

Scripture Study

Fifth Sunday of Easter– Cycle C



Opening prayer

Acts 14:21-21

(Ps 145:8-13)

Revelation 21:1-5

John 13:31-33a,34-35

Overview of the Gospel:

- The setting of this Sunday's Gospel is right after Jesus has predicted his betrayal, and Judas his betrayer has left into the darkness of the night (verses 21-30).
- Jesus speaks of his ultimate glorification which began with his fulfilling the mission given him by the Father (John 17:1-5) and of which his impending Passion is the final step. The glorification of the Son is that of the Father: when one is glorified, so are both.
- Jesus leaves his disciples with a “new” commandment: to love one another. This command is similar to commands found in the Old Testament (Leviticus 19:18; Exodus 23:4-5) but with important—and more demanding—differences: Whereas the Old Testament command to love did not typically extend beyond one's kinsmen and fellow Israelites, Jesus' commands us to love even our enemies and do good to them (Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 10:25-37; Romans 13:9).
- Jesus' love will be the standard and example for Christians. However, he also gives us the power to carry out this love by faith and through the grace given by him in the sacraments.
- This love will be the distinctive mark of those who claim to walk in his steps (verse 35; John 15:12-13; 1 John 2:8, 3:7-21). In this we are imitating God who loved us first (Romans 5:5-8).

Questions:

- In the First Reading, the Apostles visit no less than 7 cities in this leg of their missionary journey. What is the focus of their activities in each of these places? In light of the Gospel reading, what is the motivation behind these labors?
- In verse 31, Jesus refers to himself as the “Son of man” and says it is now time for him to be glorified. How does this fulfill the prophecy of the Messiah and the coming Kingdom (Daniel 7:13-14; c.f. Matthew 26:64; Revelation 14:14)? How is this a beginning of the fulfillment of the Kingdom as described in the Second Reading?
- Why did Jesus wait until Judas had gone (verses 30-31) to share the message of verses 31-35? What does he call the disciples to do?
- Jesus' new command of love goes beyond that of the Old Covenant (Leviticus 19:18; Exodus 23:4-5): Where does this love come from (Ezekiel 36:26; Jeremiah 31:31-34; 1 John 3:16)? How, according to Jesus, is this new command meant to be carried out?
- Would all know you are a disciple of Jesus by the way you behave? Why or why not?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 1822—29, 1970, 2822, 2842

Closing Prayer

Love is sufficient by itself, it pleases by itself, and for its own sake. Love seeks neither cause nor fruit beyond itself. It's fruit is it's use. I love because I love; I love that I may love. -St Bernard of Clairvaux

Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings found in the bulletin!

"Love one another, even as I have loved you"

Scripture: *John 13:31-35*

When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and in him God is glorified; if God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Meditation: How does God reveal his glory to us? In his Last Supper discourse Jesus speaks of his glory and the glory of his Father. What is this glory? It is the cross which Jesus speaks of here. The cross of Jesus shows us that the greatest glory in life is the glory of willingly sacrificing one's life for the sake of another. In the cross God reveals the breadth of his great love for sinners and the power of redemption which cancels the debt of sin and reverses the curse of our condemnation. Jesus gave his Father supreme honor and glory through his obedience and willingness to



sacrifice his life on the cross. The greatest trust one can give to their leader is the willingness to obey in the line of duty, even to the point of putting oneself in harm's way. In warfare the greatest honor belongs not to those who survive but to those who give the supreme sacrifice of their lives. Jesus also speaks of the Father bringing glory to the Son through the great mystery of the Incarnation and Cross of Christ. God the Father gave us his only begotten Son for our sake, to redeem us from slavery to sin and death. He freely offered his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the world.

There is no greater proof of God's love for us than the Cross of Jesus Christ. In the cross we see a new way of love – a love

that is selfless, sacrificial, forgiving and compassionate beyond comprehension. Jesus commands us, his disciples, to love one another just as he has loved us. How can we love one another selflessly, sacrificially, and with compassion? Through the victory of the cross and resurrection, we have access to God's grace and mercy. God gives us new life through the gift of the Holy Spirit and he fills our hearts with faith, hope, and love. Paul the Apostle reminds us that "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). As we turn to God with trust and obedience, he transforms our hearts and frees us to love others with compassion and kindness. Do you want to bring glory to God in the way you love others?

"Lord Jesus, your love knows no bounds and your obedience to the Father reverses the curse of our disobedience. May I bring you glory in the sacrifice of my will to the will of the Father and in my love and compassion for others, both for those who treat me well and for those who cause me grief or harm."

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