



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

I will not leave you orphaned;
I am coming to you.

John 14:18

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Overview

The Sixth Sunday of Easter focuses on a reassuring and important message for children: Jesus does not leave us alone. He gives us the Holy Spirit to stay with us and help us live with love.

In the Gospel, Jesus speaks to His disciples before He returns to the Father. He tells us that if we love Him, we will follow His teachings. But He also knows we may feel afraid or unsure. So He promises to send the Holy Spirit—called the Advocate—to be with us forever. This Spirit will guide, comfort, and help us make good choices. For children, this is a powerful truth: even though we cannot see Jesus, He is always close to us through the Holy Spirit.

The first reading shows this promise coming true. The apostles pray over new believers, and they receive the Holy Spirit. This brings joy and strengthens the community. It reminds us that God's Spirit continues to be shared with His people.

In the second reading, we hear that following Jesus means living with gentleness, respect, and courage. Our actions should reflect our love for Him.

The pastoral focus this week is to help children recognize that the Holy Spirit is God's helper within them. This is not an abstract idea but a lived reality. When children feel prompted to do what is right, to say sorry, to help someone, or to be brave in a difficult moment, they are responding to the Holy Spirit. Leaders can gently affirm these experiences and help children name them as moments when God is close.

Ultimately, this Sunday invites children to trust deeply: they are never alone. Jesus is with them always, guiding their hearts and actions. The takeaway is clear and memorable: The Holy Spirit helps me love like Jesus.

Key Messages for Children

1. Jesus is always with me.
2. The Holy Spirit is our helper.
3. Loving Jesus means loving others.
4. God gives joy and peace.
5. You are part of God's family.

Key Messages for Leaders

- † Emphasize presence over absence.
- † Make the Holy Spirit relatable.
- † Link love with action.
- † Focus on formation, not on information.

Leader's Personal Reflection Questions

- When have I recently experienced the guidance of the Holy Spirit?
- Do I trust that God is already at work in the children I serve?
- What is the Holy Spirit inviting me to grow in as a leader today?

Leader Takeaway

Holy Spirit, help me lead children to recognize Your presence with them and to love as Jesus did.

Background

Acts 8:5–8, 14–17 proclaims Christ in Samaria, crossing cultural boundaries and bringing healing and great joy—a sign of God's presence. Though the people are baptized, they receive the Holy Spirit through the apostles' laying on of hands, highlighting apostolic unity and pointing toward the Church's understanding of Confirmation. The passage shows that the Gospel brings joy and unity, and that the Holy Spirit completes the life of faith.

Psalms 66 calls all people to praise God for His mighty deeds. The focus is on God's saving power and faithfulness, especially in delivering His people. The psalm highlights that God's works lead to joy, awe, and universal praise.

1 Peter 3:15–18 urges us to revere Christ in our hearts and be ready to explain our hope with gentleness and respect. Christian witness is not argumentative but rooted in a life of integrity and a clear conscience. Suffering for doing good is presented as participation in Christ's own suffering. Jesus, though innocent, suffered to bring humanity to God, moving from death to life in the Spirit. The passage emphasizes that authentic Christian living—marked by humility, courage, and trust—becomes a powerful testimony to the Gospel.

John 14:15–21 is part of Jesus' Farewell Discourse, in which He prepares His disciples for His departure. The central theme is the inseparable link between love, obedience, and divine presence. Jesus declares, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments," indicating that love is not merely emotional but expressed through faithful living. Jesus promises the Holy Spirit, who will remain with the disciples forever. This Spirit is described as the Spirit of truth, unknown to the world but intimately known to believers because He "abides with" and "will be in" them. The language signals a profound shift: God's presence is no longer external but indwelling. Jesus reassures them, "I will not leave you orphans," expressing both pastoral tenderness and theological depth. Though He is going away, His presence continues through the Spirit, establishing an ongoing relationship between the risen Christ and His followers.

