

## God's Chosen Friends

**Intro.** It looks easy, but making friends can be hard. Sometimes *we* choose our friends and other times *they* choose us. And sometimes it doesn't work no matter how hard we try. I used my dictionary app to look up the word, "friend." It reads, "A person with whom one has a bond of mutual affection ..." [Oxford Dictionary]. A newer meaning is "A contact on a social network" [Ibid].

**I.** In the gospel, the Lord was again talking about his relationship with his disciples. When they first met him, the disciples like students, learning from the teacher. They listened as he taught the greatest commandment is to love God and our neighbor. They saw great miracles and healings. During the three years they were together, they were *changed* by those experiences. The same thing happens with *our*

friends. We influence each other for good or bad. We help each other be better or to be worse. So, what *connects us*, what is the *bond* we have with our friends? Shared experiences often bring us together. Going to school is a way friends meet. So is working together. Serving in the military, the fire and police departments; in medical and education jobs, brings people together for a few years or for a lifetime. It is kind of a mystery how friendships happen.

**Concl.** One of our *most* important shared experiences is we are all created in God's image and likeness. Many of us also share a belief in God. As Catholic Christian followers of the Lord, we became members of God's family through Baptism. As the first disciples were changed by their experiences with the Lord, *your* relationship with the Lord is

changed today. You receive the bread and wine that, in his words from the Last Supper, become the Lord. Jesus becomes part of you in a whole new way. The seminary teacher who showed us how to say Mass, said that when we hold the Communion in our hand, [cup hand] to imagine the most precious thing in the world. I thought of diamonds or gold. Then he said to try to understand what we hold in the Communion is even more valuable than that because it is the Lord. Welcome to his table where you are not just followers of Christ; you are friends of Christ.

[10:30 Today we start Bryleigh on her journey to Communion.]

[Sunday, 5:30 ending] **Concl.** We share some other important experiences. We are all created in God's image. We also share a belief in God. We became members of God's family through Baptism. When we come together in prayer and worship, our relationship with God and each other is strengthened. When we hold his Word of love in our hearts we are different. When we hold his Communion in our hands, we are changed. The teacher who showed us how to say Mass said to imagine we hold the most precious thing in the world. I thought of diamonds or gold or fragile crystal. Then, he said try to imagine it is even more valuable than that because it is the Lord. We are more than just followers of the Lord; we are friends of the Lord.