

Seventh Sunday of Easter Year B

John 17:1,11-19

1 Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: 11 'Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. 12 While I was with them, I kept those you had given me true to your name. I have watched over them and not one is lost, except the one who chose to be lost, and this was to fulfil the scriptures.

13 But now I am coming to you and while still in the world I say these things to share my joy with them to the full. 14 I passed your word on to them, and the world hated them, because they belong to the world no more than I belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. 17 Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, 19 and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth.'

Other readings: Acts 1:15-17,20-26 Psalm 102 (103) 1 John 4:11-16

Chapter 17 of the Gospel of John contains a lengthy prayer of Jesus, set, just like the gospel readings of the previous two Sundays, in the context of the Last Supper. John's contribution to the gospel tradition here is unique.

This is a deep and intimate prayer, focused on the disciples, but also focused on us, as Jesus leaves us to return to the Father. Jesus prays that we be kept true to his name. It is easy to show enthusiasm at the beginning, but the life of faith has its good times and bad. Jesus speaks of the one who chose to be lost. The reference here is clearly to Judas, who freely turned against Jesus. God does not reject us, seeking the opportunity to condemn us. God yearns for our positive response of love. We can only lose ourselves.

Jesus is to leave this world, but he shares his joy with us, the joy of the resurrection which no one can take from us. But Jesus knows that the world is not a comfortable place for people of faith. We do not belong to the world, just as Jesus did not belong to the world. Nevertheless, he came into this world to bring freedom and truth. As Jesus goes to the Father, we are sure that through the Spirit, the Advocate, we can maintain our faith and consecration in the truth.

What do I do to maintain my love for Jesus, and increase my understanding of his truth?

Do I allow the values of the world to deceive me so that I lose sight of the values given by faith?

Let us pray for those seeking direction and meaning in their lives, that they may be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We pray especially for those recently baptized and received into the Catholic Church, that they may persevere in fidelity to the truth revealed by Jesus.