Christian life is not defined by absence, but by abiding presence through the Holy Spirit, expressed in love and faithful action.

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

Dear children, today, Jesus tells us that he will always be with us. Go with your leaders and learn how God sends us the Holy Spirit.

Once most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the celebration site. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the CLoW room, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome

The leaders assist the children in sitting and preparing. **Begin with the Sign of the Cross.** Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may offer the following prayer, in these or similar words.

Let's quiet our hearts and make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear God, help us to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and to express the love we have received. Amen.

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, the Gospel is required.

READINGS

FIRST READING

Acts 8:5-8. 14-17

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In those days:

Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Christ to them. The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Philip, hearing and seeing the signs that he did, for unclean spirits, crying with loud shrieks, came out of many who were possessed; and many others who were paralyzed or lame were cured. So there was great joy in that city.

Now, when the Apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a, 16+20

R. Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth.

Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth;
sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise.

Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!" **R.**

All the earth worships you;
they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name."
Come and see what God has done:
he is awesome in his deeds among the children of Adam. **R.**

He turned the sea into dry land;
they passed through the river on foot.
There we rejoiced in him,
who rules by his might forever. **R.**

Come and hear, all you who fear God,
and I will tell what he has done for me.
Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Peter 3.15-18

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter.

Beloved:

In your hearts, sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.

For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REIMAGINED READINGS FOR CHILDREN

The reimagined readings below are intended for use after the children have heard the original reading. The intent is to allow the children to listen to the original reading and help them better understand it (not replace it).

Read at a minimum, the Gospel, which has the highest priority, and then ask the children to sit down. You can then read the reimagined reading. Leaders may not have time to read all of the reading. If time permits, after the Gospel, proclaim the Psalm, and then the first reading, if time permits.

Reimagined readers must always remain faithful to the original Scripture's intent, making it age-appropriate for children to understand.

FIRST READING

Acts 8:5-8. 14-17

The Apostle Philip went to a city called Samaria. He told the people there about Jesus. Many people listened very carefully.

Something amazing then happened. Philip not only spoke about Jesus, but he also showed them God's power. Many people were hurting. When Philip prayed, many were healed. Philip also helped people who were paralyzed or sick, and they were made well as well. Because of all this, the people in Samaria were filled with great joy.

When the Apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people in Samaria wanted God, they sent Peter and John to help. Peter and John prayed for the people.

Then Peter and John placed their hands on them and prayed. After that, the people received the Holy Spirit.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a, 16+20

R. Make a joyful sound to God!

God, we sing Your name and give You praise.
You are so powerful—Your wonderful deeds make people believe.
The whole earth can worship You and sing Your praises. **R.**

Come and see! God can help us—
He can even guide us through scary things safely.
If we pray, God listens. God does not stop loving us. **R.**

SECOND READING

1 Peter 3.15-18

Always remember this: Jesus is our Lord, and you belong to Him.

Always be ready to tell others about the hope Jesus gives you. But say it gently and with a respectful heart.

Try to keep your conscience clean. A clear conscience means you do your best to do what is according to God's will: to love. And when people are mean or lie about you, they may be surprised—because the good decisions you make show something true about Jesus.

Jesus is our example. He suffered, but He suffered in love. He died for sins to bring us closer to God—the righteous (Jesus) for the unrighteous (us). Even though He died in the body, God brought Him to new life in the Spirit.

Jesus said to his friends:

"If you love me, you will do the things I ask you to do."

"And don't worry—God the Father will send you the Holy Spirit, who is your Helper. The Helper will be with you forever, and the Spirit will live inside you."

"The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. The world can't really understand that truth, but you can—because the Spirit stays close and helps you."

"Jesus also says: I won't leave you feeling alone. I'm coming to you, and one day you will see me again. And because I live, you will live too."

"When you keep my commandments, it's a joyful way of showing you love me, and you will get to know him even more."

"Remember: the greatest love is to love God with all your heart, and also to love your neighbour—because love is the best way to follow God."

