

During this unprecedented time in our world's history, we offer you the following material for your praying and reflecting on God's Word.

## **Introduction - May 9, 2021**

Today's Gospel follows immediately after the Gospel proclaimed last week, in which Jesus taught that he was the vine and that his disciples were the branches. In the example of the vine and the branches, we learned that our union with Jesus will lead to fruitful service.

Today's reading extends this teaching to describe the kind of service that Christians are called upon to offer to others. We hear Jesus affirm that he is known by the Father and that his disciples will know the Father by knowing Jesus. In this passage, however, Jesus reminds his disciples that this knowledge is to be expressed in love. Those who know Jesus well—and Jesus says that his disciples do know him—will love one another.

Knowledge leads to love, which leads to action. Even more, a true disciple shows a particular kind of love, sacrificial love. We know that Jesus himself gives us the greatest example of the kind of love and service that he teaches to his disciples. He has, in fact, laid down his life for his friends, for his disciples, and for us. Through his death and Resurrection, we have received the grace to love others as Jesus has commanded.

## **Lectio Divina with the Sunday Gospel**

Lectio Divina means 'divine reading'. It is a way to pray using the holy scriptures in a step-by-step process. Gather the entire family around and make the sign of the Cross. Light a candle.

**Leader: "Holy Spirit, you inspired the authors of Sacred Scripture to write what you wanted us to know for the sake of our salvation. Inspire us now to hear those words not only with our ears, but our hearts, so that we might know your saving Word for us today."**

- Have one person **read** the scripture slowly, out loud and have a few moments of silence afterwards. (It may be helpful for everyone to have a copy of the reading).
- **Read** the scripture again out loud and choose a single word or short phrase that touches, speaks or surprises you. Share with everyone.
- **Read** the scripture out loud one more time and discuss what is happening directly in the text.
- **Meditate** on what God is doing now in our lives through this text.
- **Respond** to what God is doing through prayer.
- **Contemplate** on what God is asking of me through this text and how to use these words as a gift for others through my actions.
- After a period of silence, end with the Sign of the Cross.

*(see over)*

**The Holy Gospel for May 9, 2021**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

“As the Father loves me, so I also love 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 joy  
may be in you and your joy might be complete.  
This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.

No one has greater love than this,  
to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you.

I no longer call you slaves,  
because a slave does not know what his master is doing.

I have called you friends,  
because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.

It was not you who chose me,  
but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit  
that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.  
This I command you: love one another.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

### Family Activities

In family life, we have many opportunities to show love in action. Each time we postpone a task to tend to the needs of another, we show ourselves to be on the path to following the example of love shown to us by Jesus. Sometimes the sacrifices we are called upon to make for others are small. But these small choices to love and to serve others prepare us for the larger choices and sacrifices that we may be called upon to make. Discuss the meaning of the word generosity. Ask each family member to describe an action that shows generosity. To be generous is to give freely to others without counting the cost. What can we do to be generous?

- ❖ Jesus' commandment to his disciples was to love one another. But sometimes we face obstacles that make it difficult for us to show love to one another.  
Reflect on a time in which it was difficult to show love to someone.  
Reflect on ways you could have faced the obstacle and instead have shown love.
- ❖ Reflect on the friends that you have.  
What characteristics do they possess that make you want to be friends with them?  
Jesus also calls us friends. How is Jesus our friend?
- ❖ Write a card/letter to someone to let them know how much they are loved.  
You can send it to a family member, friend or even better, a complete stranger.