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## “ IF ALL THE GUYS ON EARTH... ”

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French singer Marcel Achard had his “fifteen minutes of fame” when he recorded a song called “If All the Guys in the World,” which made the rounds of youth groups in France, Canada and other Francophone countries. The song was in a way an expression of the yearnings of those who wanted to be citizens of a world without borders, or at least of young people who were looking for friendship, fellowship, and unconditional solidarity. The song can help us understand what love is all about, the love that is promoted in Level Two of the family- and parish-based catechetics programme. The feelings expressed in the song do not necessarily reflect every kind of love.

### HAPPINESS: A HABIT?

*“If all the guys in the world decided to be pals and one morning shared their hopes and fears with one another; if all the guys in the world became good buddies and walked hand in hand, there would be happiness tomorrow.*

*“Don’t talk about differences; don’t say that he is too light-skinned or black as coal, not even that he is not from France; love them any way you can, even if their appearance throws you off, love is like the army, one mustn’t try to understand.*

*‘I have my worries and you have yours, I count on my buddies, the guys we don’t know can comfort us, too. All hope is ours; happiness is like a habit. With five hundred million friends, there is no fear of being lonely!’*

### ALONG FRIENDSHIP ROAD

Long before Achard, the Boy Scout Movement had taught me a song called “Sur la route d’amitié” [“Along Friendship Road”]. It seemed to me that friendship was something unearned, something that grew, something lasting, something that would not be washed away in the first rain.

*I walked with you along the winding road,  
With you I loved.*

*I loved the coolness of the running brook  
Across the field, along Friendship Road.*

*I joined you in singing the most beautiful songs,  
With you I loved.*

*I loved the time of rest for my tired body,  
Along Friendship Road.*

*I learned with you how to be a better person,  
With you I loved.*

*I loved the advice you gave me at difficult times,  
Along Friendship Road.*

*With you, along the road where life leads us,  
With you shall I love.*

*I shall love in happiness, I shall love in sorrow,  
Towards the light, along Friendship Road.*

Through songs like these, friendships developed among the youth. Their bright faces turned towards bright tomorrows. They really wanted to work together at building a proud new world. As they were all united by a deep joy, their journey would be easy.

### **Jesus Showed His Love**

When Jesus was on earth he had many friends, and the first of them mentioned in the Gospel were called Andrew and John. One day they saw a man walk by, along the shore of the Jordan River, a man who looked so kind that they really wanted to meet him. They asked who he was, and they were told that his name was Jesus. This Jesus was sent by God to bring joy and peace to the people. Andrew and John wanted to get to know him better, so they followed him but they didn't dare talk to him. Jesus noticed that he was being followed. He turned around and asked them who they were looking for. The two young men were embarrassed, and they asked Jesus where he lived. Jesus answered: "Come and see." Andrew and John followed Jesus to his home and spent the day with him.

### **THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO LOVE**

Jesus went to a town called Bethany, and a woman called Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister called Mary who seated herself at Jesus' feet and listened to his words. Martha, who was busy with all the details of hospitality, came to him and said: "Lord, are you not concerned that my sister has left me to do the household tasks all alone? Tell her to help me." The Lord in reply said to her: "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and upset about many things; one thing only is required. Mary has chosen the better portion, and she shall not be deprived of it." Jesus really enjoyed resting in the home of his friends Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Jesus said to his friends: "The important thing is to love. Love one another."

### **"GIVE ME A DRINK"**

Another time, Jesus was travelling through Samaria and came to the town of Shechem. Tired from his journey, he sat down at the well. It was around noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." The Samaritan woman said to him: "You are a Jew. How can you ask me, a Samaritan and a woman, for a drink?" The Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans, but Jesus and the woman had a long conversation, and she realised how kind Jesus was, and how he was bringing joy, peace, and love into the world. Jesus and the woman became friends. Later, she introduced Jesus to all her friends.

### **MATTHEW BECOMES JESUS' FRIEND**

One day Jesus met Matthew. Matthew wanted to be Jesus' friend, but he said to himself: "It isn't possible because the people don't like me, and Jesus won't like me any more than they do." Matthew was wrong. Jesus came to where Matthew was working and he said, "Come follow me." Matthew was overwhelmed, and he was transfigured by Jesus' gaze and call. Happy to be with Jesus, Matthew had a big banquet at his house, and it was there that Jesus said he had come for sinners and for all those who needed him, that he brought love, peace, and forgiveness.

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