

Do you love me?

After three weeks of school, I find myself looking back and wondering how we manage, year after year, to get through the frenetic flow of demands which must be met for us to consider that we have established a successful start to the school year. I also ask myself why, as I get older, I don't seem to become any wiser about getting caught up in the minutiae.

Perhaps the answer is that I love what I do and do it because of my faith, hope and love in Jesus. I have accepted his challenge that whatever I do in the company of my brothers and sisters I also do to him.



And even as I may be complaining about being busy, there is nothing I would choose not to do: I love my role and find meaning and purpose in its many parts. That said, when I am very busy I may not always be the most patient person and I need to be reminded of the message from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7:

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (NRSV)*

Although most people associate this reading with weddings, I think it carries a message for all our relationships and certainly addresses the way in which we should interact with students, colleagues, parents, members of the community, not to mention our friends and loved ones. Unfortunately, the latter are often the ones who receive the brunt of our fatigue, impatience, intolerance – and usually roll with it and bear us up.

Perhaps this is a good time to imitate our Jewish brothers and sisters who have just celebrated the Days of Awe, ending in Yom Kippur. This is the day on which Jewish people appeal to God for forgiveness for their sinfulness and start afresh. Let's all make a commitment to see Jesus in everyone with whom we interact and treat that person accordingly.

Do I love you? You bet I do!

*By Gillian Federico, System Chaplaincy and Faith Formation Leader, Catholic Education Centre*