

March

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (Jn 15:10)

The Word of Life for this month is taken from the fourth Gospel, where Jesus is addressing his apostles after the Last Supper (cf Jn 13:31–17:26). It highlights the fact that by observing his commandments we remain in his love. These words refer to a preceding verse in which Jesus tells his apostles, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (Jn 14:15), which makes it clear that the motive and incentive for observing his commandments must be love for Jesus. The result is a circular movement between love for Jesus and observing his commandments. Love for Jesus always urges us to live his words more faithfully. At the same time, by living Jesus' words, we remain in his love and, as a consequence, we love him more and more.

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The point then is to remain in his love. But what does Jesus mean by this expression? Undoubtedly he means that the observance of his commandments is the sign, the proof, that we are his true friends. It is the condition that allows Jesus to reciprocate and assure us of his friendship.

But it seems that he wants to say something else as well, and it is this: keeping his commandments makes us grow in that love that is really Jesus' love. He communicates to us his way of loving, which we can see throughout his earthly life. It is a love that made him one with his Father and, at the same time, a love that urged him to identify and be one with all his brothers and sisters, especially with the least, the weak, the alienated.

Jesus' love was a love that healed every wound of the soul and of the body, a love that gave peace and joy to every heart, a love that overcame every division by rebuilding solidarity and unity among all.

If we live his words, Jesus will live in us and make us too instruments of his love.

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How can we live this month's Word of Life? By keeping in mind and aiming with determination at achieving the objective it proposes: a Christian life that is not satisfied with doing as little as possible, with observing the commandments in a cold and exterior way, but rather, a Christian life marked by generosity. The saints observed his commandments in this way and each one became a living Word of God.

During this month, let us take one of his words, one of his commandments and try to live it. And since Jesus' New Commandment — “Love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12) — is considered to be the heart, the synthesis, of his words, let us live it in a truly radical way.

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(First published in May 1994)