

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost XI The Inner Shape for Living an Indestructible Life

Peter is a name for someone who loved life and people. He learned this by following Jesus. But it had been in him from the start. It is not there automatically in human nature but comes as a gift. "God is love" and God is the author of life. It is intrinsic to being "fully human" as we say of Christ in the Creed. We may have goodness and kindness and love in us, but it requires the stirring of the Spirit to shape its fullness and the spark it into life. It is then more clearly seen as the gift of God. It comes both invited and uninvited. But when it comes it never lies dormant. It is always the "hand of the heart", stretching out to convey the deepest gifts and needs of the heart.

Peter had to move from judgment to joy. **When we judge people we step into the circle of their sin with our own sin of judgment. This contaminates us both and our inner strength is sapped and reduced. Every sin that we reject strengthens us.** This is perhaps why Jesus was so severe on the judgment of others and said that it rebounded on the one who judges. Peter wanted to be a less "sinful man" and he found in Christ a sure way of easing his inner pain at not being truly himself. The less sinful we are in thought and word and deed, the more indestructible we become in imitating the Christ who was raised into an indestructible life. Christ was indestructible before the Cross and Resurrection were linked to signal "the power of an indestructible life" in him. His welling spring of kindness flowing from a love of endless depth for God and humanity made him indestructible well before the Resurrection stamped his indestructibility. The Cross is also an unfailing source of forgiveness when we offend God by sinning and blurring the image of God in our soul. Not a popular word "sin", but who can escape it?

The greatest achievement of any human being is to find someone who truly loves us and draws from us the same response. This is always in some sense linked to the love of God, but when it is made more vocal in the words of faith and belief, it makes us indestructible. We may lose such a love and continue in our life broken by it, but no one on earth can take it from us. When Paul says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?", he is stating his own inner conviction and experience.

It is also the experience of Peter at Caesarea Philippi when he proclaims Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus tells Peter that he does not get this “from flesh and blood” but from the revelation of “my Father in heaven.” Jesus tells Peter that with such faith he will become a rock for those around him who will surge forward with Jesus to the Cross and beyond into the life of the Christian communities of the world. *Tu es Petrus*, “You are Peter” are the first words that a newly elected Pope hears to indicate his election to the papacy. This is also a word from Christ for all of us to gather up all the love and strength within us and offer it to the Christ as an affirmation of our being and our intention to follow our Master into an indestructible life. Health problems may limit us, and the eventual reluctant dissolution of our bodies comes, but our identity in the world, marked by our love for humanity and God, will never cease from reverberating in the “circle of life.”

Bishop Arthur Jones

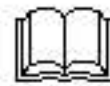
THIS WEEK:

Wednesday, August 27.

- *Bible study, 10:00am*
- *Group discussion, 7:30pm Parish Hall.*

Thursday, August 28.

- *Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel*



NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26; Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:21-27