

# For the love of love

Heather Smith *reflects on*  
John 14:15-21

**A**m I loved?" is a common question. We can become preoccupied about whether the people around us really care. Some find it so hard to accept that a life partner really loves them that they drive them away because of incessant questioning and suspicion. A good relationship can end up in tatters because of insecurity. At the root of it all is often the belief that "I'm not good enough – why would anyone love me?"

Jesus turns the question around. We should be asking not "Am I loved?" but "Do I love?" It completely changes the focus. Instead of being crippled by inward doubt and an obsessive concern about what others think of us, we can get out of our own heads and learn to enjoy loving.

"Who do I love?" The possibilities are endless, from those who may become our closest relationships, to every human being who deserves our love just because they're human. Our horizons expand and new possibilities open up before us.

When it comes to God, if we love, then we will certainly find that God loves us. If we don't love God, it isn't that we aren't loved, but we will never notice the love that overflows in return. This is the love that truly addresses our underlying insecurities about whether we are good enough. If the greatest source of love that exists believes we are, and showers love upon us, then we need have no doubt. 🍷



**God of Love, open our hearts, expand our horizons in love. Teach us to love one another and you. Amen.**

## Mental Health Awareness Week

*Part 1 – you can feel it coming on!*

by Katharine Smith

*Mental Health Awareness Week (www.mentalhealth.org.uk) runs for a week from tomorrow. Over the next four weeks Katharine Smith shares her personal experience of depression and describes how she deals with it.*

It's three years since you had your first bout of depression. It was a difficult time and you really struggled, but you have been feeling much better since. But now you feel some symptoms coming back: your skin feels stretched tight on your face when you speak;

you fear that if you do get to sleep you'll wake at 4 a.m.; you won't be able to concentrate on anything or retain information from anything you've read.

Now's the time to remember that you got through this before and you will again as you use all that you learnt last time. And to hear God's voice saying: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1).

*Katharine's book, Angels in the Wilderness, is available from Redemptorist Publications: www.rpbooks.co.uk/angels-in-the-wilderness 🍷*

## Christian Aid Week

by Alan Jefferies

Today is the start of Christian Aid Week, an annual fundraising and advocacy campaign by Christian Aid, which aims to combat global poverty and injustice, and to empower individuals to build businesses, improve farming, and secure basic needs for their families. Christian Aid has been working for over fifty years among communities in India, for example, to eradicate the practice of manual scavenging, where people are forced to clean human waste by hand. This dangerous practice is seen as the "role" of certain communities,

such as the Dalits. Mostly carried out by women, it puts health and lives at risk, and strips people of their dignity, all because of discrimination.

Through fundraising activities such as door-to-door collections, in Christian Aid Week supporters donate money and lend their voices to support community-led projects like this, helping people to gain strength, opportunity and resilience against poverty, the effects of climate change, and humanitarian crises.

It's not too late to lend your support to Christian Aid: [www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week) 🍷

**“ We've harnessed something formidable. Something that can't be silenced by injustice. Something that refuses to sit back and watch poverty ravage communities.”**

[www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)