

May 15, 2022

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 14:21-27 | Rev 21:1-5a | Jn 13:31-33a, 34-35

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

I'm an expressive one when it comes to sharing my opinions: I absolutely LOVE these new shoes! I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE this lemon meringue pie! All good. My friends and family are mildly pleased that I am content with my wardrobe and my diet. But in today's Gospel, Jesus gives us the great commandment, combining the two commandments – to love God and to love neighbor – into one: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." But what does it really mean to *love*? Saint Paul says it is to be patient, kind, and to rejoice with the truth; it is not being jealous, pompous, rude, or quick-tempered. (1 Cor 13: 4-6) Saint Thomas Aquinas says that "to love is to will the good of another." The love we show is the very essence of what it means to be Christian. "*This* (italics added) is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

In today's reading from Acts, Paul, and Barnabas return from their travels to various Christian communities. They have shared the Good News, making disciples in each place and building up the Church. Yet when they return, they do not gloat or boast of their accomplishments. Rather, they "reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." Sometimes in our strivings – to be better friends or parents, better Christians, better at sharing our faith – we can become discouraged when we fall short. Paul, arguably the best evangelist ever, reminds us that God works through us, not the other way around. We are to persevere, placing our trust in God. Through him we are able to love as he does, and help others come to know that same love.

ACTIONS Spring is upon us! Plant something and watch it grow. Just as the sun and water nurture a garden, God nurtures and helps us grow through the Holy Spirit and the people around us. How can we in turn share that love with others?

