

**Lessons for the Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**May 21, 2017**

Psalm 66:8-20 ~ *Praise our God! let the sound of His praise be heard.*

Acts 17:16-31 ~ *Paul proclaimed the good news of Christ in the Areopagus of Athens.*

1 Peter 3:13-22 ~ *It is better to suffer for doing right, as Jesus did, than for doing evil.*

John 14:15-21 ~ *If we love Jesus, we will obey His commands.*

**GATHERING THE TEXTS:** Let Me Tell You What God Has Done.

We are usually eager to relate the exciting things that are going on in our lives. It should be no different with the things God is doing and has done for us. St. Paul was not intimidated by the philosophers of Athens, but eagerly explained “the unknown” God's role in creation and redemption. Just as Noah built an ark to rescue the faithful people of God from the flood waters, we can bring people to the saving waters of Baptism by our witness. Jesus said that when we keep his commandments the love that God has placed in our hearts comes shining through! We say the same thing in another way: "We are 'Turning Hearts to Christ Through Love.'"

**PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE:** O Spirit of the living God, give me the right words when people ask about Your love they see in my life. Help me tell anyone who asks, about Your gift of love in Christ and Your promise of life in heaven. Amen.

**STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT** - Stewardship is our act of freedom and generosity through which God works to touch with His love those suffering under the burden of sin and injustice. It is our joyful response to God's grace, not an act of obligation, duty, or social expectation.

**OFFERING PRAYER:** Dear Father, by our generous gifts and sincere care,  
May Your love in Jesus be the message we share,  
Until all the world's people, both far and near  
Experience Your love to banish their fear. Amen.

**CONVICTION AND COMFORT:** Jesus' words are hard to hear because we profess to love Him, yet find it so hard to keep His commandments. It is precisely when we are slandered and mistreated unjustly that we think we have a right to revile and strike out in anger. We fall under the same judgment as our accusers. Jesus is the one appointed, who by His death and rising again, is proven to be also the one who rescues us through the waters of Baptism. He lives in us to help us make a good confession of the hope that we have through Him.