

# SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 8, 1994

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

On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshipped him. But Peter made him get up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal."

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

1 John 4:7-10

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

John 15:9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved 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 do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe what you know about your Baptism. What mementos do you have of the event?
2. Give examples of persons who lay down their lives for others.
3. Describe your experience of God's love.
4. How is the love of God evident in your parish?

Mary Fran Zeller □

# Jesus lays down the law: Love

## THE GOOD NEWS

GOD'S WORD IN EVERYDAY LIVING

By Father Paul Turner



shocked his enemies that they motioned to pelt him with rocks.

Now he reveals a deeper mystery about that unity, and the news should take our breath away: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you." The glorious unity Jesus shares with the Father he now shares with the disciples.

He's a coach telling his team they've made it to the play-offs. He's a teacher telling his students they've passed. He's the morning paper announcing you've won the lottery. The disciples have entered a whole new way of relating with Jesus, and hence with God.

But, if you're a pro, you must act like a pro. So Jesus lays down the law, and the law is love. How strange is this law! Jesus seeks obedience, but not one that enslaves. The obedience Jesus seeks is one which brings joy. Love brings joy. We all know that. But what is love?

Love is doing what Jesus did, caring for others, even to the point of laying down your life for them. Doesn't sound like joy to you? Then you have not yet loved. Jesus can talk like this because he's modeling this love even as he speaks. His hour has come. He's on his way to the cross. And for him, this is love. This is joy.

At this point, some followers might want out of the bargain. Paradoxically, though, there is no exit. God has already loved us. Jesus has already set an example. He has drawn us into the same union he has with the Father. Joy cannot come from escape. Joy comes from living this union to the end. And that end is love, selfless love.

THE EASTER SEASON offers us a seven-week-long meditation on the mystery of the cross and resurrection. This week we come to a deeper realization of why Jesus succumbed to this death. In addition to winning us to redemption, he also gave us an example, a terrifying example of the demands of the Christian life.

On the eve of his death, with his closest friends gathered round him, Jesus gave the message he most wanted them to hear. That message had power because it lay consistent with the life Jesus lived and the example he was setting. "Love," he says.

Father Paul Turner is pastor of St. John Francis Regis Parish, Kansas City. □

## Daily Scripture Readings

Fifth Sunday in Easter  
Sunday, May 1

Acts 9:26-31  
Psalms 22:26-28, 30-32  
1 John 3:18-24  
John 15:1-8

Monday, May 2

Acts 14:5-18  
Psalms 115:1-4, 15-16  
John 14:21-26

Tuesday, May 3

1 Corinthians 15:1-8  
Psalms 19:2-5  
John 14:6-14

Wednesday, May 4

Acts 15:1-6  
Psalms 122:1-5  
John 15:1-8

Thursday, May 5

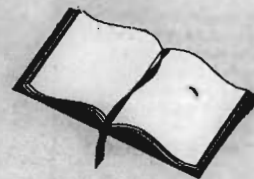
Acts 15:7-21  
Psalms 96:1-3, 10  
John 15:9-11

Friday, May 6

Acts 15:22-31  
Psalms 57:8-12  
John 15:12-17

Saturday, May 7

Acts 16:1-10  
Psalms 100:1-3, 5  
John 15:18-21



Sixth Sunday of Easter

Sunday, May 8  
Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48  
Psalms 98:1-4  
1 John 4:7-10  
John 15:9-17