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions. An excellent place to begin is the question:

What did you hear? Allow children to respond.

Today's Gospel shows us something comforting and happy: Jesus promises that God will give His Holy Spirit as a Helper.

Jesus says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." That might sound like "commandments" are only rules, but Jesus means something deeper: when you love Him, you want to do what He teaches—because love wants to stay close to the one you love.

Jesus also promises a Helper or an Advocate. An Advocate is someone who helps you—someone who stands with you and supports you.

When you feel nervous or worried, what kind of Helper would you wish for?

Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit isn't just a far-away idea. He says the Spirit will live with you and inside you.

Jesus says something very personal to us: "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you." Orphaned means feeling alone with no one to help. Jesus says He won't do that.

What's something that can make you feel alone?

Now, Jesus connects love and commandments again. He says, "They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me." So love isn't only "I feel happy." Love is also "I do what Jesus says," with help from the Holy Spirit.

When someone asks which commandment is the greatest, Jesus answers that the greatest and first commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. Then Jesus adds a second like it: love your neighbour as yourself.

So if you're wondering, "What does Jesus want me to do?"—you can remember: love God and love your neighbour.

How can you show love to God when you're at home? (words, choices, prayer.)

What is one easy way to show love to your neighbour this week? (helping, sharing, forgiving.)

Jesus finishes with a wonderful promise: “those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.” To “reveal” means to show more clearly. Jesus wants you to grow in knowing Him—so you can recognize His love in your life. That doesn’t mean you’ll understand everything all at once. But when you choose love, you become more able to recognize Jesus guiding you.

Can you think of a time when you were kind, and then you felt peaceful or happy inside? That feeling can be a sign that God is close.

The Holy Spirit helps you love. The Holy Spirit helps you listen, pray, and choose what is good—right there in church and right after church too.

Here are three small steps you can try this week:

- Before you do something hard: ask the Holy Spirit for help with truth and goodness.
- When you want to choose the easy wrong thing: pause and choose love instead—like kindness, honesty, and forgiveness.
- After you choose love: thank Jesus and notice how your heart feels.

Which one of these steps will you try first this week?

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith. Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who gave his life for us?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: I believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. The leader may need to repeat and paraphrase the petition, concluding it with the cue for the response: 'We pray.' All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

The intercessions are said. The Leader introduces them, and an assistant announces them.

The leader says:

Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit to us. Let us pray with trust to God.

Assistant:

For the whole Church: that we may show our love for Jesus by keeping his commandments, and by loving one another each day. We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For Pope Leo XIV, Bishop Joseph, Priests, Deacons and all who lead the Church, that they may guide God's people with wisdom and joy. We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For our families and for us here today that the Holy Spirit may be "the Spirit of truth," helping us know what is right and stay close to Jesus. We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For all who feel lonely, worried, or "orphaned": that they may hear Jesus' promise, "I will not leave you orphaned." We pray to the Lord. R:

Assistant:

For children who are suffering or lonely, that they may be comforted, helped, and reminded that Jesus loves them. We pray to the Lord. R:

The Leader says:

Loving Father, hear our prayers. Send your Holy Spirit to stay with us forever, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Return to the church

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and reflect on what they have heard and what they are now doing. Be mindful of children who may have difficulty finding their families.



