

*Homily 63 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter – Cycle B*

**Phillip Wilkinson**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** (Acts 10 25-26, 34-35, 44-48)

**Psalm** (Ps 98: 1, 2-3, 3-4(2b))

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** (1Jn 4:7-10)

**Gospel** (Jn 15: 9-17)

**Focus Statement** – Jesus remains with us through the love we share, because all love comes from Him for God is Love.

**Open** – For the most part, I'm pretty sure everyone here at some point in your lives has set off to do something new or something you've done numerous times, but never on your own. You're off to do something without the teacher in the classroom, the parent at home, or the boss at work looking over your shoulder. You may have graduated, or found a new job and got your own apartment, or even left home to join the military or even to enter religious life. Whether you know it or not, you've been preparing for this for a while and you are ready. Right?

Think about those moments leading up to your new adventure. Even if you've had years to prepare, there's usually a flurry of excitement preceding the event. Did you pack everything? Do you have your tickets? Make sure you have all your tools with you. Call me when you get there. Don't be a stranger. Write when you can. You're going to do great. We are so proud of you. And most importantly... "We love you!"

This is the last Sunday before we celebrate the feast of the Ascension. Jesus is preparing the disciples for his departure, while at the same time he is telling them that he will remain. He will be going away, but he will never abandon them. He will never abandon us.

This week's gospel from St. John continues Jesus' preparation of the disciples from last week with Christ as the vine, the Father as the grower, as we his disciples the branches. The end of last week's gospel says, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples." This fruit we bear are not just our own children and families, but all those we reach out to while spreading His word and who are changed and come to believe and follow Him. This is the adventure we, as His disciples, are committed to every day of our lives no matter what ever new earthly adventure were set out on. St John continues this week with Christ helping the disciples to understand how he remains with them. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. Then Christ gives one more commandment, to love one another, truly tying all others together.

Christ then reminds us similar to last week, "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."

St. John takes this to heart as we see in his first letter, today's second reading. Here he is spreading the news of Christ and his love. He says that without love we cannot know

God, for God is love. Through the love of the Father, he sent his only son so that we may have life through him. He shows us his love for us through the sacrifice of his son for our sins.

His love is for all creation. Peter acknowledges this in our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, saying "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him." Peter was not speaking empty words, for those present who believed became new fruit on the vine as the Holy Spirit descended upon them and then they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. For those who believe, and we truly know St. Peter believes, they will bear much fruit.

In keeping the commandment's, Christ calls us friend. We have everything packed, all the tools we need, our ticket to eternal life, constant contact through prayer, strength and encouragement through His word, and most importantly...His love. Adventure awaits. Go forth bearing much fruit.