

'BEING IN LOVE WITH GOD' - HOMILY – 21 MAY 2017 – 6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

OUR PARISH MINISTRY RENEWAL WEEKEND

This is our parish ministry renewal weekend.

Margaret leads us in an overview of the many ministries in our community and changes since last year.

We are invited to pray about where God is calling us and taking time to listen to God.

LET GOD DWELL IN US

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN – TO DWELL? Let us explore its meaning.

This Sunday we continue our Gospel reading from John Chapter 14.

In John Chapter 2 we find a change in understanding of God's house, from the Temple in Jerusalem as my Father's house, John 2:16

To the Temple of the body of Jesus. John 2:21

Now in Chapter 14 we see another development.

Let us understand 'house' in the sense of household.

We understand church in a wider sense than a building.

Church is our faith community, composed of a family of believers.

Let us view the house of God as the household of God as Trinity.

Not static but dynamic.

To be alive, to be in love, are dynamic.

Into this mystery of God, we ponder our place, now and in eternity.

In John Chapter 14, we hear that there are many rooms or dwellings in God's house.

IS IT ONLY IN THE FUTURE, AFTER DEATH THAT WE LIVE IN THESE DWELLINGS?

IS IT OUR INITIATIVE OR IS IT GOD'S INITIATIVE?

The Australian Biblical scholar Mary Coloe examined "dwelling" in her article ['John's Portrait of Jesus'](#).

In this chapter the Holy Spirit is revealed as Paraclete. She said,

'Chapters 14 uses derivatives of dwell (menô) and dwelling (monê) to describe a variety of interpersonal relationships between the Father, Jesus, Paraclete and believers.

The relationships are usually described with the translation abiding or dwelling.

These series of relationships are introduced by the phrase many dwellings.

"In my father's house are many dwellings..." – namely

- *the Father who dwells (menōn) in Jesus (v. 10)*
- *the Paraclete who dwells (menei) with believers, and in the future will be in them (v. 17).*
- *the Father and Jesus who will make their dwelling (monēn) with the believer (v. 23)*
- *Jesus dwells (menōn) with the disciples (v. 25).'*

Mary Coloe explains in a foot note,

'The imagery of many dwellings continues into chapter 15 where the verb dwell is again used to describe the believers dwelling in Jesus.

The shift to the community of believers is reflected by a shift in the metaphor from 'house' to 'vine' since the vine was a common image for the community of Israel.'

Eventually we gain insight into the mystery of God as Trinity, in love, dynamic loving. And we are invited not only to love God and be loved by God, but also to be in love with God, to dwell in love, now and into the future.

It is God's initiative. Mary Coloe continues:

'But the subject of the verb dwell throughout chapter 14 is not the believer but God. ... the emphasis in chapter 14 is on the Divine dwelling with the believers...'

And she says of the author of John's Gospel:

'In John we have a visionary – a theologian and poet, a mystic and a realist.'

HOW CAN WE, AS A FAITH COMMUNITY, BE A VISIONARY AND THEOLOGIAN, POET AND MYSTIC AND A REALIST?

As we approach this Ministry Sunday,

We do not focus on a list of jobs to be filled, but as a community,

- How we express our love for God,
- How we dwell in God's love.
- How we recognise God dwelling within us,
- How does what we choose, in ministry, become a prayer of love, of dwelling in God?
- Visiting the sick, or reading the Word of God at Mass, or pruning the garden around our buildings, church maintenance, or cooking for the families in need, or being part of our new groups of parish communication and caring for creation, or our school communities, or OSHC, or other schools, or joining the Ladies Prayer Group or Men's Group, or Children's liturgy, or Kindy Liturgy or young adult group SALT, our youth group ROCK, our children's group BLITZ, or our children's sacramental program, RCIA, weekend liturgy ministries, or transport, church linen, social media, or social justice group, SVDP, refugee family support or prayer chain support, pray@8, weekly prayer intentions, Pope Francis Monthly Prayer Intentions (and the list goes on)

HOW DOES MY PARTICIPATION, MY SHARING OF MY GIFTEDNESS, RESPOND TO MY CALLING TO BE IN LOVE WITH GOD?

HOW DOES MY MINISTRY IN COMMUNITY BECOME A LIVING OUT OF GOD DWELLING WITHIN US?

The communal ministries are but part of our wider ministries in the world. As we ponder our ministries, let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Being in Love with God –21 May 2017]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/052117.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook21052017>]

[Other References: '[John's Portrait of Jesus](#)' Sr. Mary Coloe PBVM, Associate Professor in Theology ACU and Mary Coloe's YouTube channel - [Ecce Homo](#) – 7 short video lectures on John's Gospel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzfak9t6Fa33cqO0Wlrj2vA>]