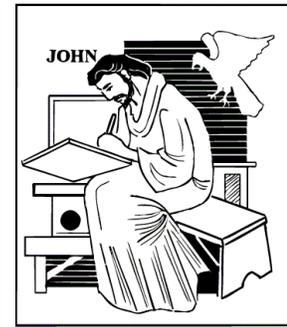
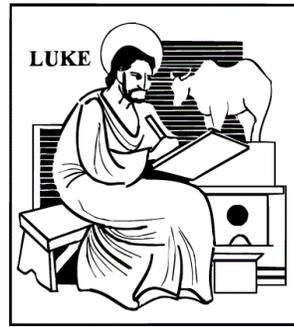
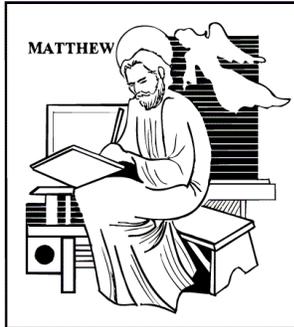


Breaking Open the Word



May 10, 2015 Sixth Sunday of Easter Lectionary: 56 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."

Spiritual Reflection: "You are my friends if you do what I command you." May at first seem pretty demanding and not very friendly. Why does Jesus put a condition on His friendship? The key to this passage is the word "remain." Jesus' friendship is unconditional and He always offers it to us. We though can run away from that gift. We can reject it. God who is love cannot be a part of an unloving act. The commandments of Christ are meant to lead us into being loving people and therefore rejecting them means doing something that is not loving.

Spiritual Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus limits God's friendship in today's Gospel?
2. How can you better remain in Jesus friendship?
3. Describe a time in which you could not be with a friend because of what he or she was doing.
4. How does following the Commandments allow you to bear fruit?
5. How does it feel to be chosen by God?