

The Gospel of Saint John today speaks of God's love for us. In the same way that the Father loves Jesus, His Son, so also Jesus loves us! That is incredible! We often do not think of God's love for us as in any way being the same love that the Divine Persons have among themselves. Somehow, we often see ourselves as less. The whole Christian tradition tells us, however, that Jesus became man, human, so that we might share in His Divinity. What an incredible life we have! We are created to share in the Divinity of Jesus. Although nothing is said in today's readings, we are all aware, that to share in Christ' life is to follow Him by living the way in which He lived. So God gives us a path of life. In our everyday life not everything is good and not everything is holy. There are actions and ways of thinking and ways of speaking that take us away from this incredible gift of Divine Life. Far too often today, everything is seen as good as long as it makes me happy and feel good. This is not the way of the Lord Jesus. Love in the Gospel is not a feeling about another person, but a choice to seek the good of the other person, even if I must sacrifice my own good. This is the way of the Lord Jesus. We actually have the power to live this way once we recognise God's unique love for each one of us and His choice to share His life with us. Our power, our virtue, our goodness, our capacity to love all come from the Lord Jesus. He is risen indeed, alleluia!

#### ***Prayer over the Offerings***

*May our prayers rise up to you, O Lord, together with the sacrificial offerings, so that, purified by your graciousness, we may be conformed to the mysteries of your mighty love.*

#### ***Prayer after Communion***

*Almighty ever-living God, who restore us to eternal life in the Resurrection of Christ, increase in us, we pray, the fruits of this paschal Sacrament and pour into our hearts the strength of this saving food.*

**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**

## **Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**Year B**

**5<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

### ***The Love of the Lord Fills the Universe***



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 for the whole church. The Holy Spirit shows that the Christian message is for the whole human race, Gentiles as well as Jews. The Psalm 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 each one of us to go and bear fruit and to love one another.

#### ***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.*

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

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. Peter himself then said, 'Could anyone refuse the water of baptism to these people, now they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have?' He then gave orders for them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterwards they begged him to stay on for some days.

The meeting of Peter with Cornelius and his conversion is an important turning point in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. A Gentile receives the Holy Spirit just as the first Christians at Pentecost had. It was a massive challenge for Peter. Peter himself, had to be converted before he could convert Cornelius. Peter came to the realisation that God's gifts were given to all those who listened to the Word of God. God's love is for all!

**Psalm 97(98):1-4**

*Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders.*

*His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation.*

*The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel.*

*All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

*Shout to the Lord, all the earth, ring out your joy.*

**1 John 4: 7-10**

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

Today's second reading is from the First Letter of Saint John. Again, we see how love must include everyone. Where love is lacking, so also is God lacking. True love comes from being in Jesus Christ. God sent His Only Son into the world so that we might have life through Him. All of our life comes from Jesus and we are invited to live and to love our lives in following the path of Jesus.

*Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him.' Alleluia!*

**John 15: 9-17**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As 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 learned 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.'