

## This Week's Readings

### First Reading: Acts 14: 21-27.

Luke describes the end of the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas. The Apostles appoint leaders for the young Christian communities and exhort the converts to persevere in the faith. The seed of the Word that they planted now starts to grow to maturity.

### Second Reading: Revelation 21: 1-5.

John sees the New Heaven and the New Earth which will result from the establishment of God's Kingdom.

### Gospel: John 13: 31-35.

Jesus gives us the one commandment (of brotherly love) on which to base every action of our Christian lives.



## Points for Reflection

### *The "New" Commandment*

At the Last Supper, after washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus lays down a new commandment: that the disciples love one another. This cannot mean that Jesus is the first to posit the obligation to love one another. After all, it is a fundamental rule of life in the Old Testament. God commands: *"You shall not bear hatred for your brother in your heart... You shall love your neighbour as yourself"* (Lv 19: 17). Love was also held as an ideal in pagan antiquity, whether in the general sense of philanthropy, or in the political sense of solidarity. Jesus himself says that pagans love their neighbours and those who do good to them (Mt 5: 47).

The newness of Christian love-commandment can be explained in terms of degree and intensity or scope which would include "non-friends" or outsiders. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches the disciples to love their enemies: those who are outside their circle, those who are non-Israelites, even those who persecute them (Mt 5: 43-47). But here in the

**Gospel Reading**, the focus is the disciples: that they love one another. This for sure does not mean that the love of the disciples is restricted to their own circle, contradicting what Jesus says in the other Gospels. Rather, the focus is what the disciples, in their mutual relations, can and should mean to outsiders, to the world: *"This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another"*.

The newness of the commandment is to be found in the context and spirit with which the commandment is given: intimacy, service, mutual knowledge, giving of life. These are the characteristics of the "new covenant" that is established at the Last Supper. These are the characteristics of the love of Jesus who is the measure of this love-commandment: *"As I have loved you, so also you should love one another"*. By their mutual love and service, the disciples evoke the image of Jesus in his self-sacrificial love for all, including sinners and outsiders.

- Gil Alinsangan, SSP

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<b>Secretary:</b> Miss Tse Choi Ping <b>Office hours:</b> Mon-Fridays: 9.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00pm – 6.00pm Sundays: 8.45am – 12 noon	<b>Confessions:</b> Sundays before Mass; Weekdays on call
<b>Parish Council Chairlady:</b> Miss Candy Chan Tel: 23265322	<b>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:</b> Thursdays: 2.30 pm 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month 8.00 pm

### Kids' Corner

Colour the picture of Jesus below.

