



AMDG
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
YEAR B
13TH MAY 2018



God is Love

OPENING PRAYER

Graciously hear our supplications, O Lord,
so that we who believe
that the Saviour of the human race
is with you in your glory,
may experience, as he promised,
until the end of the world,
his abiding presence among us.

As the joyous season of Easter comes to a close, this Sunday's Scripture brings our focus onto Christ's loving relationship with us.

We see how the very early Church decided that the person who was to replace Judas needed to be someone who had known Jesus personally from the very start of his ministry, and had witnessed his suffering, death and resurrection. (*First Reading*)

We can pray with great joy the *Psalm* of thanks for all the blessings of God's love – a love that is calling all of us into a deeper personal relationship.

John's letter (*Second Reading*) is like a summary of the Good News and the mystery of the Resurrection. We are encouraged to love one another. It is through our loving relationships that we will come to know God more fully. God is love, and God shares the Spirit of love with us when we die to self and give ourselves fully to love.

In John's *Gospel* we hear Jesus praying to the Father for his followers. Jesus wants us to share fully in his joy. It is in this spirit of Easter joy that we are sent out into the world to draw all people into that relationship of love of which each and every one is invited to be a part.

Let us pray for the grace to be able to live out the joy of the Gospel of love in every part of our life!

SECOND READING 1 JOHN 4: 11–16

My dear people,
since God has loved us so much,
we too should love one another.
No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another
God will live in us and his love will be complete in us.
We can know that we are living in him
and he is living in us
because he lets us share his Spirit.
We ourselves saw and we testify
that the Father sent his Son as saviour of the world.
If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God,
God lives in him, and he in God.
We ourselves have known and put our faith
in God's love towards ourselves.
God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God,
and God lives in him.

I go to my place of prayer and as best as I am able, I slow my mind and body down. I sit in the presence of God, and allow myself to experience God's loving gaze upon me.

When I am ready, I slowly read this letter from a follower of Jesus who had known him personally. Through Jesus, that individual had come to know and experience God's love. In writing this letter, that person wanted as many people as possible to know the love of God.

I allow my reading to become my prayer, pausing on words and phrases that stir my emotions, touch my memories, or call upon my spirit.

With this in mind, I read the letter again as if it is addressed to me.

"My dear [*my name*]..." and again:

"... but [*my name*], as long as we love one another, God will live in us."

God's love is mentioned seven times in this passage.

How do I experience God's love in my life?

Who are the people that I am called to love?

Does anything get in the way of me loving God more fully?

I talk to God about my experience of love and as I bring my prayer to a close, I ask God to draw me deeper into the mystery of love.

GOSPEL JOHN 17: 11–19

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:
“Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. While I was with them, I kept those you had given me true to your name. I have watched over them and not one is lost except the one who chose to be lost, and this was to fulfil the scriptures. But now I am coming to you, and while still in the world I say these things to share my joy with them to the full. I passed your word on to them, and the world hated them because they belong to the world no more than I belong to the world. I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth: your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth.”

As part of my preparation to pray, I look back over these last few weeks of Easter. I ask God to open my eyes to notice where he has been present in my life.

What has brought me sorrow and what has brought me joy?

Knowing that God is deeply interested in me, I bring my reflections before him and ask for the grace to open my heart to the truth of the Gospel.

I read the passage prayerfully.

This text is part of the long ‘farewell discourse’ from the Last Supper.

Using my imagination, I picture Jesus gathered in the room with his beloved disciples.

What is the mood of Jesus and the rest of the gathering?

What do I notice?

As I picture myself here, perhaps as a beloved disciple ... or maybe as if looking in on the scene, how do I feel ... hearing Jesus speak so lovingly of his followers?

Do I feel that I am able to share in the joy of Jesus?

Where am I being sent?

What do I need to help my being sent into the world?

I speak to Jesus as I would to a dear friend, sharing my thoughts and feelings.

I finish my prayer by making a slow sign of the cross.

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

My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.

Psalm

As long as we love one another, God will live in us
and his love will be complete in us.

Second Reading

I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;
I will come back to you, and your hearts will be full of joy. *Gospel*

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

Acts 1:15–17, 20–26; Psalm 102 (103); 1 John 4: 11–16; John 17: 11–19



**'I have
watched over
them and not
one is lost.'**



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