

Fifth Sunday of Easter – 15th May 2022

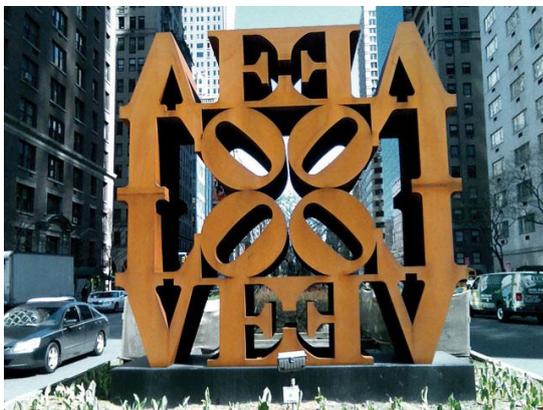
Read John 13.31-35

You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.

This reading from St John's gospel describes Jesus's words at the Last Supper. Judas has just left the room and is going to betray Jesus to the authorities. Jesus knows that he will soon be arrested and put to death. He gives a few last instructions to his disciples. He tells the disciples that they should love one another, as he has loved them.

Jesus says that this is a new commandment. But, throughout his life Jesus has taught people to love one another. So, why do you think he says that this is a *new* commandment? What does it mean to love like Jesus? How did Jesus show love to other people throughout his ministry?

Jesus is not just speaking to the disciples at the Last Supper, he is speaking to us as well. When Jesus commanded us to love one another, he really meant, "Love the person who is most unlike you" or "Love the person that you find it hardest to love." It is not an easy task! Can you think of someone that you would find hard to love? Is it someone who has been unkind to you, or said hurtful things to you? Is it someone that you are angry with, or a person who has ignored you? Think of that person now and ask for God's help in understanding, forgiving, and loving them. How can we serve others and love those we would rather not love?



Look at this picture. It is a sculpture in New York. Do you like it? Why do you think it was put up in the city? How many different types of love, or ways of loving, can you think of? When have you experienced love turning things upside down?

God loves each one of us completely, even though we make mistakes and do not always behave as God wants us to. God wants us to love each other in the same way.

Activities

- Find a nice smooth stone or pebble. Paint a message of love on the stone. You could use one of the phrases from today's gospel reading. When the paint is dry cover it with a layer of PVA glue. This will dry clear and form a varnish over the surface of the stone. It can be used as a paperweight or to hold in your hand when you pray.
- On a large sheet of paper write the word LOVE in bubble writing so that it fills the page. Write lots of examples of loving and serving inside the big bubble letters. Pin the picture on your wall to remind you to show love to other people this week.

Prayer

We thank you, Jesus, that you loved us so much that you died for us and rose again.

We thank you, Jesus, that you gave us your Spirit to comfort us and to lead us.

We thank you, Jesus, that you gave us the perfect way to show your love to others, not just with words but with loving actions and service.

Open our hearts today so that we are aware of your wonderful love and we can learn to pass that love on to others. Amen.