

2020 May 17

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Readings:

First: Acts 8.5-8, 14-17, "Then Peter and John laid their hands on them." (17a)

Psalms 66, "Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds!'" (3)

Second: 1 Peter 3.15-18, "Beloved, in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord." (15a)

Gospel: John 14.15-21, "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you." (18)

In company forever

As the Lord progresses in his final discourse with the disciples he seems to get closer to them even emotionally. In communicating the presence of the Trinity Jesus becomes emotional and very intimate. Look at the words he invents, 'abide'. The Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, whom the world cannot see and recognize, is promised to the disciples and consequently to us, and this Spirit will abide with them and us forever.

Then Jesus proceeds further and is more intimate. When this Spirit comes upon them they will know and the Spirit will instruct and make them realize that Jesus is in the Father and they, the disciples, are in Jesus and he is in them. Logically, they are in the Father. That means Jesus is offering us an abode in the Holy Trinity and we are made an abode of the Holy Trinity.

Then Jesus proceeds to say that keeping his commandments is equal to loving him and we know his only commandment is that of love. In fact, Jesus makes the whole conversation a love song and a discourse on intimate love. The Holy Spirit, the Advocate, the inspirer and 'the instigator' of love, the Spirit of truth, is being sent to us, and is to live in us forever. It means a relationship effected by Jesus, by God, remains forever. It is the covenant made by God, and the meaning of God's covenant with us is that he will not withdraw himself or set aside that covenant even when we run away from it.

For us humans living in our times the word **forever** has become so meaningless and unintelligible. The relationships humans used to have in the past with a permanent or everlasting nature like marriage, family, relationship with parents and children, etc., have become so meaningless and irrelevant today. People in these relationships have become interchangeable or could even be discarded. But for God, as Jesus tells us today, a relationship he enters with us remains forever. The only reason is that our God is an eternal God, an everlasting Father, incapable of making a deviation from the path of his love, his eternal love. Let us enter into that intimacy, that relationship consciously and abide therein 'forever'!

Fr. George