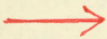


Hello again: good morning. Peter Ustinov, the British actor, was in H.K. lately, and he said something, talking to reporters and press-people, that I think merits further thought and prayerful reflection. And maybe this short time-slot is a good place to begin, since many of us who talk with you at this time of day here are clergy. For Ustinov said that clergymen talk of love as what the world most needs, but that's too hard, too theoretical.



Ustinov said that what the world today most desperately needs is respect, respect of people for each other. In his work for UNICEF no doubt he <sup>was coming</sup> comes across attitudes and problems and the plight of many children: it is revealing that respect for others is what <sup>was</sup> struck him as being so needed, and (presumably) so evidently lacking. So, how indeed can people go about loving each other if there isn't even respect between them?

And where do we start, how do we start? In prayer and praise to God today let's consider this matter of respect, think about our own attitudes to people and interaction with them, especially people we come across (or know about) who are needy, who are perhaps "difficult" --- people whom Jesus has told us to love, in imitation of His own love for us ---. And may we understand a bit better, in communion with God, how to respect and to love as we ought.

This song is "Tell us People", sung by The Fishersfolk

MUSIC

St Luke's

is the gospel of compassion, of God's understanding and kindness towards us who are sinners, hardly deserving of respect, so little respect do we have for ourselves. But it is an incident from St John's gospel, a famous scene, that I suggest for reflection now on Jesus' attitudes and how He shows respect and love, and gives all of us an example as well as a message. The situation was set out as a trap for Him, but He turned the tables neatly, without comment, but with a

Willing to Row  
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demonstration that sums up, in a way, the story of everyone's salvation — recognition of sin, God's kindness, respect, mercy and forgiveness. <sup>Curiously enough,</sup>

this passage is more like St Luke's gospel, and scholars think it isn't part of the original St John at this point, <sup>cl 8</sup> QQ.

St John cl. 8. <sup>4</sup> man now, <sup>the</sup> son "Tell us People" <sup>by</sup> <sup>the</sup> Fisherfolk

MUSIC

The Our Father, the Lord's Prayer, in Slavonic, by Rimsky Korsakov

Ps 55 / PRAYERS (Breu. p 222) (Deus p 165) That was

In the end, of course, Ustinov was right — it is too difficult to love everybody: impossible even, for that kind and extent of love is God's. And that's why it's a Christian message, as distinct from just humanitarian — what is impossible for us, maybe, is possible. Respect, and all the other human virtues, and all those things like courtesy, hospitality, kindness, gentleness that (for example) St Paul in his letters mentions as being marks that should distinguish a Christian --- these are all servants of love, features of it that help and point the way. Love itself, as St Paul also says is the greatest divine gift of all. It is a gift, something that God's goodness allows us to share — not so much to "have", to "possess", as to be a source, a channel, a medium through which God touches other people around us. <sup>a power</sup> ~~source~~, a strength that makes us share, help, be involved with our brothers & sisters in God, give and share. We can only ask for the gift: but we can make ourselves more ready receivers and transmitters, in cultivating the human virtues. The world does desperately need kindness and respect.