

- What a wonderful Gospel for Mothers' Day—a reading focused on love.
- Of course, one of the things that mothers (and fathers) desire most is that those in their little community of the family love one another—brothers and sisters living together in joy and harmony... as it says in Psalm 133: *“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”*
- What joy we bring to the Blessed Mother of all when we live in harmony. What joy we bring to God.

- Now, in our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the Roman centurion Cornelius falls at Peter's feet in worship...knowing by the fulfillment of the vision that he was given that Peter was most certainly a servant of God.
- But Peter doesn't succumb to the temptation to glorify himself, but rather chides Cornelius: *“Stand up; I, too, am a man.”*
- “I am only a man...there is nothing about ME to worship; worship God alone.”
- This humility is repeated by an angel in the book of Revelation when St. John recounts: *“...when I heard and saw [these things], I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”* (Rev 22:8-9 RSV)
- Thus the humility and wisdom required of a disciple—acknowledging that all men and women are children of God...as Paul later tells Timothy that God: *“...desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”* (1Tim 2:4)
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- Peter then realizes in our story today: *“Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.”*
- Now the Jews thought that Gentiles had no chance of eternal life...
- ...but the principle of the all-inclusiveness of God expands to everyone; God wants every person on earth to come to Him, for we are all His children and made in His image.

- Sadly, racism and bigotry will probably always exist; the temptation to feel part of a “better” class or category is very strong.
- But like all temptations to evil, it must—and can—be fought...and conquered.
- Exclusivity—excluding—is based in disdain, pride and even hatred—and are unacceptable in the Christian man or woman.
- St. Paul wrote: *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all ONE in Christ Jesus.”* (Gal 3:28-29 RSV)
- There is only one Body of Christ...of which we are all a part.
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- We remember that at Pentecost, scripture tells us that those who converted were from all regions.
- And in the book of Revelation St. John writes of his vision: *“...I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes...”* (Rev 7:9 RSV)
- So if God makes no preferences among peoples and races, how do WE dare do so?
- Peter said in our reading today: *“...anyone who fears [God] and does what is right is acceptable to Him.”*
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- Race, nationality or heritage—all irrelevant. Shall we reject someone whom God accepts?
- Christians are called to rise above prejudice and bigotry...to see all people as God sees them...and in that love of God, to seek them out for Christ.
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- Like oil and water, love and hatred do not mix.
- Now St. John tells us that God is love...
- ...and hatred and love are not opposites, but rather hatred is the absence of love...and therefore hatred is, by definition, the absence of God.
- So if we hate, we reject God Himself...whether we hate because of bigotry or grudges or offenses against us or whatever.
- St. John tells us: *“If any one says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.”* (1Jo 4:20 RSV)
- Such a person who stubbornly and voluntarily persists in hatred may therefore very well forfeit eternal life with God...because hatred cannot exist with God.
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- So live in the light of God’s love, and reflect that light of love to everyone around you.
- And keep perspective!...remember what is truly important: loving God, loving your neighbor...
- ...not seeking your own good, but seeking the good of the other person in leading them to God...because, in the end, leading them to God and to a stronger faith is the best for you both. It is the true good.

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- The story goes that when St. John was too old and feeble to celebrate Mass, he still insisted on being carried on Sundays to preach to the people.
 - Sunday after Sunday his sermon consisted in one short sentence: *“Little children, love one another.”*
 - After some weeks of this, the presiding priest said to the John: *“Father, could you not say something more?”*
 - John answered: *“No...for if they do this, they are doing everything.”*
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- Jesus tells us today in the Gospel to go and bear fruit.
- Souls are the fruit He desires...and we water the fruit by love.
- So let us go to the harvest—shedding self-interest, perpetual self-concern and self-absorption that the world assures us will make us happy, but never seems to do so, nor can it.
- Because when we seek ourselves, ourselves is all that we will have. But when we seek the good of others, we have their love, their community, their friendship as well.
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- The way that we are faithful to God is to live in the fullness of love as Jesus says: *“This I command you, to love one another”*—not just this or that person of our own little circle...but all...
- ...and there is no act of love greater than to lead others to God’s love—to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To the Body of Christ, which is His Church...which leads us all to eternal life.
- For, as St. Paul writes: *“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains,*

but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing... faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” (1Cor 13:13 RSV)

- Have a wonderful and blessed Mothers’ Day...living in the arms of the love of one another...for all love is of God.

Reading 1

[Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48](#)

When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and, falling at his feet, paid him homage. Peter, however, raised him up, saying, "Get up. I myself am also a human being."

Then Peter proceeded to speak and said, "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him."

While Peter was still speaking these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the word. The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit should have been poured out on the Gentiles also, for they could hear them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter responded, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit even as we have?" He ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4](#)

R. (cf. 2b) **The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done wondrous deeds;
His right hand has won victory for him,
his holy arm.

R. **The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

The LORD has made his salvation known:
in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice.
He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness
toward the house of Israel.

R. **The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation by our God.
Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;
break into song; sing praise.

R. The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Reading II

[1 Jn 4:7-10](#)

Beloved, let us love one another,
because love is of God;
everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God.
Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.
In this way the love of God was revealed to us:
God sent his only Son into the world
so that we might have life through him.
In this is love:
not that we have loved God, but that he loved us
and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

Gospel

[Jn 15:9-17](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:
"As the Father loves me, so I also love you.
Remain in my love.
If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and remain in his love.

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you
and your joy might be complete.
This is my commandment: love one another as I love 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 no longer call you slaves,
because a slave does not know what his master is doing.
I have called you friends,
because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.
It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you
and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain,
so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.
This I command you: love one another."