



Sixth Sunday of Easter-C

John 14:23-29

Dear Friends,

These fifty days of Easter animate our journey of faith. We are invited to enter more deeply into the Pascal Mystery, the saving Death and Resurrection of Jesus. We are asked to bring this message of love into our hearts. In this experience, we continue to answer the most fundamental question in our lives, who is Jesus for us?

In today's gospel passage from John, Jesus is talking about his return to the Father and the double gifts of the Paraclete and peace. He does this in the context of his general invitation into love.

The peace Jesus is talking about is not the absence of conflict or struggle with life's many manifestations of evil. The peace Jesus offers is the presence of God bringing us salvation, a basic harmony within the depth of our being. It is the power to live life to the full no matter the circumstances. Jesus' peace, so different from the world's sense of a peace in prosperity and indulgence, begins and ends in love. Even in the midst of tension and turmoil, love can pass through the dark valley and, even in the dark valley, bring peace.

Today's gospel is taken from the message of the Last Supper. Jesus is calling the disciples and us to trust in him in spite of the impending horror of the Passion and Death. He is telling us that love will win out. He will reveal the fullness of God's love, God's presence and God's peace in the gift of the Paraclete. This Spirit will help us to both understand and embrace more deeply all that Jesus has taught us. Through our openness to life and with the guidance of the Paraclete, the truth of the gospel will unfold in our hearts. Jesus will truly become our way, our life and our truth. A commitment to deep personal prayer is the most reliable means to stay in touch with the Spirit.

As the power of the Resurrection emerges in our hearts, we can take in the daily events of evil and corruption with an awakening sense of hope. Gun violence and denial of climate change, racial and sexual prejudice, the dehumanization of migrants and the isolation and neglect of the poor and ever-present trial of deep conflict with our loved ones will remain the stuff of life. The unrelenting faces of evil will not leave the headlines any time soon. However, we have received the gift of God's peace and the Paraclete. Now we can bring a heart energized by hope to these certainties. We will feel empowered to enter the struggle for a better world, the coming world of God's kingdom.

Driven by the Spirit, in the footsteps of Jesus, we can face the challenges of a sinful church and a broken society. We can indeed be the instruments of peace in the midst of the social upheaval of immigration, continuing racial change, and the shattering of comfortable but often blind definitions of sexuality. We bring our hunger for justice no matter the depth or complexity of the forces of evil.

God has spoken in Christ Crucified and Christ Risen. Love will prevail! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia!