

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



FAMILIES RECLAIMING SUNDAY

Read aloud: Sirach 15:15-20
1 Corinthians 2:6-10

Gospel: Matthew 5:17-37

It was a cold, frosty morning. One by one, the Pauline kids came downstairs on this Sunday to be greeted with colored hearts and red decorations.

“Is it time to celebrate Saint Valentine’s already?” Vincent asked his mom. “It seems like we just had Christmas!”

“Well, we’re going to have a Valentine’s celebration before Mass this morning,” Mom answered. “Your dad and I thought having a few hearts around the house would get us ready for the Gospel reading for today!”

“I really like the way my strawberry jelly is shaped into a heart on my toast!” Lucy exclaimed.

“And I don’t think I’ve ever seen heart-shaped pancakes!” Mary Clare added.

When their “hearty” breakfast was over, Dad called the family into the living room for the Gospel reading they would soon hear at Mass. There, hanging over the couch, were three huge, red hearts. Each heart had a letter on it. The letters were “W,” “L,” and “A.”

“Wah … lah?” Vincent said out loud, trying to figure out how the letters might sound. “What’s ‘wah-lah’?”

Dad could only laugh. “You’ll see!” he chuckled.

Mr. Pauline opened his Bible to the Gospel reading from Matthew, Chapter 5. It was the familiar passage from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus explains to us in very direct language how to live in righteousness and truth.

When Mr. Pauline was finished, he looked up at the hearts on the wall.

“This Gospel reading shows Jesus as both a Redeemer in Whom we are to trust, and also as a Lawgiver in Whom we are to obey. Jesus has divine authority to instruct us in these laws.”

Mom went on, “Many times we see laws only as a list of things we can’t do, but the laws of Jesus were given to free us and guide us. That is why we have these letters on the three red hearts.”

Dad reached up and put the large heart with the “L” on it against the back of the couch. Next, he put down the heart with the “A” on it. The last heart had the letter “W” on it.

“Oh, L-A-W!” Vincent exclaimed as he realized what the hearts said. “The word LAW is written in the hearts!”

“That’s right, Vincent!” Dad said. “Now, let’s see what is written on the backs.”

Dad flipped over the “L” and the word “LOVE” was written.

“All of the laws we just heard about in our Gospel readings are based on LOVE,” Mom said. “At the heart of everything is LOVE towards other people.”

Dad turned over the “A” heart, and the word “ABIDE” was written

Mom continued, “Jesus wants us to ABIDE in His love and treasure these laws. He wants us to take this teaching and wrap ourselves in it and get strength from it.”

Then Dad turned over the last heart with the “W” on it. That heart had the word “WELCOME” on it.

“Jesus asks us to take these laws of conduct and WELCOME them into our hearts. He wants us to do this joyfully and not grudgingly. These laws should sing in our hearts!” Mom explained.

“Pretty good, Mom and Dad!” Vincent exclaimed. “I really like how you used the hearts to show us how the LAW of Jesus should be thought of.

“Thanks, Vincent!” Dad added. Then Dad went back by the couch and rearranged the letters. They were back to the W-L-A order.

“Gee, what’s that for?” Vincent asked him.

“Well, like our magician friend, the ‘Amazing Mr. Pauline,’ would say at the end of a presentation, “Wah-lah!”

And still chuckling, the family headed off for Mass.



*Jesus, please have Your laws abide in me with love.
Help me welcome them into my heart. Amen.*