

## **Homily of H.E. Msgr. Domenico SIGALINI, Bishop of Palestrina and General Assistant of Italian Catholic Action and Ecclesiastical Assistant of IFCA**

**Friday after the fifth Sunday of Easter 7 May 2010**  
**Love is the unifying element of the universe Jn. 15, 12-17**

This is what Pope Benedict meant in His first letter addressed to all the Church and the entire world: God is love. The law of love defines our existence and that of the entire world. It is not interest, money, success, pleasure or power which counts but it is the ability to love.

A question arose in the hearts of the Jews who followed Jesus. This same difficulty comes to our minds. What does leading a Christian life actually mean? Is it a list of norms and precepts which constrain the Christian to look at the world in a controlled and good but rigid way? Is it a list of rules for politically correct behavior? Jesus says: My command to you is to love one another. This is the only law; this is the world's pivot.

Physicists, even much before our times, have always had a dream: that of showing that all forces which spring from nature can be reduced to one single force. This may show itself in diverse ways but it is always the same force: gravity, electricity, magnetism, atomic force. This helps us to understand better what Jesus wanted to tell us: he wanted to help his disciples understand that it is love which unites everything together and that every love comes from one source, which is God.

Love has many aspects. We speak about brotherly, friendly, filial, maternal and paternal love but the full potential and involvement of love reaches its climax in the love between a man and a woman. However there is only one love. It is God who is Himself love.

A Christian should thus feel loved, should feel that he has been chosen and the fact that he is a believer is only an answer to the fact that God has chosen him. Being Christians does not mean following a code of correct behaviour but above everything else it means, knowing that we are loved by God and letting Him help us to love. Very often this is also what couples do. Love is above all self-giving without any imposition.

God's love however is unique and unconditional. It is the most sublime because it comes from Him who gives His life for others. Having such a God entails that we do likewise. Our greatest hope in life results from the fact that God loves us madly.

This love, which is nourished by God's strength, calls people to help other men and women of all times to let themselves be moulded by God's love. Thus they will be able to answer generously to His call; to lead a life based on His law of love and, as John Paul II told young people at Tor Vergata in 2000, to let themselves be converted by him so as "set the world on fire" with His love.

Catholic Action grows in the warmth of this love, strengthens it and is witness to it in society, in everyday life, in the responsibilities it undertakes. All this is the result of habitual daily contemplation based on prayer and on the Word of God.