

# AWAKEN

Becoming Disciples of the Word

## Sunday's

### READINGS

Acts of the Apostles 1:15–17,  
20a, 20c–26  
1 John 4:11–16  
John 17:11b–19

Scan the code to read  
today's readings. 



## What You NEED to KNOW

### Scripture Background

#### Acts of the Apostles 1:15–17, 20a, 20c–26

This passage from Acts places us right into the first dilemma the Apostles faced after Jesus' Ascension. How do they replace Judas? A question we might ask is, "Why do they feel the need to replace Judas?" Numbers play a significant role in the lives of people of this time. They hold special meaning and are often symbolic. You may recall that the twelve tribes of Israel found their origin in the twelve sons of Judah. After leaving Egypt under the leadership of Moses, and upon their arrival in Canaan, Joshua parceled out a portion of the land to each tribe. Thus, the number 12 became the number that represented the identity of the people of Israel. What bound the tribes to God and to one another was the lived response to the covenant. The Apostles understood that Jesus was the New Covenant. They were the twelve chosen by Christ to announce that God's kingdom had come. There had to be twelve.

#### 1 John 4:11–16

All the letters of John in the New Testament explain the depth of God's love. As he writes to

his community, he drives home how God loves each person and therefore how members of the Christian community should love God and one another. He wants them to understand that at the root of all that God does is his love. This epistle takes this one step further as John speaks those now famous three words, "God is love." Thousands of years later we are still trying to grasp the fullness of those words.

#### John 17:11b–19

At first glance, one might misinterpret this reading. You might conclude that while we live in this world, we should remove ourselves from it, as much as possible. To be a disciple means to isolate yourself and simply wait for eternal life. On the contrary, Jesus is instructing us to be discerning about the voices that we hear. Our trust must be placed in those who believe in the Father and have faith in Jesus, his Son. In the Old Testament the word used for Satan is the "deceiver." In this long address of Jesus to his Father, which takes place during the Last Supper, Jesus' prayer is that we may know the truth, that we might live fully in response to the truth that he has revealed to us.



## Opening PRAYER

*Lord, my God, I am so often confused by all of the voices that tell me what I need to be happy. Please send your Spirit to help me to hear your voice. You alone have the wisdom to direct my path. Amen.*



## Thoughts for REFLECTION

Reflect upon the distinction between these two thoughts: *God loves. God is Love.*

How do you discern the characteristics of God's love?

*Awaken* is written and edited by Jo Ann Paradise, D.Min.





## Points to Ponder

### What's Really True?

One of Saint Augustine's most quoted statements is "Our hearts are restless Lord, until they rest in you." Almost 1700 years after he wrote these words we continue to ponder their meaning. As science continues to unfold the workings of our biology, those words take on new meaning. Brain research has identified that our need for relationship, our need for balance, even the things we crave, are part of our DNA. The search for meaning and truth is truly a gift from God. We must partner with the Holy Spirit to discern (come to an understanding) of God's truth. This is challenging as the Holy Spirit's voice is not the only one we hear. The work of "the deceiver" is powerful yet subtle. Jesus cautions us to "Stay awake!" His gift of salvation assures us that because of our communion with him, we are capable of discerning the truth. And the Holy Spirit will provide us with the strength to act on it.

- What process do you use to make decisions?
- How does God's will factor into your process?



The Eucharist is the supreme proof of the love of Jesus. After this, there is nothing more but Heaven itself.

—Saint Peter Julian Eymard

Strengthen belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Visit the Pflaum Eucharist resources page.



Connecting **GOSPEL**

## and CHURCH TEACHING

### The Whole Truth

Are you familiar with this scene from police dramas? *A crime happens. The police begin to interview witnesses to get a description of the perpetrator. Every witness provides a different description. There may be a few common details, but nothing that provides the full and accurate picture.* How do we discover and who do we trust to give us the whole truth of our faith? The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives gives us a full and accurate picture of God's truth. *The Catechism of the*

*Catholic Church*, tells us, "By appreciation of the faith, aroused and sustained by the Holy Spirit of truth, the People of God, guided by the sacred teaching authority (Magisterium)...receives...the faith..." (CCC, 93). The search for truth is a fundamental responsibility of every Christian, a search that all parents are called to inspire in their children.

➔ To learn more, refer to CCC, 93, 215–217 or go to Booklet 1, Session 4 in *Growing Faith*.



### Closing PRAYER

*You promised, O Lord, that you would give us grace that breaks our hearts of stone. I ask for that grace now. Instill in me the understanding that the restlessness I know can only find peace in you. Amen.*

### FAMILY CORNER

Scan here for parent resources. ➔



#### Question of the Week

How does Jesus protect you?



#### Family Prayer

Lord, help us to be worthy of all your promises. Teach us what you want us to do and how we should treat others. Amen.