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

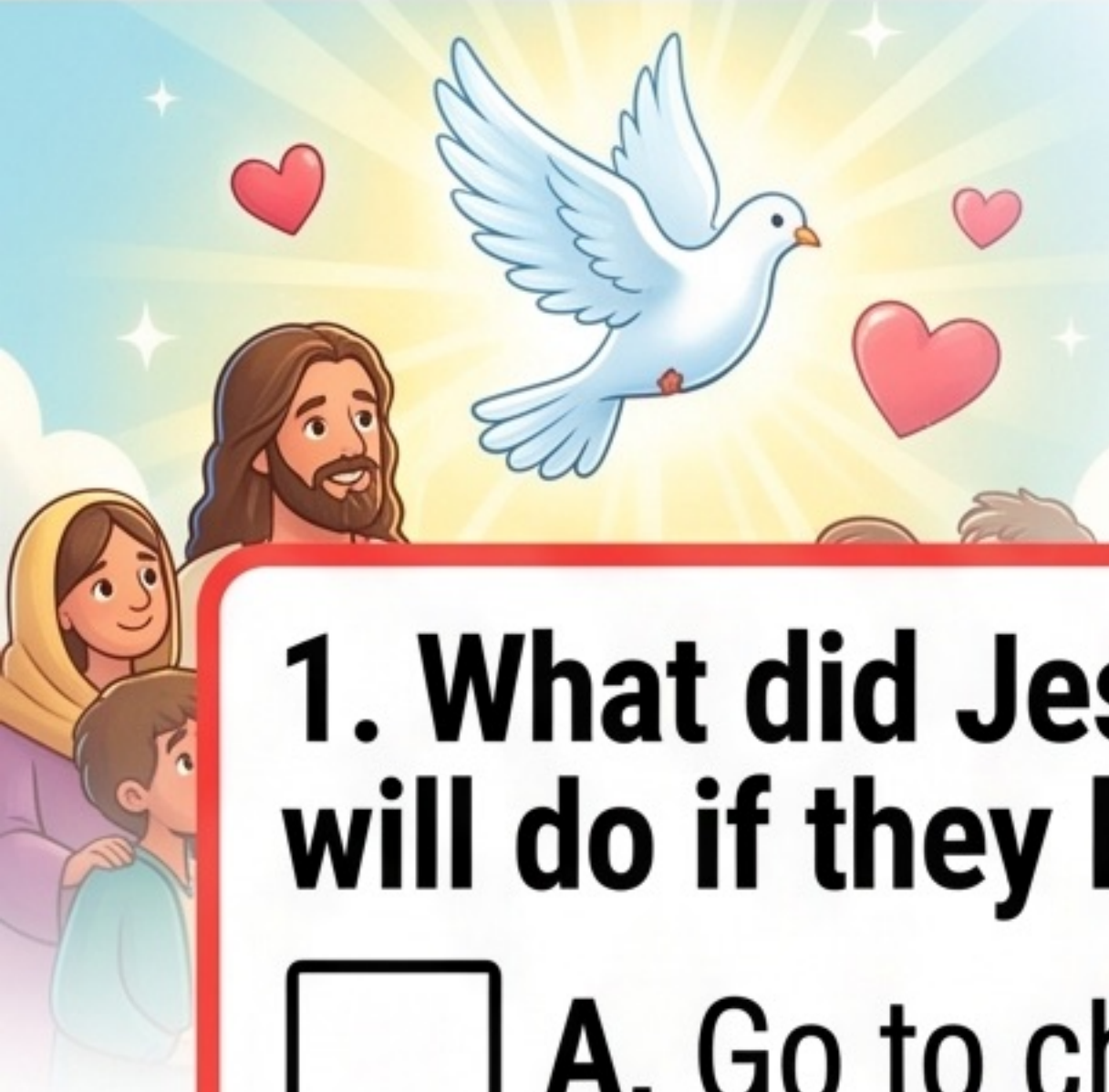
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John 14:15-21 handout provided by thewordthisweek.net


NAME: _____

DATE: _____


John 14:15-21




1. What did Jesus say people will do if they love Him?

- A. Go to church every day.
- B. Do as He command. 
- C. Sing very loud.

5. What did Jesus promise He won't leave the disciples as?


- A. Orphans.
- B. Lost puppies.
- C. Sad sailors. 

2. What will the Father send to help us?


- A. Angels.
- B. The Holy Spirit.
- C. A big pet lion. 




6. How did Jesus say the disciples would see Him again?

- A. Using a telescope.
- B. He will come back to them.
- C. In a giant cloud. 

3. What will the Spirit show?

- A. How to perform magic.
- B. What is true.
- C. Where to find treasure. 

