# LSW

children

What other gifts of love have you given, received or heard of? *Allow examples from as many children as possible. Gently identify in each example, there is a sacrifice. Someone had to sacrifice some time & effort to make a card for Mom/Dad.*

*Discuss the greatest gift from Jesus and the sacrifice he made. Discuss why he did so.*

Remember we discussed in the past few weeks about obeying and following Jesus? How had people in the past followed Jesus’ example of loving and sacrificing? *Martyrs of the past gave up their lives to tell others about Jesus, to stand up for what they believed in or, simply, to help someone else.*

Fr Maximilian Kolbe was a Franciscan monk who was imprisoned by the Nazis. When some food was stolen in the prison camp and no one owned up, the camp commandant chose ten men at random to be executed. One of them broke down and asked not to be killed as he has children and family. Fr Kolbe stepped forward and offered to die in his place. Fr Kolbe was shot and is canonised today.

Of course, we need not all die to show our love for others. Priests and nuns give up their lives to join the ministries of the Church. Lots of people give up days, months or years of their lives to help the needy in other countries (eg., with people suffering from Ebola), in hospitals, orphanages or the like. Even giving up a few minutes to listen to a friend in trouble may sometimes be sacrifice enough. And provided it is done in love, God will accept it as a gift to be cherished.

*End with each child, if possible, giving an example of how he or she may sacrifice in obedience to Jesus’ commandment.*

Year B

### Sixth Sunday of Easter

#### Theme

Love

#### Points to note

As mentioned in the leaflet for Easter 3, this is the destination of the four-week journey that John is leading us. You may wish to read that leaflet to set this Sunday in context.

Some time ago, the Church changed the name of the Thursday in Holy Week from Maundy Thursday to Holy Thursday. I always feel that we lost a little something in this change. As a result, many Catholics today incorrectly assume Thursday of Holy Week as the celebration of the Last Supper. That is actually celebrated on Corpus Christi. In truth, the word Maundy comes from a Latin word, *mandatum,* which means *command*. Maundy Thursday is, therefore, the Night of the Great Commandment. Liturgically, the commandment here refers to the commandment to wash each other’s feet. Hence, the reading for Holy Thursday.

But, there is another commandment, the one mentioned in this Sunday’s reading. The one, according to John, Jesus gave to his disciples on the Thursday before he died. In the other Gospel accounts, Jesus was asked to choose the greatest among the existing Jewish commandments. To John, however, Jesus was not referring to existing Jewish commandments. *This is my commandment:* this is the one and only time that Jesus gave us his commandment: *Love one another as I have loved you.* There is a lot in this reading and you may want to reflect on it before you share with the children.

When discussing the concept of love, it is easy to lose focus and end up with very broad ideas instead. It is critical to anchor the discussions on very concrete examples of action and the daily life events that children understand. If possible, end up with commitments from the children on how they should make real in their lives what they have heard in the readings.

**Liturgy**

*Explain to the children that John was probably the youngest of the Twelve Apostles; the only one not to be martyred and that he lived to a ripe old age. In the Gospel he wrote, he always referred to himself as* the beloved disciple*. So, this must really very much be someone who have felt the loving power of Jesus and knows he is loved by God. The story goes that when he was teaching his own disciples at the end of his life, he was asked by one of them why he always talked to them about love and nothing else. John stared out into the distance for a while and replied, “Because there is nothing else … but love … love … and love.”*

*Explain that this teaching took place at the Last Supper on the night before Jesus was crucified. Explain that Jesus wanted to leave a gift to his disciples before he leaves them the next day.*

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Jesus said: “If anyone loves me he will keep my word,

and my Father will live him, and we shall come to him”

Alleluia!

##### Gospel

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And with your spirit.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St John

*All:*  Glory to you O Lord

 (Jn 15: 9-17)

Jesus said to his disciples:

“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved 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 own joy may be in you

and your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment:

love one another, as I have loved you.

A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends, if you do what I command you.

I shall not call you servants anymore,

because a servant does not know his master’s business;

I call you friends,

because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father.

You did not choose me, no, I chose you;

and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last.

And then the Father will give you anything you ask in my name.

What I command you is to love one another.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Discussion**

Has anyone ever made a birthday card or a Mother’s Day/Father’s Day card for Mom or Dad? Did they like it? Did they like it more than one that was bought in the shops? Why? *Because the one you made was made with love, and love is the greatest gift of all!!*