IS ALSO YOUR TIME & TALENTS & YOURSELF. IT IS ABSOLUTE NONSENSE TO BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN BE A SPIRITUAL PERSON & BE LIKE GOD & NOT GIVE. THAT DOESN'T WORK. IT'S WHY THE RICH MAN WENT AWAY SORROWING / HE WANTED GOD WITHOUT GIVING / DOESN'T WORK.

A RECENT SURVEY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS INDICATES THAT 50% OF THESE SENIORS SAID THAT THEY HAD DRIVEN A CAR WHILE DRINKING WITHIN THE LAST MONTH - 50% - ½ OF THEM / 75% SAID THAT EVERY PARTY THEY WENT TO HAD DRUGS & ALCOHOL AVAILABLE - GIVING IT AWAY FREE - WITHOUT CHARGE -- 75% / 90% SAID THEY HAD BEEN DRUNK AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LAST YEAR....WE ARE FORCED BY LAW TO SPONSOR EDUCATION IN OUR SOCIETY / THAT'S WHERE OUR TAX DOLLARS GO / BUT SUCH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITES / SUCH SOCIAL, PEER PRESSURES..... DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THE ONLY INSTITUTION THAT IS TRYING TO SPIRITUALIZE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE IS THE CHURCH? WE ARE THE ONLY INSTITUTION IN SOCIETY THAT IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE & ACCEPTANCE & MORALITY / AN ATMOSPHERE FREE FROM DRUGS!.....LOOK AT FRANZ FOSTER'S OTHER WOODCUT / JESUS BLESSING THE CHILDREN / STOOPING DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL. YOU CAN ALMOST HEAR HIS WORDS ECHOING IN THE DISCIPLE'S EARS: "LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME / DO NOT FORBID THEM / OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD!".....IS THERE ANY QUESTION ABOUT OUR NEED TO LIFT UP OUR EARNEST PRAYERS & DIG DEEP INTO OUR WALLETS TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRIES HERE AT HOLY CROSS / BETSY'S MINISTRY WITH THE XP CONNECTION & PUPPET MINISTRY / BRETT & DAVID WITH OUR TEENAGERS / PAT LUCAS & HER COUNSELING MINISTY / JANE SOSZKA, CHRISTINE ALLEN SHERRELL BASS, GERRY MEADE, DOROTHY CARMICHAEL, HIS SONG & ALL THE OTHERS WHO ARE REACHING OUT TO EMBRACE PEOPLE WITH GOD'S LOVE.

ANOTHER NATIONAL SURVEY SAYS THERE ARE THREE REASONS WHY KIDS SAY "NO" TO ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS. THE FIRST IS A STRONG RELATIONSHIP TO TWO PARENTS WHO ARE UNITED! MOMs, DAD,S LET ME SAY IT AGAIN: "THE GREATEST GIFT YOU CAN GIVE YOUR CHILDREN IS TO LOVE EACH OTHER!" / THE 2ND REASON IS A HOPEFUL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FUTURE. KIDS WHO ARE HOPELESS USE DRUGS. / KIDS WHO ARE HOPEFUL DO NOT USE DRUGS. / THE 3RD IS A STRONG ATTACHMENT TO A LOCAL CHURCH.....ANY YOUNG PERSON WHO HAS A STRONG ATTACHMENT TO TWO PARENTS WHO ARE UNIFIED & CONSTANTLY DEMONSTRATE THEIR LOVE FOR EACH OTHER / DRAWING THEIR CHILDREN INTO THE UNITY OF COMMUNITY / THAT KID IS BOUND TO BE HOPEFUL & IS MOST LIKELY TO BE FOUND IN C

I WANT TO CALL YOU & CHALLENGE YOU TO DO SOMETHING GREAT FOR HOLY CROSS & XP'S CHURCH IN THIS PLACE / CHALLENGE YOU TO REACH HIGHER THAN YOU HAVE EVER REACHED / THEN TO FALL ON YOUR KNEES & SURRENDER IN A WAY YOU HAVE NEVER SURRENDERED BEFORE / TO JOIN HANDS WITH YOUR SPOUSE & YOUR CHILDREN & TO HUMBLY PRAY: "GOD, WE WANT YOU TO BE A LEADER / OUR LIFE & THE LIFE OF OUR NATION DEPENDS ON IT / GOD, YOU BE OUR LEADER & TEACH US TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS YOU HAVE LOVED US / UNITY IN COMMUNITY!

