**2017 9 3 THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK**

***“Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, and be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”***

 On this Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew, we hear these beautiful words of our blessed St. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians that teach us the one thing that is needful for us to be strong and firm in our faith. This is all we need to do to truly be a Christian. ***“Let all that you do be done in love.”***  It is not how much we do in life but rather with how much love that we do it that really counts.

 In our families, we must preserve love before all else- even before being right. In our parish life, we must preserve love before all else- even before being successful and building a new church. If the church is not built on love then it is an empty structure. In our relationship with the world, we must preserve love, because it is the only way that we can transform ourselves and those around us.

 ***“Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends; (1Co 13:4-8 RSV)”*** Love will never end because if we love- if we truly love, then Christ Himself will be in us and will never leave us- “***and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (Mat 28:20-1 NKJ)”***

 This is the beginning, the middle, and end of all of our efforts here at St. Simeon. Indeed, it is the goal of our Christian lives.