7. What will the disciples know about themselves and Jesus?

- A. They are best friends forever.
- B. They are one with Him, and He is one with them.
- C. They are his students. 

4. Why can't people of this world accept the Spirit?

- A. They don't have enough money.
- B. They are too busy playing games.
- C. They don't see or know him.

8. If you love Jesus and do what He says, what will happen?

- A. The Father will love you.
- B. You will get lots of candy.
- C. You will become famous.

Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit Through the Sacraments



In today's Gospel reading, Jesus tells the disciples that He is going away, but the Father will send the Holy Spirit to help them.



We can't see Jesus on earth any more, because His body went into Heaven at the Ascension. We can't see the Holy Spirit either, because He doesn't have a body. The Holy Spirit really is in the world, though. He is working in the Church and in people who obey and love God.



The Holy Spirit comes to us mainly through the sacraments. We get grace, which is God's life in us, when we receive the sacraments. Jesus gave us the sacraments to help us on our way to Heaven. Do you know the seven sacraments? Here is a list to help you to remember:



- Baptism**
- Confession**
- Confirmation**
- Holy Communion**
- Marriage**
- Holy Orders**
- Sacrament of the Sick**



Answer to Word-Find: Holy Spirit

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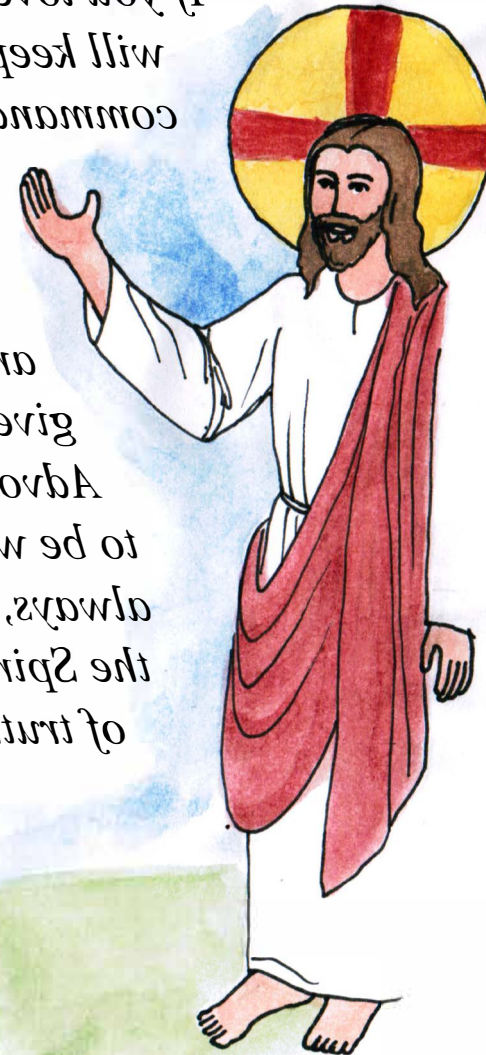
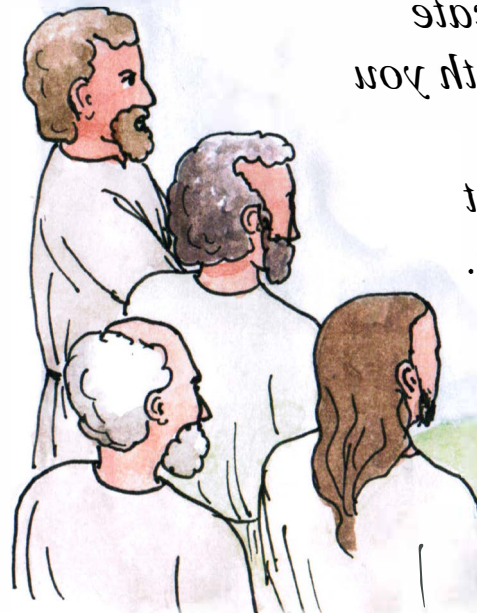
Sixth Sunday of Easter



