

**May 5-6, 2018**

**Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**Acts: 19:25-49**

**First John 4:7-10**

**John 15:9-17**

Some days we get it and on other days, we have a long way to go. As the Easter Season slowly winds to its conclusion (Ascension is next weekend followed by Pentecost on the 19-20), within our reading from Acts of the Apostles we hear of the expansion of the early Church beyond just being Jewish...and the apostles wrestling with what God apparently desired rather than just how THEY thought the early Church should grow. In the Second Reading we hear the admonition to be GENEROUS in our embrace and LOVE of others...so that, knowing what goes around-comes around, others may also be generous in lovingly embracing us. Finally, in the Gospel of John we AGAIN have the importance of LOVING ONE ANOTHER placed upon us by none other than Jesus himself. **The selfless embrace of others in LOVE is not easy.** Perhaps it is our broken human nature which makes it so hard but LOVING everyone is not what most of us set out each day to accomplish. There are those we most certainly LOVE, there are those we LIKE and then there are assorted layers of people whom we tolerate, acknowledge, begrudge, hope to avoid and some whom we probably wish did not exist. Some of our memories are haunted by those to whom we extended what we thought was LOVE and had it thrown back in our faces and then there is the rallying cry of 'better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all', which is not easy to reconcile within the parts of our hearts that feel betrayed, wounded and rejected. LOVING is not accidental, it requires a conscious decision, an act of will on our parts. LOVING needs tending, the LOVE of yesterday needs to be affirmed TODAY and again TOMORROW. LOVE grows, it does not remain the seed from which we first bound ourselves to someone. To LOVE is to become vulnerable which invariably implies we will on occasion be hurt. Within each HURT lies the challenge of whether to LOVE again or to close off our hearts, hide and run away. LOVE grows best when rooted in truth and honesty; the weeds of doubt sprout and grow when fed with lies, deceptions or even well-meaning half-truths. The command of Jesus is: 'LOVE ONE ANOTHER.' How we do this is a work in progress...thank goodness Pentecost is but two weeks away! COME HOLY SPIRIT...help us to love.

Thank you for sharing this Cinco de Mayo weekend with our Santa Clara community. Next weekend being Mother's Day, please note the Mother's Day Envelopes at the exits by which you may enroll your moms, living or deceased, in the special May Masses. On the 19-20 we will have a Second Special Collection for OTHER ORANGE COUNTY PARISHES that have extreme financial needs beyond what their own resources can cover....this might be one way of starting to 'love one another'. Our cut-off date for Registrations for our Married Couples Retreat is nearing...please see the Website for fuller information. Enjoy these Spring days and remember, you are loved. FKB