

6th Sunday of Easter 2021

(Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; Psalm 97; 1 John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17)

I have a niece; who lives in a place called Caesarea, Ontario in Canada; she became a mother last year, this seems to have sparked an interest in genealogy, with a strong desire to find out where she has come from. This is not just for her own interest, but so that she is able to inform her daughter. The latest development in this is that she has undergone a DNA test and has started to make contact online with others she is related to. Some of us may share this desire to find out where we come from; to learn the history of our development as a family or a Community.

In our first reading today, we can clearly see one of the pivotal moments of the development of our Christian Community. Peter visits Cornelius in Caesarea, Palestine shunning the honour reserved for Lords, reminding his host that he is just a man and that God does not have favourites. As he says this, the Holy Spirit came down on all present, regardless of their origin. This was a clear indication to the early Church from God, that the New Covenant was not reserved just for the Jewish people, but for **everyone**. Peter then baptised the first Gentiles, opening up the possibility that we could all become children of God through our Baptism. It would be very useful to read the full chapter of the Acts of the Apostles from this week, it will help fill in some of the detail of the reading to gain a better understanding of how God used Cornelius to inform Peter of God's desire for the Word to be taken out to the whole world.

In our second reading we hear the call to love. St John reminds us that love comes from God, and states that the very fact that we have the ability to love is a sign that we come from God. He also states that anyone who fails to love can never have known God; because God is love. God made us because He loves us. And because He loves us, He sent Jesus to save us. God loves us so much that He sacrificed His own Son for us.

The emphasis continues to be about love in the Gospel reading today. The reading continues on from last week's reading and Jesus' words to the disciples at the Last Supper. Jesus is reminding the disciples to keep His commandments to remain in His love and to love one another as He loves. He tells them that a man can show no greater love than to lay down their life for his friends, immediately telling them; and us; that they are His friends. He no longer views the disciples as servants, but as friends.

Jesus also states that the disciples did not choose Jesus, Jesus chose them; just as He has chosen us. Jesus calls us to go out and bear fruit and speaks about the joy He has when we obey the commandments and that by loving one another our joy will be complete.

How do we express that love today? How will we express that love tomorrow? Love is putting others before ourselves. Last week at the RCIA course we discussed the seven Capital (or deadly) sins; Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth; these are all about self, these relate to us thinking and acting only to please ourselves, all other sins come from these. God calls us to greater things. God wants us to think about and do things which positively affect other people. The call to love is for me to think not about me, but about you. We also discussed the virtues, the virtues which oppose these sins, which are Humility, Liberality, Chastity, Meekness, Temperance, Brotherly love and Diligence. Taking just one of them as an example, Covetousness, what do I covet? For me it is probably **time**, if I get the chance to spend time doing a puzzle, the few minutes I plan can easily become twenty or thirty minutes. If that time is interrupted, I can become sullen and start to do things

grudgingly, instead of lovingly. When we put others needs first, we are more likely to be living a virtuous life in line with God's commandments.

When was the last time we considered the vices and virtues? Do we consider them when we reflect on our day before going to sleep? Do we ask God to help us overcome our faults? I know that I ask for God's help in the morning before I start my day, sometimes I forget to thank God for the help He has given me. Sometimes I forget to examine my conscience at the end of the day, not only to make peace with God, but in an effort to improve the next day.

On Friday night, I attended the virtual meeting for the Candidates who will receive Confirmation at St Bede's Church over Pentecost Weekend. I found it to be a most positive experience. I think it is sometimes difficult for us to see the effect we have on other people. I was really struck by the enthusiasm of the Catechists and the questions the young people were asking. Thank God for them all.

Our readings today, tell us where our Church has come from, these young people will help to develop where our Church is going in the future. All of this is done in love. A love we receive from Our Father, God the Creator, a love we were told about and given the greatest example of by Jesus His Son and a love which is guided, nurtured and comes to fruition through His Holy Spirit. Amen.

Please keep in your prayers this week

- All those who are sick, all those who care for them and all Key workers who are striving to keep us safe.
- Those who are organising and attending the Let it Be course on Monday.
- All of those preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation this Pentecost, that they will prepare themselves diligently to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Those who will start the Novena for Pentecost this Friday (14th May)
- The repose of the soul of Friday Ogbuka, who died on Easter Monday and the comfort and welfare of his family.
- Prayer Marathon to end the Pandemic. (see below)
- Those who continue to attend the RCIA Course on Wednesdays.
- The families starting the Baptism Preparation Course this Sunday.

Deacon Tony Darroch, 8th May 2021.

Worldwide Prayer Marathon for an end to Coronavirus

SHRINE LIST AND DAILY PRAYER INTENTIONS

Basilica Vaticana (Madonna del Soccorso) The Vatican Europe. For the entire world wounded by this pandemic

1 Our Lady of Walsingham, England. For all the deceased.

2 Jesus the Saviour and Mother Mary (Elele) Nigeria. For all those who have not been able to say goodbye to their deceased loved ones.

- 3 Our Lady of Częstochowa, Poland. For all those infected with the corona virus and all the sick.
- 4 Basilica of the Annunciation (in Nazareth) Israel. For all expectant women and their unborn babies.
- 5 Blessed Virgin of the Rosary (in Namyang), South Korea. For all children and adolescents.
- 6 Our Lady Aparecida (San Paolo), Brazil. For all young people.
- 7 Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage (Antipolo) Philippines. For all families.
- 8 Our Lady of Luján, Argentina. For all communication workers.
- 9 Holy House of Loreto, Italy. For all seniors.
- 10 Our Lady of Knock, Ireland. For all people with disabilities.
- 11 The Virgin of the Poor (Banneux), Belgium. For all the poor, the homeless, and the economically distressed.
- 12 Our Lady of Africa (Algiers) Algeria. For all people who live alone and those who have lost hope.
- 13 Our Lady of the Rosary, (Fatima), Portugal. For all prisoners
- 14 Our Lady of Health (Vailankanni) India. For all scientists and medical research institutions.
- 15 Our Lady Queen of Peace (Medjugorje) Bosnia. For all migrants.
- 16 Saint Mary's Cathedral (Sydney), Australia. For all victims of violence and human trafficking.
- 17 Immaculate Conception, (Washington, D.C.) USA. For all world leaders and for all heads of international organisations.
- 18 Our Lady of Lourdes, France. For all doctors and nurses.
- 19 Mother Mary's House - Meryem Ana Evi (Ephesus) Turkey. For all people at war and for world peace.
- 20 Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre, Cuba. For all pharmacists and health care personnel.
- 21 Our Lady of Nagasaki, Japan. For all social workers.
- 22 Nuestra Señora de Montserrat, Spain. For all volunteers.
- 23 Notre Dame du Cap (Trois Rivières), Canada. For all law enforcement and military personnel and for all firefighters.
- 24 To be confirmed To be confirmed. For all those who provide essential services.
- 25 Basilica of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu, Malta. For all teachers, students and educators.
- 26 Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Mexico. For all workers and entrepreneurs.
- 27 Mother of God (Zarvanytsia), Ukraine. For all the unemployed.
- 28 Black Madonna of Altötting, Germany . For the Holy Father, bishops, priests, and deacons.
- 29 Our Lady of Lebanon (Harissa), Lebanon. For all consecrated men and women.
- 30 Blessed Virgin of the Holy Rosary of Pompeii, Italy. For the Church.
- 31 Vatican Gardens, The Vatican. For the end of the pandemic and the resumption of our social and economic life.