

***Nurturing Faith...
Every Day in Every Way***

May 28, 2017

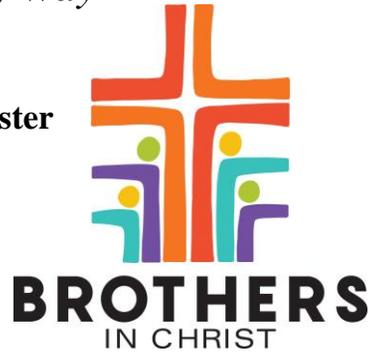
Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:6-14

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

John 17:1-11



Standing Together as One. *Object: A bundle of small sticks which by itself could be easily broken, but when bundled with other sticks is too strong to be broken.*

I am looking for someone who is very strong to help me this morning. Who would like to help? You look pretty strong to me. Do you think you can break this stick? Wow! You are strong! You easily broke that stick. Let's see if you can break these sticks.

The sticks in this bundle are just like the stick that was so easily broken. Yet when they are bound together, they are much stronger than they are when they are by themselves. Even the very strongest person here this morning could not break this bundle of sticks.

These sticks can teach us an important lesson about the church. Sometimes when we think of the church, we think of a building where we come to worship, but the church isn't a building. The church is made up of men, women, boys, and girls who have chosen to follow Jesus. You, me, all of the people here today -- all of us together -- we are the church.

Some people say, "I can be a Christian without going to church" -- and that may be true -- but by ourselves we are not very strong. When we are tempted to do something wrong, it may be difficult to resist if we try to go it alone. But if we stand together with others who follow Jesus, they will be a source of strength and encouragement. We will be much stronger than we would be by ourselves.

One day, Jesus went off by himself to pray. He prayed for his disciples because he knew that his disciples had to live in the world and that they would be tempted by the evil things of the world. He also knew that if his disciples would come together as one, they would be much stronger than they would as individuals. So he prayed and asked God to protect them and to help them to be one, just as he and his Father were one.

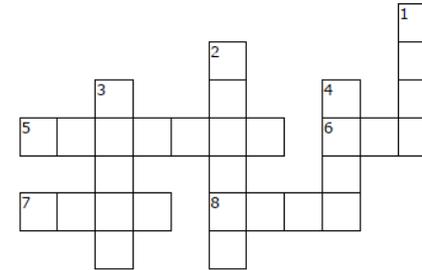
When you are tempted to do things that you know are wrong, remember the lesson of the sticks -- there is strength in unity.

Father, protect us and help us to be one with other believers, just as you are one with Jesus. Amen.

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Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. I will not leave you orphaned, says the Lord. I am coming to you. Alleluia. (John 14:18)

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 5. To keep from being injured or harmed
- 6. To be a single unit, object, or living being
- 7. A combination of letters that represents a thought or idea
- 8. To speak to God

DOWN

- 1. To place in the hands of someone
- 2. To receive something
- 3. That which belongs to you
- 4. Deserving special respect or reverence; worthy of worship

PRAY	GIVE	HOLY	PROTECT
ACCEPT	YOURS	WORD	ONE

BEAD NECKLACE: Have large beads for the child. Give the child 2 or more strings to "string through" the beads. Tell the child that the necklace is much stronger with more than ONE string and talk about "strength in unity" as in our Bible story today.

"THE CHURCH" UNITED: The child can use ink fingerprints and make stick people, holding hands together, for a picture to remind them that the church is US and we need to hold on together to be united and strong!





"I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, Protect them by the power of your name-the name you gave me-so that they may be one as we are one."

John 17:11