is Love.... Love is all you need."

The message sounds so simple that it really can't be true—or can it? It seems Jesus thinks it can. He says "love one another as I have loved you." And he tells us that love also extends to those who aren't nice to us, whose opinions are different from ours, who get on our very last nerve. He even tells us to love our enemies, to go the extra mile. So while love is simple, loving isn't simple to do.

Nearly a century ago British convert and poet G. K. Chesterton captured the struggle to love in his poem "The World State."

Each of us carries and often justifies our own reasons to not act with love, to judge, to dislike and sometimes even hate, especially people who are different from us, whose religion, race, or life experiences aren't like ours, whom we don't understand or even fear.

Like typical boys, my three-year old grandsons sometimes tussle and fight, especially when the other has taken a toy they want. Getting them to tell the other "I'm sorry" can take persistence. Each feels justified in what he has done. It's hard to witness this discord. They're brothers after all, and brothers should love each other. Eventually they relent, mutter a "sorry," hug and get back to playing with each other and there's a sense of relief.

I sometimes wonder if God is sad or even weeps when his children disrespect, denigrate, disregard, hate, and even kill each other. I can almost imagine him sobbing "Children, children stop hurting each other. You were meant for love and peace, not hatred and war. Love one another as I have loved you."

That nagging command remains—"Love one another as I have loved you." Just how do we go about doing that? Often it starts with small steps—things that are doable. I like to greet people when I walk in my neighborhood, a wonderfully diverse community. I look them straight in the eye and say "Good morning. Isn't it a beautiful day?" "I'm often amazed by what results. Sometimes we talk for a while and discover we share many things in common.

If we try things like this, I'm guessing we'll find we're much more alike than we are different and we'll begin to let down our guards and grow more open to each other. The three-year olds have a book about how people may look different but are the same inside. God made us that way. All we need is love to see this. Love is all we need.

