



AMDG
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
YEAR B
6TH MAY 2018



God is Love!

OPENING PRAYER

Grant, almighty God,
that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion
these days of joy,
which we keep in honour of the risen Lord,
and that what we relive in remembrance
we may always hold to in what we do.

The central theme of today's readings is God's unfailing and overwhelming love for humanity.

In the *First Reading* we hear of an incident at the house of the centurion Cornelius that marks a turning point for Peter and the whole church. The Holy Spirit shows that the Christian message is for the whole human race – Gentiles as well as Jews.

The *Psalms* is a song of joy and wonder at the salvation offered by the Lord to all nations; a psalm Cornelius would have gladly sung.

The *Second Reading* gives the best definition of God to be found in the Bible: God is love. This is the very nature of God: he acts in love and sends his Son to reveal the fullness of his love.

In St John's *Gospel*, Jesus teaches us of the centrality of his loving relationship with his Father. Throughout his life, he is responding to the Father's love and making it known to us. Jesus invites his followers into the intimate relationship that exists between Father and Son. As his friends and disciples, he invites us to go and bear fruit and to love one another.

This week, I pray for the grace to recognise that I can bear fruit in my life – and to respond in unique ways to God's love. I ask the Lord to help me live my life through loving relationships with my brothers and sisters, and with the living planet.

SECOND READING (part) ACTS 10: 25–6, 34–5, 44–6

As Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him, knelt at his feet and prostrated himself. But Peter helped him up. ‘Stand up,’ he said ‘I am only a man after all!’ Then Peter addressed them: ‘The truth I have now come to realise’, he said, ‘is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.’

While Peter was still speaking the Holy Spirit came down on all the listeners. Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter were all astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should be poured out on the pagans too, since they could hear them speaking strange languages and proclaiming the greatness of God.

As I come to my place of prayer, I settle my body into an open, comfortable position. I ask the Holy Spirit to breathe upon me.

If it helps me to become more present to God, I notice how my body is feeling. I become aware of any particular sensation.

I read the passage slowly, several times, with a receptive mind and heart, noticing what touches me.

Perhaps I picture Cornelius as he greets Peter, listens to him and receives the gift of the Holy Spirit.

What stirs within me?

Do I desire to receive God’s Spirit afresh?

I speak to Jesus from my heart.

I may picture myself as one of Peter’s companions.

What does it feel like to come into the home of Cornelius and then notice the Holy Spirit come down on the pagans as well as the Jewish believers?

I turn to Jesus and tell him of my thoughts and feelings.

I ask God’s Spirit for the graces and gifts I need.

I pray for the salvation of all peoples, that the joy and peace of the Good News be known throughout the earth.

I end my prayer slowly, giving thanks and praise to the Lord.

GOSPEL JOHN 15: 1-8

‘**A**s the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know his master’s business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name. What I command you is to love one another.’

As I come to pray, I reflect on my mood: am I joyful, sad, dutiful ... or ...?
With every breath I take, I become conscious of God’s love for me.
What are my deepest desires as I settle down to pray?
I tell the Lord.

In time, I read the familiar passage slowly, several times.
Maybe I stop at a particular phrase which I had not ‘heard’ properly before, or which takes a different meaning for me today.

Perhaps I imagine Jesus is addressing me personally.
Where are we?
What is his voice like?

As I listen to him telling me that he has chosen me to be his friend, what emotions come to the surface?

Maybe I am drawn to reflect on the love I bear for those who are dear to me: men, women, children ... those for whom I’d like to feel I’d be prepared to lay down my life. I tell the Lord about them.

When I realise that Jesus is also speaking in the same way to others, even those I might consider ‘bad people’ ... ‘enemies’ ... how does that make me feel?
In what ways can I begin to love my enemies as Jesus loved them?

Finally, before I conclude my prayer, I ask the Lord for the grace truly to appreciate the love others have for me and to reach out to them in love too.

My God loves me, his love will never end ...

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

I have now come to realise that God does not have any favourites.

First Reading

Let us love one another since love comes from God.

Second Reading

Love one another as I have loved you.

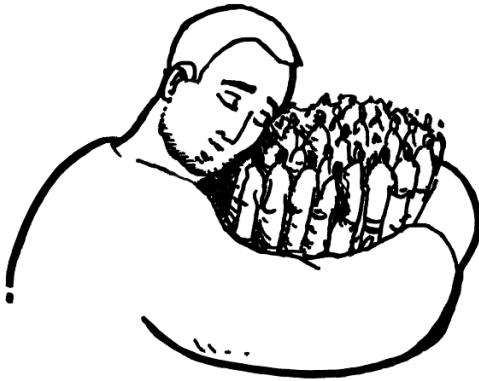
Gospel

You did not choose me, no, I chose you;
and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit.

Gospel

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:

Acts 10: 25–6, 34–5, 44–8; Ps. 97 (98); 1 John 4: 7–10; John 15: 9–17



**As the Father
loved me,
so I have
loved you.
Remain in
my love.**



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Ministries



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LDS