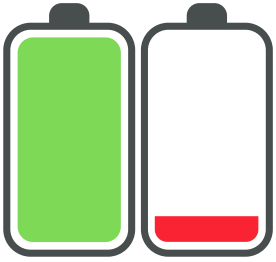




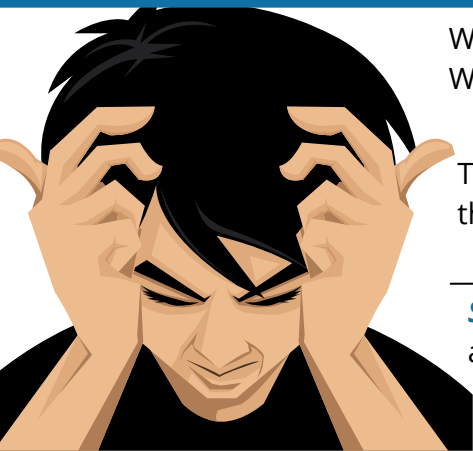
LOVE THOSE WHO ARE DIFFICULT TO LOVE

“At the end of life, we are going to be judged on the basis of our love for one another.”
St Teresa of Calcutta



- CAN YOU THINK OF THREE PEOPLE YOU FIND IT EASY TO LOVE, THE ONES WHO CHARGE YOUR "LOVE BATTERY"?
- CAN YOU THINK OF SOMEONE WHO IS DIFFICULT TO LOVE, WHO DRAINS YOUR "LOVE BATTERY"?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ: "HOW TO LOVE SOMEONE WHO IS HARD TO LOVE", AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



What is the real challenge for a Christian when it comes to loving people?
Who are Christians called to love?

Those who are difficult to love might not be our enemies, but why might they still be difficult to love?

Step 1: Acknowledge that some people are _____ and some are _____.

Step 2: I cannot _____ what I do not _____

1 John 4:19: We love because He _____.

What kind of life did St Bakhita have?

Who did she choose to love? How was she able to do this?

"I am definitely loved- and whatever happens to me- I am awaited by this Love. And so, my life is good."
- St Josephine Bakhita -



Step 3: Recognise that Love is a _____ Street!

Relationships are a _____ street, because we give and receive in a healthy relationship.

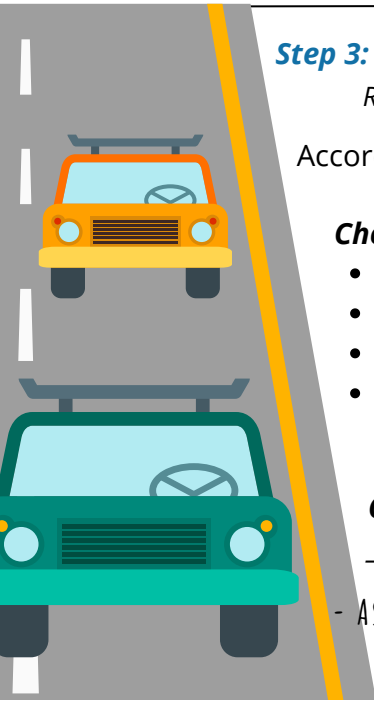
According to St Thomas Aquinas: **Love is willing** _____ **of the** _____.

Choosing the good of the other does not mean:

- there will be good f _____
- there will be no b _____
- waiting for someone to love us _____
- them c _____ and _____ how we want them to.

Choosing the good of the other does mean we make the _____ to will their good.

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE)



LOVE THOSE WHO ARE DIFFICULT TO LOVE

MATTHEW 5:38-48

REMINDER: THREE STEPS TO LOVING THOSE WHO ARE DIFFICULT TO LOVE:

1. Acknowledge _____
2. I cannot give _____
3. Love is a _____



Jesus is waiting for me, in my own way, in the way that I can (not in the way I cannot), to choose the good of the other.



That might mean:

- Making _____ for them
- tolerating _____
- making great p_____ s_____ for their good.
- establishing / maintaining _____ (you're not called to be a doormat!)



Now Read Matthew 5:38-48



I don't know about you but this Gospel isn't the easiest one to hear, not to mind put into action. Love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us, turn the other cheek, go the extra mile...? Is that even possible? We've all been hurt in life, felt like people have used us, walked over us, made our lives difficult (whether deliberately or not). We have to love them?

Jesus' message was as shocking and difficult 2000 years ago as it is now. Think of how the Jews viewed tax collectors and Roman soldiers - and Jesus told them to love them and pray for them? We absolutely have to have boundaries to prevent ourselves from being trodden upon, He's not asking us to be doormats. But if I'm carrying hatred or unforgiveness in my heart, if I'm wishing someone ill because of what they've done to me, then I can't call myself a follower of Christ. It's as simple as that. It's easy to love those who are lovable, that's not being virtuous; but choosing to love those who annoy us, get under our skin, who have have gossiped about us, betrayed us, or have no time for us: that's where we get to put our faith in action. It's not easy, but He never said it would be. He showed us how to do it on the Cross, and He sent His Spirit to guide us. Lean into that.

MISSION!

IDENTIFY THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE WHO CHARGE YOUR LOVE BATTERY AND WHO DRAIN IT! CHOOSE ONE PERSON. HOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY REACTING TO THEM? WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR HEART WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THEM? CHOOSE TO INTENTIONALLY PRAY FOR THEM THIS WEEK, AND FOR THE GRACE TO LOVE THEM, IN THE WAY THAT YOU CAN.



PRAYER TIME!

Jesus, it's so hard to love those who are difficult to love. Yet You love them infinitely Lord. You know the people in my life who are easy to love and I thank You for them. You know the people in my life who are difficult to love, and I ask for Your help in loving them as I should, so that I can be a true follower of Yours, and build Your Kingdom of love and peace. Amen



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN THIS WEEK TO AS YOU REFLECT ON CHOOSING TO LOVE

- Kyle Sigmon: Love Your Enemies
- Out of the Dust: Love Your Enemies
- Newsboys: Love One Another
- Bethany Barrie: Love my Enemies
- TobyMac: Show Up Choose Love
- Rend Collective: I Choose to worship
- Micah Tyler: Different
- Matthew West: Forgiveness



3:24 MINS



St Josephine Bakhita (Catholic Online)