



a Kendall Hunt Company

Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year B, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

John 15:9-17 [or: John 17:11-19 when the Ascension is celebrated next Sunday]

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Jesus our Friend,

You accept and love us just as we are.

Help us to grow closer to you, our true friend.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is Love, the center and soul of the Church's mission. To begin, invite the young people to reflect on the word friendship. Brainstorm the qualities of a true friend and write down their responses on a chalkboard or sheet of poster paper. Discuss:

- When do you consider someone a good friend?
- How can you be a good friend to others?
- When can it be difficult to stand by a friend?

Allow time for discussion. A true friend is caring and faithful. Jesus invites us to share in a close friendship with him. Jesus is a true and faithful friend.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from Acts of the Apostles listen to Peter announce that God's love is for all people.

Read Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How does Cornelius greet Peter?
- What message about God's love does Peter bring to the Gentiles?
- What happens when the Gentiles receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?

In the gospel today listen to Jesus call his followers, friends.

Read John 15:9-17 [or: John 17:11-19 when the Ascension is celebrated next Sunday]



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Allow for silence.

- What does Jesus tell his followers about loving one another?
- Why does Jesus call his followers, friends?
- What does Jesus ask of his friends?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

The first reading from Acts of the Apostles points out that God shows no favoritism when it comes to love. God loves all people equally. In today's passage the disciples are doing what Jesus asked of them. They are going out "to the ends of the earth" and spreading the Good News. While Peter is preaching to the Gentiles, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. The gift of the Spirit is freely given not only to Jews, but to Gentiles as well. This event demonstrates how God's unconditional love is for every human being. Love is the heart and soul of the Church's apostolic mission.

In today's gospel Jesus invites his listeners to an even deeper friendship with him, with his Father and with one another in the Church. By proclaiming that, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you", Jesus makes clear that love is at the core of this friendship. Jesus tells his friends that they have been chosen to bear fruit in the world. They are called to go out and love one another. Christians continue the mission of Jesus in the world because of love, the love they have received from God, the love they have received from Jesus, and the love they share with others in the Christian community.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How does the love that is portrayed on television and in movies today compare with the love that Jesus speaks of?
- Why is it important to understand that God loves all people equally?
- How can friendship with Jesus help you to be a good friend?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life**.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starter

Love, the Soul of an Apostolate

Catholics understand that the entire Church is apostolic. The original apostles have inspired us to continue Christ's saving work and spread Christ's message of love. Through Baptism we share in the life of the Body of Christ, the Church. All members of the Church, through the grace of God, carry out the apostolate of the Church. We each have an important role to play

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in continuing Christ's mission on earth. God's gift of grace and love must be shared with others. By our acts of love and service toward others we work for the glory of God.

The Eucharist draws us closer to Christ and in him we are made closer to one another. United as one Body in Christ, we are a sign for the world of a people formed by the Spirit into a community of faith, hope and love.

- How are members of the Church called to live in the world?
- How does the Eucharist help us grow closer to Christ?
- What does it mean to work for the glory of God?

Sacrament Connection

Sharing in the Eucharist nourishes our communion with God and with one another. In this Sacrament we celebrate our unity as members of the one Body of Christ. Communion with Christ strengthens our ability to love God and others.

The Gospel in Life

How can you use your gifts this week to work for the glory of God?

