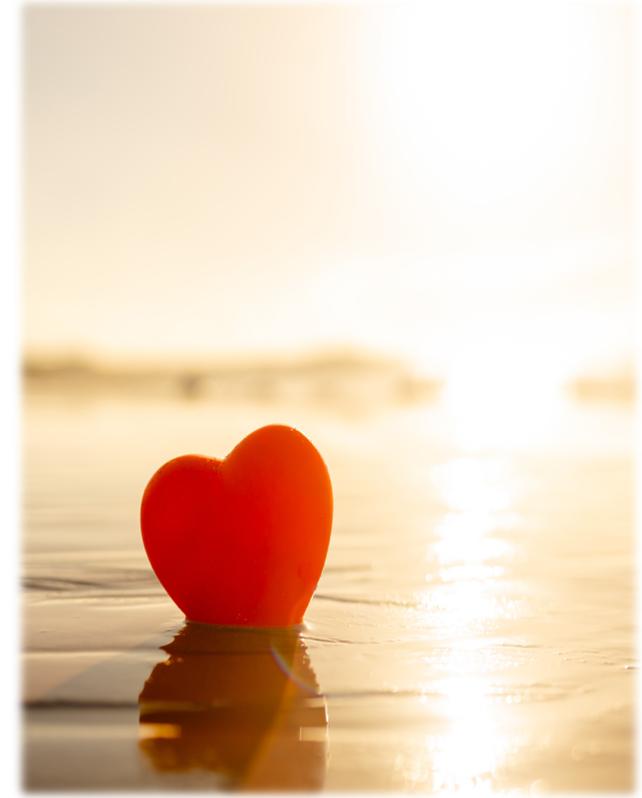


Blessing

O Christ, You came that we might have life and have it more abundantly, grant us power in our love, strength in our humility, purity in our zeal, kindness in our laughter, and Your peace in our hearts at all times. Amen



**Loving
Ourselves,
Loving our
Neighbours**

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Caraway

Spiritually Resourcing the Older Person

Introductory Sentence

And now these three remain: Faith, Hope and Love, but the greatest of these is Love.

1 Corinthians 13:13

Prayer

Set our hearts on fire with love for You, O Christ our God, that in its flame we may love You with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength and our neighbours as ourselves, so that, keeping Your commandments, we may glorify You, the giver of all good gifts.

(Eastern Orthodox Church)

Bible Reading

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the law?" He replied.

"How do you read it?"

He answered "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and, love your neighbour as yourself."

"You have answered correctly." Jesus replied "Do this and you will live."

Luke 10:25 - 28

Reflection

So often we have been brought up not to be selfish, and to put other people first; all very well and good, but unless we learn to love ourselves and take care of ourselves, we cannot do this for other people, we will find ourselves with burnout. Self care is so important. If we think of being on an aircraft, with children, going through the safety procedures, we will be told when the oxygen masks come down in an emergency, to put on our masks first, before the children. This is because if we run out of oxygen we will be useless to them in any difficulty. This same principle applies in everyday life of loving ourselves enough to take care of ourselves first, then we will have enough energy (love) to care for others. This is the importance of love for our neighbours as ourselves, so now let us look at the author of love in the hymn to follow.

Hymn

Love came down at Christmas,
love all lovely, love divine:
Love was born at Christmas,
star and angel gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead,
love incarnate, love divine;
worship we our Jesus:
but wherewith for sacred sign?
Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and all men,
love for plea and gift and sign.

Prayer

Lord of the loving heart, may mine be loving too,
Lord of the gentle hands, may mine be gentle too,
Lord of the willing feet, may mine be willing too,
so may I grow more like you in all I say or do.

(From all our days)

Bible Reading

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed His love among us; He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us. 1 John 4:7-12.

Hymn

Love is His word, love is His way,
feasting with all, fasting alone,
living and dying, rising again;
love, only, love is his way.
Love is His name love is His law,
hear His command, all who are His:
Love one another: I have loved you.
Love only love, is His law.
Richer than gold is the love of my Lord,
better than splendour and wealth.