



John 14:15-21

15 Jesus said to his disciples: ‘If you love me you will keep my commandments. **16** I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever, **17** that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. **18** I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you. **19** In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live and you will live. **20** On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. **21** Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.’

Other readings: Acts 8:5-8,14-17 Psalm 65 (66)1 Peter 3:15-18

Our reading from the Gospel of John contains one of several references, in the speeches of Jesus on the night before he dies, to the Advocate, the Holy Spirit. These references to the Spirit prepare us to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, which concludes the Easter season. Only in the Fourth Gospel is the Spirit referred to as ‘the Advocate’, ‘the Paraclete’, ‘the Spirit of truth’. Jesus stresses that the world of sin, opposed as it is to truth and goodness, does not welcome the Spirit. In fact, the world of sin is incapable of receiving the Spirit.

Later in these speeches Jesus affirms that the Spirit will remind the disciples of what he has taught (14:26), and lead them into the fulness of truth (16:13).

Jesus reassures the disciples that he will not abandon them. Even though he will no longer be seen by the world, the bond between Jesus and his disciples endures. This bond is maintained by the Spirit. This bond is the life which Jesus shares with us, a bond which draws us deeper into the life of God.

This passage both begins and ends with reference to the commandments of Jesus. Living the commandments is proof of the love the disciples have for him. Jesus speaks later of his one commandment, ‘love one another as I have loved you’ (15:12). This Spirit-inspired love, shown in living the commandments and loving the brothers and sisters, keeps us fully alive in the new life of the Risen Jesus, drawing us deeper into the life of the Father.

These precious words of Jesus are like a symphony in which the different themes are played and played again in their various forms. The words of Jesus, with the Eucharist and the priesthood, are treasured parting gifts of the Lord to his friends, gifts which maintain his presence in a troubled and unbelieving world.

Which of these words of Jesus speak to you most powerfully?

How might you be more prepared to receive the Spirit of truth?

Pray that you may experience the bond every disciple has with Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Pray for all those who seek to bring God’s love to a suffering world.