

JESUS ASKS US TO BE AN ADVOCATE FOR HIM & HIS FRIENDS IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

Sixth Sunday of Easter – 14 May 2023



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We are on the 6th Sunday of Easter, and over the last six weeks, we have envisioned our afterlife in heaven with God, affirming that death is obviously not our ultimate end of life. Death is another beginning / journey in the sense that we begin to participate in the love of God in heaven.

As we confess Christ as the beginning and end at the Easter Vigil, we reflect on both the end of life, which opens the path to resurrection, and the beginning of life. We received the gift of life from God, and our origin is where we received this gift.

Today, the Word of God asks us to find a deeper understanding of our ultimate origin with Jesus. Jesus gives us a hint, and that hint is God the Father. God the Father gave us the gift of life, and we joyfully received it on our own birthday. Our origin completely reveals what and whom we belong to. As God is our origin, we belong to Him and His love. This is the Spirit of Truth that today's gospel tells us.

Another message we receive from the Word of God is that of the Spirit of Love. Philip, in the first reading, was warmly welcomed, and his preaching was attentively listened to.

Samaritans welcomed Peter and John, and the two disciples prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit by laying their hands on them. In the gospel reading, Jesus says, 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments.' The reason why Jesus speaks of the commandments is not that He would judge or punish us if we do not keep them, but because He truly loves us and wishes for us not to go astray. When schoolteachers give instructions to their students,

their intention is not to judge the students but to support them in their learning of life. Likewise, Jesus asks us to 'keep my commandments' as a way of expressing His support towards our journey of faith.

As Jesus loves us so much, He said clearly, *'I will not leave you orphans.'*

"Our Lord is asking us the following questions: 'Would you show the spirit of love to all? Would you welcome others and their words? Would you lay your hands on others to pray for them? Would you keep my commandments not predominantly for obedience but for love?'

We show the spirit of love in various ways. Parents show love to their children, and the children show their love to the parents by following their instructions. We lay our hands on others in the form of handshakes, exchanging greetings with one another. When we pray for people to be blessed, we extend our hands towards them. We are invited to reflect on how to continue showing the spirit of love.

We remember today one particular area in which the spirit of love works: parenthood. On Mother's Day, we remember all mothers as they deliver God's love to their children. Mothers face many challenges, including pain during childbirth, as nothing can be higher than the motherly love that fully reveals God's spirit of love. Even in the face of those challenges, motherly love remains strong. Many people would give a gift to their own mother today, but the best gift for them would be remembering that a mother's love is all about influence. Influence is something God asks us to hold to support one another.

Sisters and brothers, there are many challenges around us, and we are unsure of what may be happening in our lives, but Jesus says, 'I will not leave you orphans.' He promises us that he will send his Advocate. It is now our turn to promise with him that we can be his advocates, showing the spirit of love to one another.

Are you willing to be an advocate for Jesus and his friends, just as mothers do for their children?

Deacon Minje Kim

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/051423.cfm>