IN NOMINE JESU

ST. JOHN 14: 15-21 MOTHER'S DAY

THE GREAT AMERICAN WAR - THE GREAT ISSUE OF OUR SURVIVAL - HAS TO BE THE FAMILY -- WHETHER WE CAN RESTORE A NATION OF PEOPLE UNDER GOD -- A NATION OF PEOPLE WHO CAN KEEP THEIR COMMITMENTS TO EACH OTHER IN LOVE & IN THE FAMILY. THIS IS THE GREATEST ISSUE. IT IS NOT THE NATIONAL DEBT / IT IS NOT THE ECONOMY / IT IS THE STRENGTH OF THE FAMILY....& ON THIS MOTHER'S DAY I WANT TO SET BEFORE YOU, THE PEOPLE OF HOLY CROSS, THAT YOU HAVE NO GREATER CHALLENGE. RELATIONSHIPS ARE NEVER SAFE / THEY ARE NEVER FINISHE / THEY ARE ALWAYS IN JEOPARDY. I'M SURE WE COULD ALL TALK ABOUT HAVING AT LEAST 3 FRIENDS / 3 FORMER FRIENDS THAT WE THOUGHT WOULD ALWAYS BE CLOSE & INTIMATE / TRUE BLUE / FRIENDS FOR LIFE-- & THEY FALL APART. RELATIONSHIPS ARE ALWAYS IN DANGER.

ON THE OTHER HAND, GOD IS A GOD OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE & ACCEPTANC HE DOES NOT LOVE YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE GOOD OR SMART OR RICH. HE LOVES YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE YOU. GOD'S LOVE / GOD'S GRACE / GOD'S MERCY IS GREATER THAN ALL OUR SIN / & THAT IS WHY HOLY CROSS IS A CONGREGATION OF PEOPLE WHO OPENS ITS ARMS WIDE TO PEOPLE / TO PEOPLE WHO ARE BROKEN - EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO MAKE A NEW START... JESUS STARTS OUT THIS GOSPEL LESSON BY SAYING, "IF YOU LOVE ME..." AND THIS "LOVE ME" SEEMS TO BE THE SAME AS "IF YOU BELIEVE IN ME / KNOW ME." IT IS THE "LOVE" THAT BINDS TWO PEOPLE TOGETHER IN MARRIAGE / IT IS UNITY IN COMMUNITY / THE LOVE THAT MOTIVATES A MAN TO "LEAVE HIS FATHER & MOTHER & CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE / WHERE THEY TWO BECOME ONE FLESH" / WHERE THEY CRY OUT IN EXUBERANCE & GLEE: "THIS IS NOW BONE OF MY BONE & FLESH OF MY FLESH."....THER IS ONE LIFE THAT FLOWS IN GOD & IN CHRIST & IN JESUS' BELOVED DISCIPLES. JESUS LIVES IN GOD, HIS FATHER, & THE DISCIPLES ARE IN JESUS & JESUS IS IN THEM / UNITY IN COMMUNITY. AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE? IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO A SINGLE NEW COMMANDMENT -- THAT WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

SOMETIME AGO I WROTE IN THE "HAPPENINGS" THAT WE MIGHT DO WELL TO CHANGE THE VOWS OF OUR MARRIAGE CEREMONY FROM "I TAKE YOU TO BE MY WEDDED WIFE / HUSBAND" TO "I GIVE MYSELF TO YOU AS YOUR DEVOTED HUSBAND / WIFE.".....HAVE YOU EVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT THAT "GOSPEL IN A NUTSHELL" PASSAGE [JOHN 3: 16] & WHAT THE VERB IS? "GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE - WHAT? -- HE GAVE!" IF YOU WANT GOD'S KIND OF LIFE / IF YOU WANT "UNITY IN COMMUNITY" YOU HAVE TO BE A GIVER / NOT A GETTER. THE FATHER LOVED US & GAVE US HIS ONLY & DEAR SON / THE SON LOVED US & REDEEMED US WITH HIS OWN HOLY & PRECIOUS BLOOD / THE HOLY SPIRIT LOVES US & BREATHES INTO US GOD'S ONW BREATH - THE VERY BREATH OF LIFE. GOD IS A GIVER!!! ....IT'S NOT JUST YOUR MONEY, TO BE SURE - BUT PLEASE DO NOT DISCOUNT YOUR MONEY EVEN IF IT IS A "WIDOW'S MITE" / IF YOU DON'T HAVE A PENNY, A HALF-PENNY WILL DO. [READ THE STORY OF THE RICH YOUNG RULER IN MK. 10; "SELL ALL YOU HVE," SAID JESUS, "GIVE IT TO THE POOR / THEN COME & FOLLOW ME] YES, IT IS YOUR MONEY BUT IT