

Reading

Romans 15: 1b–3a. 5–7. 13

Treat each other as Christ.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

¹ We should not think of ourselves.

² Each of us should think of his neighbours
and help them to become stronger Christians.

³ Christ did not think of himself.

⁵ And may he who helps us when we refuse to give up,
help you all to be tolerant with each other,
following the example of Christ Jesus,

⁶ so that united in mind and voice
you may give glory to to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ It can only be to God's glory, then,
that you treat each other in the same friendly way
as Christ treated you.

¹³ May the God of hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith
that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope.

The word of the Lord.

Looking at the Text:

+ N-3 Romans 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13
Treat each other as Christ.

St Paul's letter to the Romans

In the last ten years of his life, St Paul wrote letters to the churches he had founded. He wrote to both communities and individuals, often responding to questions and or difficulties they were having. He teaches about belief in God and how to live this out in life. The letter to the Romans is the longest letter, making the point that the law itself can give us knowledge about how to live the Christian life, but ultimately, it is God, through Jesus, who gives us the power and the strength to live it. Through baptism, we enter into 'new' life with Jesus, as children of God, members of Christ's family, with all the love we need! Nothing can separate us from the love of Jesus, and this love enables our love.

In this passage

St Paul gives advice on how to grow stronger through being unselfish and tenacious, following the example that Jesus gives in the Gospels. It takes effort to be tolerant and unselfish, and grow towards being united in 'mind and voice'. But that is how God wants us to be, and if we are open, God gives us the strength to live this way. If we treat one another as we see Jesus treating all, with radical, self-emptying love, we will have a deep sense of joy and peace, and become a place of hope and peace for others too.

Reflecting on Scripture together

Use the 'Reflecting on Scripture together — a simple way' in the introduction 'Choosing your Wedding readings'.

Further Reflection

Following the 'slow reading' process, here are some questions for further reflection:

- What did we learn about being tolerant and unselfish in our relationships as children, growing up? Can you think of some good and some poor examples?
- Where is there room for improvement, perhaps, in our relationship together? Where and when do I need to be less selfish and more tolerant?
- What would you say are the qualities of a great relationship?
- You may like to think about the last verse together — what does it mean for you? And then to pray it, putting the word 'us' in:
May the God of hope bring us such joy and peace in our faith that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope. Amen.
- What do you like about this reading, and why might it be a good reading for your wedding?

Note about the Reading

+ = This reading selection is new to the *Order of Christian Marriage* and so is not found in the Lectionary (1983). It is included in the Scripture Readings on the Liturgy Office website.

These notes have been prepared by Caroline Dollard, Marriage & Family Life Project, CBCEW www.catholicfamily.org.uk This is one of a series of Liturgy Office resources to support the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*. www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Marriage © 2016 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales