



CATHOLIC CONVERSATIONS ON THE SCRIPTURES

Archdiocese of Miami - Ministry of Christian Formation

May 5, 2013

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Gospel reading John 14:23-29 *[To be read aloud]*

Jesus said to his disciples: "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me. "I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me tell you, 'I am going away and I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe."

Brief commentary:

For the next four Sundays (sixth Sunday of Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday) the gospel readings will speak to us about the relationship between God and the human race, which is most realized in the Body of Christ, the Church. This is a relationship with the one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. During the Easter season many of our first readings are taken from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, which offer us the stories of the earliest communities and how these sought unity despite tensions among their diverse groups, most particularly between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. And our second reading, from the Book of Revelation, describes using stunning imagery the Church in glory as Christ's own bride. Many questions about Christian identity and mission can be considered with these vital readings: Who are the Christians? What are we called to be? What are we called to? How can we live as disciples of the Lord, and apostles to the world his saving gospel? How can Christians live authentically our new life in Jesus Christ, as sons/daughters of God the Father and as Temple of the Holy Spirit? These questions are addressed in the readings of the Easter season very explicitly, as they are addressed today. Focusing on today's gospel we can draw many answers to these questions: Christians are those who love Jesus Christ and keep his word, we live in communion with God who is Father, Son and Spirit. By receiving the Holy Spirit Christians are able to remember – and live faithfully by – everything that Jesus taught. Christians can live and profess the gospel of Jesus with courage and confidence because he gives us his own peace. Christians rejoice in what God has done in Christ and continues to achieve in our lives through the Risen Jesus who is ever with Father and also always with us. Christians have received a fullness of God's revelation in Christ and have come to believe by responding wholeheartedly with faith, hope and love. Finally, drawing on the first reading, Christians are to seek unity and harmony among ourselves so as to offer the world God's model for human community; and from the second reading, Christians live in hope that what God has begun in us God himself will bring to fulfillment in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Today's reading offers significant messages:

- As a result of the life, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus, the grace is offered to all people to enter into relationship with God. The new reality of the baptized Christian is based on a new relationship with God the Father in Jesus Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Christians also enter into a new relationship with each other as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.
- During the Easter season, the Church's readings call us to consider the profound meaning of our new lives in Jesus Christ and as members of his Church.
- As we draw near to the Ascension of the Lord, we are called to live in communion with God by "keeping the word" of Jesus.

For our shared or personal reflection:

After a brief pause for silent reflection share your answers, ideas or feelings.

- How can I grow in knowledge of the meaning of being Christian and being Church? How can the Scriptures and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* enable me to do this?
- What does it mean to live in communion with God?
- In what ways can I be an apostle of Christ's Gospel in the Church and in the world?

Suggested readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 811-70