

**Nothing Greater**  
5th Sunday of Easter

**FIRST READING**

Acts 9:26-31

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

Psalm 22:26-27, 28, 29-30, 31-32

**SECOND READING**

1 John 3:18-24

**GOSPEL**

John 15:1-8

**KEY WORDS**

Growth, Solidarity, Community, Obedience, Trust, Confidence

**KEY THEMES**

1. Our words are fleeting if our actions do not support them.
2. God asks great things from us, only after giving us all we need to achieve them.
3. There are many people God wishes to use who do not yet know Him; be Barnabas to another.
4. You can't bear fruit if you're separated from the root.

**The Ascent**

*Welcome and Introduction (5 min)*

Welcome all of the teens to the discipleship group and invite them to share one "high point" and one "low point" from their week. If there are new teens, invite them to introduce themselves.

*Reverse Charades (10 min)*

Prior to the session, write the following "acts of love" on two sets of notecards: doing the dishes, picking up your sibling from school, helping a friend with homework, serving the homeless at a food kitchen, taking out the trash, and talking to a new student at school. Include "acts of love" specific to your community on notecards as well.

Split the group in half and have them sit on opposite sides of the room facing each other. Have one teen from each group sit in the middle of the room and face his or her group. Give each group a set of notecards. The groups must silently act out the activities listed on the notecards one at a time while the teen in the middle guesses what the activity is. The group with the most correct guesses after five minutes wins.

**Lectio**

*Opening Prayer*

Jesus, we ask that you reveal your love to us in new and powerful ways. We ask that we are aware of and open to fully receiving your love, so we can love others with the same love we have received. We ask this in your name. Amen.



### *Our Voice (10 min)*

Use the following questions to prepare the group for the topic of the session:

- When did you feel loved this past week? What happened that made you feel loved?
- Whom do you love? A friend? A family member? A girlfriend or boyfriend? How do you display your love for this person?

### *Reflection: Nothing Greater (5 min)*

Play the *Summit* reflection video, “Nothing Greater,” found online at [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com). Use this video to provide a thematic overview to the session before entering into God’s Word.

### *God’s Voice (5 min)*

Read 1 John 3:18-24 aloud and then invite a teen to read the passage aloud. Encourage the teens to actively listen. After the second read through, invite the teens to open their Bibles and silently read the passage a third time. Allow time to pause and reflect between read-throughs.

## **Meditatio**

### *Reflecting on God’s Voice (10 min)*

Invite the teens to take a few minutes to silently reflect and journal on the following questions:

- Love is often described as giving ourselves for the good of the other. Reflect on the past week. When have you put the needs of others before your own? When did you forget or fail to put someone else’s needs before your own?
- How has Jesus loved you? How can Jesus help you love others?

## **Oratio**

### *Discussing God’s Voice (30 min)*

Following the silent reflection, guide the teens in a time of discussion. The following questions are a great starting point for the discussion, but be open to where the Holy Spirit may guide it:

- How would you describe love? What does it mean to truly love someone?
- Which is a more powerful expression of love: the words “I love you” or an action, like helping a sibling with homework? Why?
- How does God communicate His love for us?
- How does God communicate His love for you, specifically?
- How should we respond to God’s love? What does this look like in your daily life?
- What are some concrete ways you can show others they are loved by you and God?

## **Contemplatio**

### *Letters of Love (10 min)*

Pass out stationery, pens, and envelopes. Instruct the teens to write a letter to their parents or guardians, thanking them for the sacrifices they have made. Challenge the teens to name specific acts and instances in which their parents or guardians



sacrificed their own needs for the sake of the teen. Some examples include a parent staying up late to care for a sick teen, a parent not buying something they wanted in order to pay for their teen's after school activities, a parent traveling to a sports game or band concert, etc. Encourage the teens to give the letters to their parents or guardians.

*Closing Challenge*

This week, challenge the teens to commit to looking for and acting on the opportunity to do one or two of the actions they brainstormed in the discussion.

