



Lectio Divina. Sixth Sunday of Easter, Cycle A

Paris (France), Sr. Anne Lécu, May 17, 2020.- Come, Spirit of Truth, come our Savior, come save us.

GOSPEL

John 14: 15-21.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Advocate who will be with you forever: the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, for it does not see him and does not know him; but you know him, for he abides with you, and he will be in you.

I will not leave you orphans; I return to you. In a little while the world will not see me, but you will see me alive and you will live also. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me and I am in you. He who receives my commandments and keeps them, the same is he who loves me; and he who loves me shall be loved of my Father; I also will love him and manifest myself to him."

STUDY OF THE TEXT

The Gospel according to Saint John is built around the five main chapters, chapters 13 to 17, which form a kind of micro-gospel at the heart of the text. These five chapters begin with the last supper of Jesus, during which he goes to wash the feet of his disciples so that they may go with him. This is followed by a long discourse in which Jesus comforts his disciples, and finally it ends with Jesus' great prayer to his Father in chapter 17. With this Sunday's text, we

are here at the beginning of this discourse, and Jesus promises that after his death, another form of presence will be experienced by his people, 'the defender', 'the Spirit'.

MEDITATION

I am writing this commentary on March 22, while all are in a locked down, confined, by the coronavirus. I do not know where will we be on May 17, whether or not the confinement will have ended. I don't know yet who among us will be on our feet and who will be down on earth. What I do know is that, for the time being, we are like the apostles, locked up in their homes, waiting for something they do not know and whose power they will later discover: The Spirit of the Risen One. In these hours of confinement, the most difficult is the absence of communal bodies: the absence of the body of the other, absence of the collective body, absence of the ecclesial body, absence of the Eucharistic body. Now the Spirit has everything to do with the body, and that is why it is urgent to desire his presence. A French theologian, Maurice Bellet, wrote: "The body is the Holy Spirit present". So yes, let us hold on to the promise of Jesus who promises us the One who will be "with us forever".



Of this Defender, three things were told to us. He is the Spirit of truth, he will be *in* us, and he will let us know about the intimacy of the Father and the Son. Jesus promises this at the hour of his passion. He promises this when he was just being betrayed by Judas, whom he has washed his feet, that he might have a part with him, and when he will soon be denied by Peter. To them also he promises the Spirit, the Defender, who is the truth. It was the time of the test - and often the test is when one is deceived, abandoned by those whom one loved - that Christ assures for the one who accepts to be awake with Him in the night, a communion of truth. there is communion between us because the sign of God in us, more than his sign, his living mark, and even more than his living mark, his real presence, in each one of us, in

Judas and in Peter. This communion is nothing else but charity, which unfolds precisely when we find difficult to love, and we beg from the One who gives it.

PRAYER

O Father of goodness instill in us the desire to receive your Spirit of truth. O Son, beloved of the Father, at the foot of the cross make us believe that it is from your open side that the Spirit springs forth. O Spirit of the Risen One, come and lift our miserable, strained bodies, and our societies that are torn apart by a thousand tensions which existed before the pandemic and which the virus has exacerbated, we beg you.

Come, Spirit of Truth, come our Savior, come save us.