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From the Bible

Now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

—1 Corinthians 13:13

Jesus is the best teacher when it comes to love. Even as a child he studied the Word of God. He learned about the **Law of Love** that God gave to the Jewish people.

While he was growing up, Jesus tried to follow God's Law of Love. Little by little, he found the way to true happiness. It is NOT through riches, or power, or beauty, or being famous. The way to true happiness, Jesus found, is through great love. Jesus spoke about God's love with the people and he showed them how to love others.

Sit quietly and think about these words. Ask Jesus to help you understand them deep within your heart.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might, and your neighbour as yourself."

—adapted from
Deuteronomy 6:5 and
Mark 12:31

If you want to be happy, look for God's love in your life. Open your heart to sharing, forgiving, and helping those in need.



A Happy Celebration

One day Jesus came to a town called Capernaum. The people ran to greet him because they had heard about his preaching and healing. Jesus was happy to meet them and tell them about God's love. But the day was hot and in the evening Jesus was very tired. Many sick people were still waiting to see him.

When he saw this, he felt sorry for them. He forgot how tired he was. He took time with each one, blessing them and healing them all. Imagine the celebration that evening in Capernaum!



Something to Think About

- Why didn't Jesus tell the people, "Come back tomorrow. I'm too tired right now"?
- What would you have done when you saw all those people?
- What do you do now when you are tired but someone needs your help?

A Story of Love and Forgiveness

**"Love one another
as I have loved you."
This is what Jesus
asks us to do.**



Something to Think About

- Why do you think Jesus forgave Peter?
- Would you want Jesus for a friend? Explain your answer.

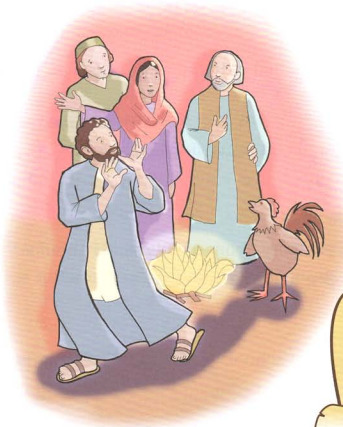
One of Jesus' best friends was Peter. He was a fisherman who worked hard to take care of his family. One day Jesus said to him, "Why don't you change jobs? Come and be my helper." Peter liked that idea. He put down his fishing nets and went with Jesus. He listened and he learned about God's Law of Love.



A few years later, when Jesus was arrested, Peter forgot God's Law of Love. He was afraid that he would be arrested, too. So he told people he didn't know Jesus. He lied! He turned his back on his best friend!

When Peter realized what he had done, he was so ashamed, he ran away crying.

But the story doesn't end there. After God raised Jesus from the dead, Jesus came to see Peter. Jesus didn't get angry at all. He loved Peter and he forgave him. What a relief! Peter and Jesus were **reconciled**, and Peter kept growing in God's love. Soon Peter became the leader of those first followers of Jesus.



Let Us Pray



Peter was sorry he had failed Jesus. Maybe Peter said a prayer like this:

Lord Jesus,
Son of God,
have mercy on me,
a sinner.



The Church Teaches...

Be merciful and forgiving, as Jesus was, and love others as he has loved us.

—adapted for children from CCC #2842



Following Jesus

Before he returned to his Father in heaven, Jesus told his followers:

But can we really love as Jesus did?
Can we forgive as Jesus did? Yes, but only
when we open ourselves to God's Law of
Love as Jesus did.

Read this story about a boy named Thomas.
Was he open to God's Law of Love?

*"I am giving you a
new commandment.
Love one another as
I have loved you."*

—John 15:12



Something to Think About

- **What do you think? Did Thomas practise God's Law of Love?**
- **Would you have done what he did? Why or why not?**
- **What act of love can YOU do today?**

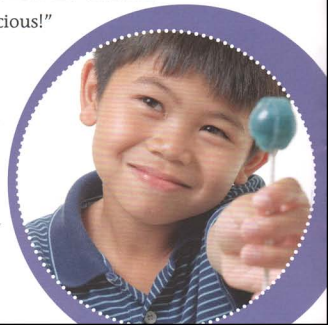


One day at school, Mrs. Perada had a surprise for the class. A friend had given her a box of candy and she wanted to share it with the children. Everyone took a big bite and said, "Yummy! So delicious!" Everyone but Thomas, that is.

"Don't you like candy?" Mrs. Perada asked him.

"Yes, I do," Thomas said, "but I want to keep it for my little brother, Dylan. He never gets candy."

