Reflection from the Gospel of Matthew 22:34-40
30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Asia

Growing in a Catholic country I often hear this phrase from old people wishing the young ones "may you grow up with the fear of God and love with one's neighbor *(fear equates love of God)*. Although it's always been a reminder, a teaching or a value our ancestors, our parents, and our faith teaches us: "*Ibigin ang Diyos at ang kapwa*" in English "*love God and neighbor*" this inseparable love of God and neighbor becomes a dichotomized love. Faith, religion, beliefs, worship is one reality and seems to have less effect in ordinary life. For example: a more than eight six percent Catholics but with a very corrupt government system, wherein, money always matters, and self-interest as a first priority, with high number of poverty and an extreme gap between the rich and the poor. My question is: If it truly loves why it does not render genuine service and seek common good? Why is it not transformative and life changing? Supposedly, *"Love is the measure of faith and faith is the soul of love."* Pope Francis

Today's Gospel from Matthew 22:34-40 on the greatest commandment *"love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with your entire mind. And love your neighbor as yourself"* It comes from an awareness that God loves us first, and He loves us unconditionally. And from this experience arises the sense of gratitude and moves us to love God and our neighbor.

It also reminds us of a law that depends on the acts of love. A love that seeks to please the lover as what Blessed Francisco Palau says: "*Because I love you, I seek in service the means of pleasing you. (M.R. 9, 7)* The movement that goes towards the other to love and to serve with all our heart, soul and mind.

Let us humble ourselves before God that we too like our Founder Francisco Palau were the love of God and neighbor were intimately merged in his spiritual experience (cf. C.21) may receive the grace of a deep experience or union with the Church – God and neighbor.