

A Homily Easter 6
Focus: John 14:15-21
May 28-29, 2011

The Easter Season is winding down. Next Sunday we will celebrate the Feast of the Ascension. Two weeks from now Pentecost Sunday will bring the Easter Season to its end.

Remember the message that began the Easter Season? The words “Christ is Risen!” remind us that the very Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead empowers us as people of faith to bring Jesus to the world around us.

Prayerfully think about the Gospel stories that have been proclaimed on the Sundays of this Easter Season.

A week after hearing about how the empty tomb was discovered, we heard the story about the Risen Jesus appearing to the disciples in the Upper Room. He gave them His peace. He calmed their fears. He showed them His wounded hands and pierced side. He told them not to persist in unbelief, but to believe.

Have we learned to recognize Jesus in the wounds and brokenness of ourselves and those around us? Have we let Him calm our fears, give us His peace, and strengthen our faith?

Three weeks ago, our Gospel story featured two disciples encountering Jesus as they walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They came to recognize Him in the breaking of bread.

Have we come to realize that this same Jesus walks with us and feeds us as we journey through life?

In the Gospel story of two Sundays ago, Jesus told us that He is the gate who leads us to refreshment and rest, and He is the gate who leads us out into the world to do God’s work.

Have we taken our lives to the Good Shepherd who refreshes and strengthens us?

In last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus told us that He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.

Have we let this message give direction when we are lost, clear up the confusion of our doubts, and fill us with hope when the world around us tempts us to be hopeless and cynical?

Today's Gospel features Jesus continuing His farewell discourse to His disciples the night before He was crucified. He tells them to demonstrate their love by keeping His commandments. We remember that Jesus commanded us to love God and to love one another. Jesus also promised His followers that He will not leave them orphaned. He assures us that His Advocate, the Holy Spirit, will continue to guide us and sustain us. He will continue to dwell with in within His people.

At its most basic level, the Gospel reminds us of two things:

1. God will never abandon us.
2. Jesus remains present wherever there is love.

As we pray this coming week, might we consider doing two things:

1. *Give thanks to God for never abandoning us.*
2. *Pray for the strength to love as He teaches us to love. It is Memorial Day Weekend. Just think of the supreme sacrifice of love so many veterans gave in protecting our freedoms!*

We may be surprised when we search our hearts and realize the many ways God stays with us.

We may be even more surprised when we realize that God's love continues to be made known in such real ways by how we choose to be channels of His love in these times and places.