

Sunday Message

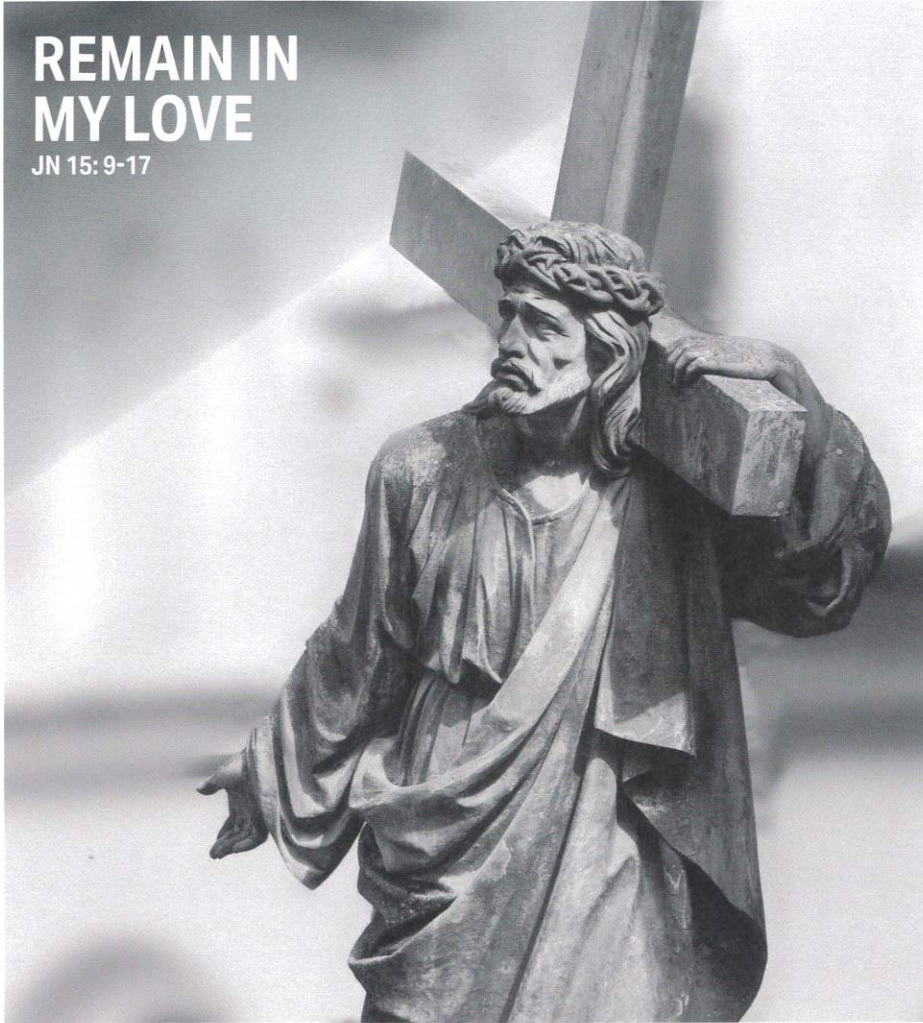
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE WORD

Year B • 5 May 2024 • Psalter Week 2

REMAIN IN MY LOVE

JN 15: 9-17



We are now in the heart of the Easter Season. John's Gospel presents us with a world, where the Risen Christ continues to have an impact on the lives of his followers.

A series of speeches from Jesus, with powerful sentiments, are designed to ground the disciples and the early Church in one of the most fundamental aspects of his teaching. God's love for all of humanity. When John talks about the love of God, he is clear what he means: 'This is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us.' The same message appears in the Gospel: 'You did not choose me, no, I chose you.' God has made an everlasting decision to love us. God's love is first, God has opted for us, declared his choice, taken us on. It is a decisive movement of love that began with the Father. 'As the father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love.' So here lies the task before us believers. Allowing God's love to come into our lives, to feel it, to recognise it, to believe it. These are the first steps. But now comes the challenge. We are to remain in God's love. This will mean that we too must make a choice. We choose to believe that for some reason, God has seen fit to embrace humanity, with all its shortcomings. We remain in his love. Jesus shows that he could have no greater love than to lay down his life for the sake of others. That is the powerful message of Easter. ■

DO

Organise a meeting of your parish pastoral council and reflect on how your faith community responds to the needs of people on the margins of society.



REFLECT

A story is told of a brilliant surgeon. It was his first time that a particular brain operation had been carried out in the country. It was performed upon a young man of great promise. It was an operation of the greatest delicacy in which a small error would have had fatal consequences. In the outcome, the operation was a triumph. But it involved several hours of intense and uninterrupted concentration on the part of the surgeon. When it was over, a nurse had to take him by the hand, and lead him from the operating theatre like a blind man or a little child.

That kind of self-giving and concentration on the needs of another reflects something of the quality of God's love in Jesus. This kind of love is sometimes beyond our comprehension. Jesus hopes that we will choose to keep on giving of ourselves in love, even when the giving hurts, even when we feel that we have nothing else to give. But it's that kind of love that mirrors God's kind of love. He loves us beyond all telling.

Some might say that this is the message we find the hardest to believe. That despite all my shortcomings and failings, there is a love that comes from God, that is unrelenting in its power. We receive this gift freely. As Jesus says, 'You did not choose me, no, I chose you.' ■

LEARN

'The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth in our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian Community.' (Catechism 638)



SAY

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have eternal life.' (Jn 3:16)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard;
proclaim to the ends of the earth:
The Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

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.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

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 word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 97 (98):1-4

Response:

The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.

Or Alleluia!

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R.)
2. 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. (R.)
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. (R.)

SECOND READING

1 John 4:7-10

A reading from the first letter of St John.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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!'

GOSPEL

John 15:9-17

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:
"As the Father has loved me,
so have I 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."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

(all bow during the next two lines)

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

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.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

If you love me, keep my commandments, says
the Lord,
and I will ask the Father and he will send you
another Paraclete,
to abide with you forever, alleluia.

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.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.