The teacher said, "It's good of you to think of Dylan, but isn't it hard to give away your own treat?"



“Yes,” Thomas answered, “but if I eat it now, it’ll feel good in my mouth. If I give it to Dylan, it’ll feel even better in my heart.”



Saint Damian of Molokai was a **missionary** in Hawaii. He took care of sick people called “lepers” who had been left on an island called Molokai because their disease was contagious. Damian treated the lepers just as he would have treated Jesus. He often took care of their wounds himself. Damian loved these suffering people just as Jesus loved them.

To do good things for others as Jesus, and Thomas, and Saint Damian did, you have to keep your eyes and your heart wide open.

Does someone need your help: your parents, your sisters and brothers, your friends, your schoolmates? If they do, act as Jesus did.



Words

to Remember...

Law of Love ~ a way to live that puts God and others first

Reconciled ~ to make things right with God and others when we have done wrong

Commandment ~ a rule in the Bible about how to live

Missionaries ~ people who carry the good news of God’s love to all the world

Let Us Pray



Lord Jesus, may I care for others as you care for them. May I love those in need as you love them.

Ways to Show Love



The Church Teaches...

From our childhood on, we grow more and more aware of God's Law of Love. We learn good habits and how to do good deeds.

—adapted for children from CCC #1784

You are on a journey that is taking you closer to God. You are on your way to celebrating God's forgiveness in the sacrament of Reconciliation. Before you arrive at this sacrament, you have to practise how to love and forgive.

Read the stories below. What is the best way each child in the stories can show love?



Ned notices that his neighbours Alberto and Rafaela are sad. Alberto is crying.

"Why are you so sad?" Ned asks.

"Our mom just lost her job," Rafaela explained, "and Alberto's birthday is coming soon. He was supposed to have a party and now he can't."

What can Ned do to help? What can his family do?

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Emma is playing in the driveway. Her toys are all spread out. Her neighbour Maria calls out, "Come and play with me!" Emma knows that if she leaves her toys where they are, her dad will have to get out of the car and move them when he gets home from work, but she wants to go and play with Maria right away. What will Emma do?



Look and Listen

Here's a game you can play with your family to help you SEE and HEAR how to love one another better.

Everyone writes their name on a slip of paper and puts it in a bag. Then they each pick one name out of the bag, without showing it to the others. (If someone picks their own name, they put that slip of paper back and pick again.) For the next week, everyone does secret good deeds for the person whose name they picked. At the end of the week, have everyone try to guess who was doing these loving things for them.

Eric and Marisol look out the window one day. They see an old woman who lives nearby. She is always walking alone. Today she is carrying two bags of groceries. Eric and Marisol feel sorry for her. They tell their parents about her. How could they help their neighbour?



Simon and his friends are playing soccer in the park. Adam is watching from his wheelchair. He wants to play, but he can't run. What will Simon and his friends do?





Something to Think About

- Do you enjoy special celebrations and special meals? Why?
- What are your family's traditions?
- What can you **SEE** and **HEAR** around your family table?

Ask your parents to plan a special meal, a time when you can share love and laughter.

Sharing Family Love

Benjamin is excited. His grandparents are coming for dinner! That means they will all sit at the table for a long time, sharing good food and family stories. "Hurray!" says his sister Michelle. "I love it when we have special meals."

We all love times of celebration. Every family has its own way of celebrating. Family traditions make special days even more special. A tradition is something passed down from grandparents to parents to children: certain actions, certain ways of celebrating, even certain stories that are told just the right way. Family meals are the best time to share your family traditions.



Think about the journey you are on. You have already come a very long way. See what you can remember so far.

HINT: Look at the signs.

1. God gave the Jewish people a L ____ of L ____.
2. F ____ g ____ e n ____ is the gift Jesus gave to Peter.
3. To make things okay again is also called R ____ on ____ iati ____.
4. Family meals are a wonderful t ____ d ____ o ____.
5. Jesus said to his followers: Lo ____ o ____ ano ____ r ____.

✠ Who said, "Oh no, I have betrayed Jesus"?

HINT: His name begins with "P." _____

✠ Who said: "I'm saving it for my little brother"?

HINT: His brother's name was Dylan. _____

✠ Who took care of sick people called "lepers" on the island of Molokai? _____

HINT: He was a missionary.

✠ Who said, "I love it when we have special meals"?

HINT: Her brother's name was Benjamin.

Love is patient.
Love is kind.
Love does good things for others!

