

6th Sunday of Easter

Today's readings show us the effects of the abiding presence of God in His Church and of His indwelling in each one of us. The first reading, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, tells us, how the Holy Spirit, indwelling in the Church, helped the apostles to solve a major doctrinal problem about the Gentiles becoming Christians, which shook the very foundation of the early Church.

The second reading, taken from the Book of Revelation, describes the Church, as the Heavenly Jerusalem which replaces the holy presence of God in the *Holy of Holies* in the Temple in Jerusalem. This New Jerusalem is a city united in love, with the victorious Jesus residing in it and in each of its members. The Gospel passage reminds us that the Holy Spirit, abiding within us, is our Teacher, Advocate and the Source of peace and joy. The passage offers a vision of hope as well. Jesus promises his followers that the Holy Spirit will come and instruct them in everything they need to know.

Let us be aware of the abiding presence of God within us: We live in the New Covenant of Jesus, daily facing uncertainty, conflict, and temptations. It is the abiding presence of God within us that enables us to face the future with undying hope and true Christian courage. The Holy Spirit Whom the risen Lord asked His Father to send upon His Church prompts us to turn to His Holy Scriptures for support and encouragement, enables us to learn the Divine truths, and grants us His peace at all times.

However, to be able to receive these gifts, it is necessary for us to spend a little time each day in personal prayer, talking to God and listening to Him. We must deepen our relationship with Jesus, learn to get in touch with him, and sincerely love him. When we listen to the Holy Spirit, we will know His plan for our life and His solutions to whatever problems we face. We will be able to love our fellow human beings, and there will be a

core of peace within us. The Holy Spirit teaches us through the Scriptures and preaching during the Holy Mass. Jesus loves us and comes to us in Communion. When the Mass is ended, we go forth in the peace of Christ - all this, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We need to have the conviction that we are not alone: One of the great social and ethical problems of our time is *isolation*. Today approximately 25% of all adults live alone. Spouses, parents and children often live as virtual strangers to one another. This is unfortunate because we never need to be alone. Jesus can always be present to us. He shares his joy with us and replaces the burden of our guilt with the freedom of forgiveness.

He takes our grief and turns it into joy. We need only to allow Jesus into our lives to get rid of this loneliness. Oneness with Jesus is the greatest gift; we can give to our children, our friends, or those who see no purpose in life. We can help to bring people to be with Jesus, which will change their lives. As we celebrate this Mass, let us remember in a special way, the price Jesus paid for our redemption. May this Eucharistic celebration empower us to lead a true life?

Thomas Merton says: "If you are yourself at peace, then there is at least some peace in the world."

Prayer: Risen Lord, you alone are our Peace. As you promised, send on us the Holy Spirit from the Father, as our constant companion to stand by our side and defend us against the onslaught of corrupt ways of the world. Through the Holy Spirit remind us and bring to our memory the words of the Gospel when we feel that we are going astray or drifting away from your teachings. Through your Spirit continue to comfort, counsel and guide us especially when we are troubled by confusion, discouragement, frustration and dilemma. Amen.