

## 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter



Acts 10:25-26,  
34-35,44-48  
Ps 98:1-4  
1 John 4:7-10  
John 15:9-17

### Monday May 7

Acts 16:11-15  
Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b  
John 15:26 -- 16:4a

### Tuesday May 8

Acts 16:22-34  
Ps 138:1-3,7c-8  
John 16:5-11

### Wednesday May 9

Acts 17:15,22--18:1  
Ps 148:1-2,11-14  
John 16:12-15

### Thursday May 10

Acts 18:1-8  
Ps 98:1-4  
John 16:16-20

### Friday May 11

Acts 18:9-18  
Ps 47:2-7  
John 16:20-23

### Saturday May 12

Acts 18:23-28  
Ps 47:2-3,8-9,10  
John 16:23b-28

Servanthood is the mark of true Christian living. Jesus emphasized this during the Last Supper, saying that he came not to be served, but to serve, and that likewise we should serve one another. In his parables, he often referred to believers as "servants" of the Kingdom. But in John 15:9-17, Jesus says that he wants us to be his *friends*, not his slaves. Is he contradicting himself?

Not at all! Friends serve because they care. Slaves serve because of duty and the fear of punishment.

Jesus said, "If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love." Do we hear this as a friend or as a slave?

Slaves are afraid of what will happen if they fail to keep God's commandments; they are self-protective. Friends are eager to find out what God commands, because

they view the commandments from the perspective of love, as opportunities to serve; they are other-oriented.

Jesus said, "This is my commandment: Love one another the way I love you." It's the supreme commandment; call it the Commandment of Friendship. He says, "You know how I love you, my friends: I openly share with you everything that the Father tells me." His friends realize that what he shares (through scripture *and* through the Church) reveals our opportunities to love.

Every commandment is rooted in love. Every Church teaching is based on scriptures that help us know when and how to love.

When we fail to obey, do we lose God's love? Never! Do we lose our

place in his love? Yes. By living outside of his commandments, we feel unloved even while being loved.

This is slavery. We're enslaved by fear or by false beliefs or by our wounds that have caused us to think that we're not loved enough. God's commandments then feel confining, and if we try to escape, we commit rebellion. Those who don't rebel accept their slavery and obey dutifully in the hope of winning God's love.

Friends, on the other hand, know that God always loves them, and in this love, they are free to serve one another joyfully.

### Reflect & Discuss:

1. Are you obeying God like a slave or his best friend?
2. Do you eagerly jump into doing the will of God or do you complain about it? Do you ever want to escape from God's will?
3. What will you do to become more aware of his friendship?
4. What raises our relationships with God from slavery to friendship? Describe differences between obeying out of duty and obeying out of love.