

TRINITY NEWS

Easter V - Knowledge without love is barren

The two passages that we are considering today are John 14:1-14 and 1 Peter 2:1-10.

“Ultimately, I believe that what is most personal is the most universal. However, to arrive at this point, friends are necessary, as they are the ones who help you distinguish between superficial sensations and deep human experiences” (Henri Nouwen).

The voice of Jesus in the Gospels speaks directly to us. Jesus’ voice is one of many voices that address us personally in the Gospels. They were all speaking to us in person about the icon of God from Galilee. The Gospel has more hands and more voices than just the designated writers. The Christ at its centre prays for us and speaks to us and teaches us by Word and by example in all the pages of the Gospel. This personal connection is never more noticeable than in what are called “the Upper Room Discourses” in John, Chapters 13-16. Let us look at some of those words.

“Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me”. The voice is gentle but it enters our hearts and minds and brings a momentary sense of well-being. All of our hearts are troubled momentarily every day. There will be something that brings a twinge of regret, remorse or unwelcome realization. Christ speaks from the silence of God. The words are pure and wise because they are not affected by our chattering minds. Wisdom comes from silence and reflection, not from murmuring, muttering, or occupying word space in other people’s minds and conversations. Out of the silence of Jesus’ reflections we hear this wonderful assurance about inner peace and faith. It is this combination of peace and faith that builds the creative contours of belief. Allow these words to resound in your heart, mind and soul.

Our hearts pulse with a constant yearning to give and receive love. Love requires a huge emotional commitment to support another person and to receive gladly the loving emotional and supportive response that encourages such a commitment. Our minds transact many thousands of thoughts a day. Some are mindless repetitions of the past. Some are fantasies. We need at least one fantasy a day. I’m sure Jesus had a lot of them. He turned them into dreams, and he turned dreams into knowledge transformed by love (Aquinas). Knowledge without love is barren.

Our soul contains part of the seventh day rest of God. It is not a place of movement except the outgoing of love and the incoming of compassion. You bring your troubles to the church. They are usually small, but they may be huge. Kneel in the pews and listen to the voice of the Universal Pilgrim who walked the road like you do. He prostrated himself to pray and he knew about anguish in prayer. We cannot have real friends without giving of ourselves and our time. It is the same with faith and prayer. Listening to the voice of Christ is more important than getting every point of doctrine fit to parade before the theologians.

But clear teaching and thinking about the Faith are always massively important. Listen carefully when the Scripture is read and focus on the words of Christ from the Gospels.

Jesus tells us that he is going to prepare a place for us, and the inn that received him as a child is still open awaiting visitors. He tells us that it has many rooms and this implies that we will meet up with many strange people in heaven. The over-pious may well find themselves on their own with countless people like them. Not a pretty thought!

Jesus says in this passage that we will not walk alone. He tells us that we do not have to make the journey on our own, whether to Heathrow or to Heaven or perhaps to Cubao. Loneliness dogs 21st century analysts. The right words just don't do it. Unless someone walks with us, a word-fest seems like a meal of cream puffs when we are hungry. Christ assures us that we don't walk alone and that he will be waiting for us. One of the worst human experiences is when a beloved person dies and we come back to an empty house afterwards. The home suddenly becomes a house. It has lost the vibrant visible presence of love.

Jesus says that he is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The Hebrew and Greek words for "Way" also translate as "road", or a "track". Perhaps the greatest assurance that I find in the Faith is that I will never be lost whether in this life or beyond it. I still hear the words of the wise ones who have inhabited my life. I hear the voice of Jesus in this Gospel. Jesus says that he is the Truth. Truth about meaning is not an abstract matter. It is a collection of all the aspects of life that bring assurance, peace, and an integrity that sustains us as a real person.

Truth is looking at a child and vowing that we will give them the best possible start in life without taking over the house of their dreams. Truth is loving someone when the first glow of love went a long time ago and they barely know your name. Truth is laughing out loud at least once a day. Truth is watching Christ walk through Galilee, reaching for the stars and enjoying the earth-contact under his sandals. Truth is touching lepers, looking with respect into their eyes, making them feel clean. Truth is loving someone more than yourself. Truth is God in Heaven, and Jesus on earth and the Spirit dancing around us causing our hearts to burn within.

The Messiah walks by and looks at you. Jesus the Christ speaks your name and you start praying in response. He comments on the children laughing and he doesn't miss anything. Neither do those who really love him. He disappears into the sunlight, but in your soul he is resting. Listen to his voice in the Scripture today. He was rejected, but he has become the chief cornerstone for countless millions on the human journey who try to build something that matters. The best journal entries are written about the times that we have met him, whether in the Scriptures, in the Eucharist or on the day when everything else look greyscale. Then the sun comes out and glory shines around.

Bishop Arthur Jones

**NEXT WEEK'S
READINGS:**

Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 148;1
Peter 3:8-18; John 15:1-8

We farewell Zee Washington. A wonderful mix of fire and tenderness, compassion and astuteness. Someone sowed the seed of the eternal in her and it has borne fruit. Go well!



THIS WEEK:

May 24, Tuesday.

- **Bible Study**, 10am.

May 26-29, Thursday-Sunday

- **Summer Youth Camp**, Bulacan.
Assembly @ CHT, 2pm.

May 28, Saturday.

- **Membership Mtg**, 3:00p.m, Parish Office