

Lectio Divina: Fifth Sunday of Easter - Cycle C

Province of Santafé -Colombia-, Sr. Mary Plata Cordero, 15th May 2022.

INTRODUCTION:

Explanation of the text John 13, 31-33-34-35.

The drama of the passion begins in this chapter 13; today's text is located during the last supper. Jesus speaks to his disciples as if he is already glorified. With the departure of Judas from the place of the supper, the discourse begins, leaving only the group of loyal followers.

Jesus is about to leave, and in view of the sadness that this event will surely cause, he affectionately calls them "little children", because they have believed that they will be with him, sharing in his glory. However, Jesus does not leave them alone, he will be in their midst through the charity they show to one another, for this is the new mandate he has left them. It is new because it embraces all the people without distinction and because that love should be, as Christ has loved.

Christ's love is not only the model but also the cause of Christian love. This charity in imitation of Christ reflects Trinitarian love. Hence the importance of fraternal charity as a sign that we are Christ's disciples, children of the same Father.

WHAT THE TEXT SAYS TO ME:

I must read it with the conviction that God is speaking to me. I must dwell on the significant words. It is about being silent in order to hear God.

Meditation: to reflect, to ruminate, to deepen, like Mary, let this Word penetrate our heart.

The first part of this Sunday's passage **refers to the love between the Father and the Son that is known through the glorification on the Cross;** there the disciples understood how much Jesus loved them.

The second part, on which we will dwell, focuses on the relationship among Jesus' disciples. He says to them, with great tenderness: "My children, I am going to be with you only a short time. I give you a new commandment, **that you love one another**. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. By this, all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. This text invites us to live as a true Christian community. A community renewed by the Easter celebration of Christ who is risen and lives in the midst of those who know how to love.

Mutual love is the essence of discipleship; it is the characteristic of every Christian community and its only authentic manifestation. Disciples must love one another as Jesus

loved, because they were loved first. God manifested his love to the world through his Son; Jesus loved his own to the point of dying for them. Only those who are loved and feel loved are capable of loving. The love of Jesus is fundamental and constitutive of fraternal love. It is not only the action of loving, but it must be the atmosphere in which we live every day and where we find the strength to love our fellow human beings.

To love as Jesus loved is a love of self-giving, of sacrificing one's own life for the good of one's brother. It is not philanthropy, an altruistic and humanitarian love, but something more, the continuation of the work of Jesus; mutual love must be a manifestation of God's love for us. This love must be an attractive sign, the witness for others to believe. This love must be the hallmark of our communities, "the soul of the community".

This universal and concrete love, silent and active, compassionate and respectful, patient and helpful, all-excusing, all-believing, all-expecting, all-forgiving, rejoicing in the truth and never ending (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7). In this love, they will know that we are disciples of Jesus, a love that reveals the presence of the Risen One....

The love of the Father and the Son on the Cross, identifies the true disciple. The love of the disciples takes shape in the mold of the Cross. The mandate is not simply to love but to love in the way of Jesus. It must therefore be a love of acceptance of the other even in his or her sin, a love that effectively helps and transforms, a love that strips itself of self to seek the good of the other, just as Jesus did. In this way it will be revealed that Jesus is alive and present in our midst.

We can ask ourselves: Does my way of loving draw its inspiration and strength from the love of Jesus? What do I have to divest myself of in order to love like Jesus? In what way do I turn my cross, the one that weighs so heavily on me, into a means of making God's love visible?

WHAT THE TEXT MAKES ME SAY TO GOD:

Prayer: To pray is to respond to the Lord who speaks to us first, to listen to his saving Word in order to love him.

Let us praise him for the capacity to be able to love our brothers and sisters with his love. Let us remember concrete names of people who love us and let us keep in mind the people we love and those we should love more. Let us apply it to the Sisters with whom we live.

Let us ask the Lord to forgive us on those occasions when we have believed that it is possible to remain in love for God without loving people, but also to forgive us when we have not given witness to the love of God.

Let us thank Jesus for his Love that led him to lay down his own life.

Let us pray with the words of this song:

To love as Jesus loved, to dream as Jesus dreamed,

to think as Jesus thought, to live as Jesus lived.

To feel as Jesus felt, to smile as Jesus smiled,
and come the end of the day, I know I'd sleep so much happier!

CONTEMPLATION:

How do I or we internalise the Word of God?

In this contemplation we can repeat several times this verse from the Gospel so that it enters our life, our heart: "**Love one another as I have loved you**".

Commitment: This contemplation must lead me to a commitment, because "it is not the one who says Lord, Lord, but the one who does the will of my Father..."