

# What Is Love? – Discussion and Reflection Questions

This reflection will help youth understand the nature of sacrificial love. Love is more than just a warm fuzzy feeling. It is an intense desire for the well being of another.

*Give everyone a pencil and a sheet of paper.*

You all have one minute to write down everything you love. Go!

*After a minute, have them stop and share their lists.*

- Now, how many of these things would you be willing to make a sacrifice for?
- Is there one thing on your list that you would be willing to give up all of the others for?

Love is a pretty broad word and it can mean a lot of different things. If I say I love ice cream that means something very different than to say I love my friend. I'd probably be willing to sacrifice more to help my friend than I would be willing to give up for a bowl of ice cream.

Go back through your lists and scratch off the things which you really only like, even though you like them a lot. So remove the ice cream type things. Keep those you truly love on your list.

Read the gospel:

[John 10:11-18](#) (Jesus the Good Shepherd) – the Gospel Reading for the [4th Sunday of Easter – Year B](#)

Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep.

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.

This command I have received from my Father."

[John 10:11-18](#)

<https://young-catholics.com/8414/what-is-love-discussion-and-reflection-questions/>

Jesus is not talking about the ice cream kind of love here. The type of love Jesus shows us is sacrificial love. He is willing to give up everything, even his own life, for us.

- How does Jesus' unbounded love impact your life?
- Do you feel like you can trust Him because He loves you so much?
- When you are stressed or afraid, does it help to know that He cares for you and understands you?
- How does the image of the Good Shepherd make you feel?

That's a really difficult thing to do. When we look at our list of loves, how many would we be willing to die for? That's asking a lot.

Hopefully we will never be asked to do that. But we are often asked to make little sacrifices for love. To love is to want what is best for someone, even when it is hard.

Imagine you have tried out for the school play. Your friend got the lead part, even though you really wanted it. Are you going to be happy for her, because she's really talented? Or are you going to hold a grudge? In this case, you might need to sacrifice your pride and your need to appear to be the best. And that can free you from any resentment and help you truly be happy for your friend and support her.

Maybe you were invited to a friend's party. But your mom needs you to babysit your little brother. You can choose to be upset and let your unhappiness control how you interact with your little brother when you are watching him. Or you can look at it as an act of sacrifice to help your family, whom you really do love, and do it with a willing spirit.

Maybe you have put away some money to buy some new clothes. You don't really need more clothes, but they are the latest. And then you hear the talk from the missionary from Africa. There are some school kids there who need uniforms. You feel your heart tugging at you to help. Will you give up some of the money you saved to help them? That would be a real sacrifice. And you don't know them. But you can still choose to love them.

- Can you think of some examples of sacrificial love from your own life?
- What is difficult about making a sacrifice for the good of another?
- What is easy about making a sacrifice?
- Does thinking about Jesus as our example for love help?

Think about the love Jesus has demonstrated for us this week.

If you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, spend some time in prayer with the Good Shepherd. Reach out to someone who loves you, knowing that they want what is best for you.

If you are presented with an opportunity to make an act of sacrificial love, pray with the Good Shepherd on that also. Know that He sees your act of sacrifice, no matter how small, even if nobody else does. And know that if you cannot bring yourself to make a sacrifice, He still loves you with all of His heart.