

## Commentary Chapter 42

**The love shown by the Samaritan was,** first of all, real, for he felt compassion from his heart for the wounded man, and had a real sympathy with him in his misfortunes. He stopped instantly when he perceived the poor man, and went up to him, whereas the priest and the Levite had both passed by regardless of his state. And because his love was real, it was practical. He wished to help the poor man, and did all in his power to alleviate his sufferings and save his life ; he interrupted his journey, tended the wounded man himself all that day, and when his business called him away for a few days, he left him in charge of the innkeeper, paying for his keep, and promising to return. Lastly, the love he showed was universal. He knew that the wounded man was a Jew, the enemy of his people; and he knew that under similar circumstances a Jew would be very unlikely to assist him. All the same he took pity on him, and forgave the enmity shown to the Samaritans by the Jews. In this poor man he saw only a suffering fellow-creature and a brother, and helped him as such. By this parable, therefore, our Lord teaches us that every man is our neighbor, and that our love ought to be real, practical and universal.

**The deeper meaning of the parable.** According to the Fathers of the Church the following deeper interpretation can be given to it. Jesus Himself is the Good Samaritan, as proved by His treatment of the robbed and wounded human race. Sin and the devil are the robbers who have despoiled man of his robe of innocence and all supernatural gifts, and grievously wounded him in his natural gifts. Thus man lay, weak, helpless, and half-dead. He still, it is true, possessed his natural life, but he had

lost the supernatural life of grace, as well as the prospect of eternal life, and was powerless to raise himself from the misery of sin by any effort of his own. Neither priest nor Levite, i. e. neither sacrifice nor law of the Old Covenant, could help him, or heal his wounds ; they only made him realize more fully his helpless condition. Then the Son of God, moved by compassion, came down from heaven to help poor fallen man, living at enmity with God. He healed his wounds with the wine of His Most Precious Blood and the oil of His grace, and took him to the inn, His Church. When He left this earth to return to heaven, He gave to the guardians of His Church the twofold treasure of His doctrine and His grace, and ordered them to tend the still weak man, until He Himself came back to reward every one according to his works. This inconceivable love of the Incarnate Son of God for all men is the great reason why we ought to love our neighbor and even our enemy.