

6th SUNDAY OF EASTER A 2008

The Father will give you another Paraclete, to be with you forever...
the Spirit of Truth,
whom the world cannot receive,
because it neither sees him nor knows him.
But you do know him,
Because he abides with you,
And he will be in you.

A VERY PIOUS OLD MAN VISITS THE ZOO.

WHEN HE COMES TO THE LION'S CAGE,

HE IS OVERCOME WITH JOY,

FOR THERE BEFORE HIM

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH IS LITERALLY FULFILLED –

A LION AND A LAMB IN A CAGE TOGETHER.

AMAZED, THE MAN CALLS OVER AN ATTENDANT.

“HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD A LION AND A LAMB
IN A CAGE TOGETHER?”

“OVER A YEAR ALREADY.”

“WHY, THAT IS AMAZING!

HOW DID YOU DO IT?

“EASY, RESPONDS THE ATTENDANT,

EVERY MORNING WE PUT IN A NEW LAMB.”

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS THE WAY THEY SEEM, ARE THEY?

NOR ARE THINGS ALWAYS THE WAY WE WANT THEM TO BE,

DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS

AT RATIONALIZING AND JUSTIFYING THEM.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

“WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT ACCEPT”

ILLUMINATES OUR VISION AND OPEN OUR HEARTS

TO DISCERN AND UNDERSTAND THE WORLD

AS DESIGNED BY GOD.

OFTEN WE THINK OF THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THOSE WHO

HAVE VISION AND FAITH

AND THOSE WHO DON'T.

BUT THERE IS ALSO A CONTRAST

BETWEEN TWO DIFFERENT LEVELS

OF FAITH AND VISION.

THE DIFFERENCE MAY SEEM SUBTLE,

BUT IT IS FAR REACHING.

ONE LEVEL IS THE FAITH THAT CAUSES YOU

TO DO OR NOT TO DO,

CERTAIN THINGS ALONG THE WAY OF YOUR LIFE.

IT BREAKS IN UPON YOUR LIFE AT DIFFERENT TIMES

AND AFFECTS YOUR LIFE.

LIKE HAVING YOUR CHILD BAPTIZED

GETTING MARRIED IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE OTHER LEVEL OF FAITH IS MUCH DEEPER.

IT CAUSES YOU TO COMMIT TO A WHOLE WAY OF LIFE.

IT BREAKS IN UPON YOUR WHOLE VIEW OF LIFE AND DEATH.

LET ME TRY TO SAY THIS IN ANOTHER WAY.

IN ORDER TO LOVE JESUS,

WE MUST KNOW THE SPIRIT.

WHEN WE OPEN OURSELVES

TO THE PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT WITHIN US

AND GOD'S LOVING US FIRST,

KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS IN AS NATURAL AS LOVING.

FOR A LONG TIME I THOUGHT AND WORKED OUT OF MY LOVE FOR GOD.

WHAT I WAS DOING,

THE COMMANDMENTS I WAS KEEPING,

THE SACRIFICES I WAS MAKING.

THE **SURPRISE** OF THE GOSPEL

IS THAT WE REALLY NEED TO BEGIN WITH GOD'S

GREAT LOVE FOR US.

THEN, RATHER THAN BURDENSOME LAWS,

COMMANDMENTS ARE CONCRETE EXPRESSIONS OF

OUR RETURNING LOVE FOR GOD AND EACH OTHER.

TODAY, THIS GOSPLE IS NOT SO MUCH ABOUT OUR LOVE

AS IT IS ABOUT GOD'S LOVE FOR US.

YOU SEE,

ON OUR OWN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE

EITHER TO KNOW GOD OR LOVE GOD.

THIS IS WHY TODAY'S GOSPEL IS SO REASSURING

BECAUSE JESUS PROMISES US THE SPIRIT

WHO REMAINS WITH US

AND WILL BE IN US.

IF YOU AND I WISH TO GROW IN OUR LOVE FOR GOD,

WE MUST BECOME ATTENTIVE TO THE SPIRIT

WHO DWELLS WITHIN US.

YOU AND I GET TO KNOW THE SPIRIT WITHIN US

WHO IS REALLY THE PRESENCE OF THE RISEN JESUS IN US,

BY TAKING SUFFICIENT TIME TO BE AWARE

OF THE BELOVED WHO IS SO NEAR US.

ONE WAY TO DO THIS

IS BY BEING FAITHFUL TO PRAYER.

NOT JUST SAYING PRAYERS

BUT ON FOCUSING ON GOD'S PRESENCE WITHIN.

PRAYER IS AN ESSENTIAL DAILY PRACTICE

THAT HELPS US

BECOME MORE ATTUNED TO GOD'S LOVING PRESENCE.

ANOTHER WAY TO BECOME AWARE OF GOD'S LOVING PRESENCE

IS BY REGULARLY **REMEMBERING**

ALL GOD'S GOODNESS TO US

AND CULTIVATING GRATEFUL HEARTS.

THAT DOES NOT HAPPEN AUTOMATICALLY IN OUR CULTURE.

A THIRD WAY

IS TO SEE AROUND US

THOSE WHO ARE BEING FAITHFUL

TO GOD'S COMMANDMENTS

AND TO APPRECIATE THOSE ACTS

AS EXPRESSIONS OF ANOTHER'S LOVE FOR GOD.

IF WE BUT SEE,

JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF TO US!

PRAYER – WITH THE FOCUS ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

REMEMBERING – RECALL ALL THE GOOD WE HAVE EXPERIENCED & HAVE

LOOK AND SEE – SEE THOSE AROUND US WHO ARE FAITHFUL

IN THEIR LOVE TO GOD.

IT IS THERE

WHERE JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF TO US.