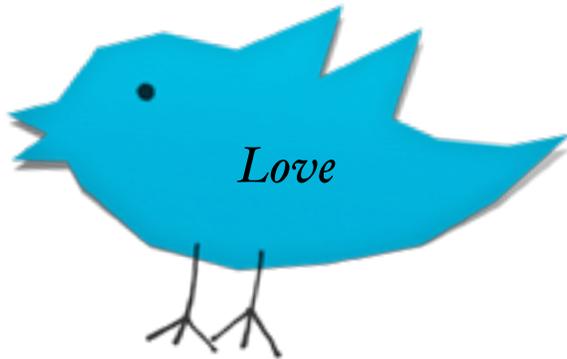




build. plant. grow.
the word this week



easter



lectionary
reading

Cycle B

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Lectionary #56

Reading I: Acts of the Apostles 10: 25-26, 34-35, 44-48

This passage presents the idea that God does *not show partiality*, but rather extends his **love** to all peoples. One of the great challenges for Christians is to grow in faith, hope, and love in order to broaden our understanding. In this passage, we see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles, and this allows the Jewish Christians to see that the **love** of God shows no favoritism towards one group over another. God's **love** is an inclusive circle that wishes to include everyone. Likewise, we are called to draw a circle of love that is inclusive rather than exclusive.

Reading 2: 1 John 4: 7-10

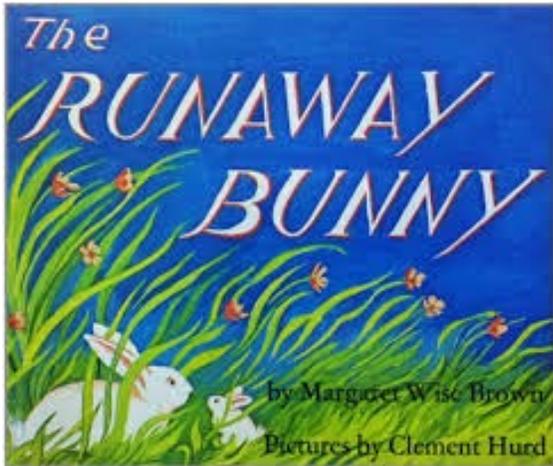
God's **love** is present with humanity and the world and needs to be made evident for others to see and experience. **Love** is seen in relationships, and the greatest commandments have to do with **loving** God, whom we cannot see, and **loving** our neighbor, whom we can see. The concept of **love** is more emphasized in the Gospel and the Letters of Saint John than it is anywhere else in the Bible.

Gospel: John 15: 9-17

The entire fifteenth chapter of Saint John's Gospel places its emphasis on the virtue of **love**. The disciples are given the commandment to be of **love** in all things, and in doing so, they prove that they are connected to Jesus Christ. This Gospel focuses on the **love** that must exist among the disciples. This becomes the basis and foundation for them **loving** those who are outside their community. The old saying *you cannot give what you don't have* applies here. It would be impossible to express **love** and care for those outside your community unless you first **love** those who share your beliefs. We are called to reveal this **love** to others through the way we live our lives rather than by our words alone. **Love** in both word and action is the ideal.



children's story



The Runaway Bunny
Written by Margaret Wise Brown
Illustrated by Clement Hurd
Publication: 2005, Harper Collins: Revised
Edition
ISBN-10: 0060775823
ISBN-13: 978-0060775827



character
education
activity

Love as a verb can be understood as seeking the good in another based on the context of our relationship with them.

The Runaway Bunny

The Runaway Bunny is a classic story of parental love. In this story, the little bunny runs away because he thinks that running away will be better than being at home. Throughout the story, the loving mother never stops seeking out her little child. The runaway bunny imagines that he is different things, and his mother matches his imagination by becoming whatever is needed to find him. When the little bunny imagines that he is a fish, his mom becomes a fisherman; when he is a rock, she is a mountain climber; when he's a flower, she's a gardener; and when he's a bird, she becomes a tree with a nest that he comes home to. The story speaks of the relentless search to bring someone home out of **love**.

Activity: Who Do You Love and Why?

Step One: You will need the following materials for this activity:

- One large sheet of butcher paper or poster board paper
- Markers and crayons for each student
- Card stock paper for each student

Prepare the large paper with the heading *Who Do I Love and Why?* Read the heading aloud and ask the students to think about who they love and why they love them. Record their comments on the piece of paper.

Step Two: Now, ask the students to create a picture that illustrates the words that they used in describing the person they love and the reasons that they love him or her.

Step Three: Place the chart of words on the wall and place the pictures around it as a frame.

Let us always meet
each other with a smile,
for the smile is the
beginning of Love.
-Blessed Mother Teresa of
Calcutta



case study

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.



closing
tool

What could you do today?

Based on the class activity, write a letter and draw an illustration for the person that you chose as the subject of *Who Do You Love and Why?* Express this **love** by making a card for that person using the same drawing that you made in class. On the inside of the card, write all the things that you **love** about that person so that they will know how much you **love** them. Find a special time to give it to them, or leave it for them in a special place so that it will be a surprise.

Look Feel Know Act

Take a look around at all of creation: those things you can see (such as the blue sky and the clouds), and those that you can't see (like the air we breathe). Take note of the many things and recall that all things were made by God out of **love**. Take time to feel the grass under your feet and the wind that touches your face and recognize that they are all evidence of God's **love**. Be amazed and joyful that all of this was made for you and for every other person. Notice this **love** and act accordingly by caring for all of God's creation.

The Runaway Bunny is a perfect story to parallel God's never-ending **love** for every human being, most especially when we are lost or have chosen to run away from God's **love**. The Scriptures tell many stories where God searches for those who have run away. Think of stories such as the Prodigal Son, the Good Shepherd, or the Lost Coin. Each of these stories speak of a God who searches us out in **love**.

An Act of Love Prayer



O my God, I seek to love you above all things with my whole heart and soul. You are worthy of all my love, and I will strive to love you by loving others as you would love them. Help me, Lord, to give praise to you by being an element of your love in the world. Amen.



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