

Agape

Agape (ah-GAH-pay) is one of four Greek words used to describe love. It refers to unconditional, selfless, and sacrificial love—the kind of love that seeks the good of another without expecting anything in return.

For Christians, *agape* has a profound meaning. It is first and foremost the love that God has for all of humanity and for all of creation. God's love is freely given, faithful, merciful, and without limits. This is the love revealed most perfectly in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As followers of Christ, we are called to respond to God's love by loving others with the same self-giving spirit. Agape is not based on feelings or emotions but on a conscious choice to seek the good of another, to forgive, to serve, and to put love into action. The Church teaches that charity (agape) is the greatest of all the virtues because it is the source and fulfillment of every Christian virtue. As St. Paul writes:
"So faith, hope, and love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

In the early Church, Christians gathered regularly for meals that expressed their unity and mutual love. These gatherings, which often included the celebration of the Eucharist, became known as Agape Meals or Love Feasts. They were signs of the Christian community's commitment to care for one another, especially the poor and those in need. Today, agape continues to be the model of Christian living. Every act of kindness, forgiveness, compassion, generosity, and service is an opportunity to share God's unconditional love with others.