If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate

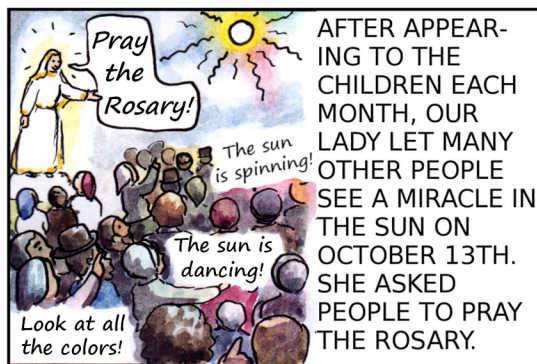
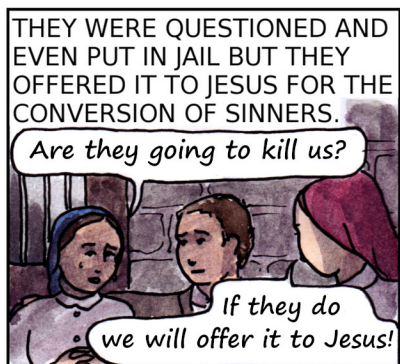
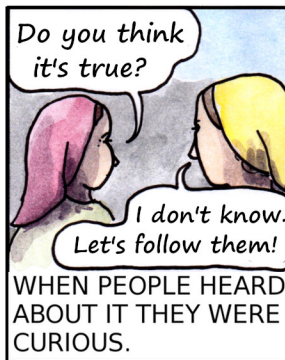
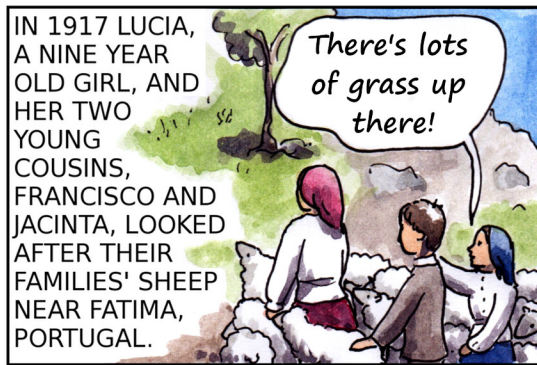
to be with you always, the Spirit of truth.



What did Jesus say to the disciples to prepare them for His departure? Look at this page in the mirror to find out!

Our Lady of Fatima

May 13



OUR LADY WANTS US TO PRAY AND MAKE SACRIFICES TO HELP SAVE PEOPLE FROM GOING TO HELL. SHE APPEARED TO LUCIA, FRANCISCO AND JACINTA SO THAT THEY COULD SHARE THIS REQUEST WITH MANY PEOPLE. THINK OF WAYS YOU CAN REMEMBER TO PRAY EVERY DAY AND MAKE LITTLE SACRIFICES.

An Acts of the Apostles Word Find

P H I L I P E T E R
 R H S A M A R I A E
 E N A M E O C W H J
 A L Y M S S O O A O
 C H R I S T M R N I
 H O P R A Y E D D C
 E L T A G O D P S I
 D Y H C E I J O H N
 O W E L C O M I N G
 W R R E C E I V E D
 N I E S P I R I T T

Today's first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles. See if you can find all the words from the reading that are in CAPITALS in the puzzle. Use the leftover letters to fill in the blanks at the end!

PHILIP went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the

CHRIST to them. The people united in WELCOMING the MESSAGE Philip PREACHED, either because they had heard of the MIRACLES he worked or because they saw them for themselves. THERE was great REJOICING in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that SAMARIA had accepted the WORD of GOD, they sent PETER and JOHN to them, and they went DOWN there, and PRAYED for the Samaritans to receive the HOLY SPIRIT, for as yet he had not COME down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the NAME of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid HANDS on them, and they RECEIVED the