

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - MAY 1, 2016

"THE ADVOCATE, THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM THE FATHER WILL SEND IN MY NAME, WILL TEACH YOU EVERYTHING AND REMIND YOU OF ALL THAT I TOLD YOU"

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF SITUATIONS IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE REALLY APPRECIATE SOMEONE BEING WITH US - ISN'T THERE???

E.G. MEDICAL SITUATIONS - I REMEMBER WHEN I HAD MY DIAGNOSIS OF PROSTATE CANCER MY SISTER WENT WITH ME TO THE UROLOGIST. SHE WAS ABLE TO REMEMBER THINGS THAT I DIDN'T AND OFFER ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW ABOUT THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPTIONS - ESP. SINCE SHE IS A NURSE

I'M SURE THE DOCTORS AMONG US HAVE A NUMBER OF PATIENTS AND SITUATIONS THAT CALL FOR THE PRESENCE OF ANOTHER PERSON AS A SUPPORT, ANOTHER SET OF EYES AND EARS, IF YOU WILL..

E.G. I KNOW WE ALSO HAVE SOME LAWYERS AMONG US TOO - EITHER PRESENTLY PRACTICING OR RETIRED - I PRESUME THAT THEY WOULD TELL YOU THAT IS THEIR PRIMARY JOB DESCRIPTION....

ACCOMPANY THEIR CLIENT THROUGH THE LEGAL PROCESS - WHATEVER THE SITUATION.....

E.G. A DIVORCE OR A LEGAL CHARGE - THEIR JOB IS TO BE AN ADVOCATE, A LEGAL COUNSEL - AS WE SAY - TO HELP THE INDIVIDUAL GO THROUGH THE LEGAL PROCESS IN THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS MANNER POSSIBLE

IT IS NO COINCIDENT THAT THE ORIGINAL GREEK WORD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT, PARACLITOS IS TRANSLATED AS ADVOCATE - BECAUSE IT HAS LEGAL CONNOTATIONS AND LITERALLY

MEANS "ONE WHO STANDS BY THE SIDE OF A DEFENDANT"....

IN SOME TRANSLATIONS THE WORD USED IS "COUNSELOR" OR

"COMFORTER" ----- MAKES SENSE DOESN'T IT?

*THAT'S WHAT LAWYERS ARE MEANT TO DO, GIVE COUNSEL, GIVE
COMFORT.....*

*THAT IS WHAT WE NEED IN MANY SITUATIONS IN OUR LIVES....SOMEONE
WHO IS WILLING TO STAND THERE BESIDE US, GIVE US COUNSEL, GIVE
US COMFORT.....GIVE US STRENGTH.....*

GIVE US ANOTHER SET OF EYES, GIVE US ANOTHER SET OF EARS....

GIVE US STRENGTH WHEN WE ARE VULNERABLE....

*ANOTHER NAME TODAY WOULD BE AGENT - IF YOU ARE IN A CERTAIN
TAX BRACKET, OR PROFESSION.....*

"LIFE COACH" IS ANOTHER ROLE THAT IS SIMILAR.....

*THAT IS THE PROMISE OF JESUSTO SEND US THE PARACLETE, TO BE
OUR ADVOCATE, TO BE OUR COUNSELOR TO STAND BY OUR SIDE.....*

TO BE OUR AGENT, OUR "LIFE COACH", IF YOU WILL....

AT ALL TIMES....ACTUALLY STAND WITHIN US AND BESIDE US

WE SHOULD REALLY HAVE HUNDREDS OF THOSE DOVES.....

LIVE, OF COURSE, AND TRAINED.....

WHO COULD STAND BY OUR SIDE WHEN WE COME IN HERE....

THAT IS THE PROMISE OF JESUS....

*HE SO WANTED HIS MISSION AND HIS MINISTRY TO CONTINUE ON AFTER
HE WAS GONE.....*

WE INHERITED THAT PROMISE AND ARE INCLUDED IN THAT PROMISE

ESPECIALLY BY WAY OF OUR BAPTISM AND OUR CONFIRMATION...

THAT IS THE PROMISE.....IT REMINDS ME OF THE COMMERCIAL.....

YOU KNOW, NATIONWIDE IS ON YOUR SIDE....

THE SPIRIT OF THE RISEN CHRIST IS NOT ONLY ON YOUR SIDE BUT

WITHIN US....

THAT IS THE PROMISE.....HIS CONTINUED PRESENCE WITH US

IT IS A TRUTH-TELLING SPIRIT.....WILL HELP US LIVE IN THE TRUTH

REMINDS US OF THE THINGS THAT JESUS SAID AND REVEAL TO US THE

THINGS THAT JESUS WAS UNABLE TO CONVEY DURING HIS LIFETIME

SO THE SPIRIT REPRESENTS THE DIVINE PRESENCE AND GUIDANCE

FROR US....

WHERE MIGHT WE SEE THAT PRESENCE IN MY CONTEMPORARY TIMES...

***E.G. FOR ME VATICAN II IS THE MOST DRAMATIC EXAMPLE -
INCREDIBLE EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRIT***

E.G. THE SURPRISING ELECTION OF JORGE BERGOGLIO AS PRESENT

POPE BY THE DELEGATES IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL IN MARCH OF 2013

AND WHEN HE ANNOUNCED HIS NAME AS BISHOP OF ROME WOULD BE

FRANCIS SETTING THE TONE FOR A HUMBLER, SIMPLER PAPACY GEARED

TOWARD REFORM AND THE POOR

E.G. SURELY THE HOLY SPIRIT IS INSPIRING CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN

MARTYS WHO WILLINGLY ADMIT THEIR FAITH EVEN THOUGH THEY

KNOW THEY WILL BE KILLED BY RADICAL TERRORISTS....

*E.G. AND ISN'T THE SPIRIT SPEAKING THROUGH MALALA VOUSAFZI, THE
YOUNG PAKISTANI ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS WHO WAS SHOT
BUT NOT SILENCE....*

THAT SAME SPIRIT BEGS FOR YOUR VOICE AND MINE....

*THE SPIRIT WAS PRESENT WITH PETER, JAMES, PAUL, MARY AND JOHN
AND IS PRESENT WITHIN US....*

*OF COURSE, WE NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE SPIRIT WITHIN US
AND, LIKE ANY RELATIONSHIP IN OUR LIVES WE NEED TO PAY
ATTENTION TO THE RELATIONSHIP ON A REGULAR BASIS -*

NOT JUST IN CRISES

*BUT EACH DAY - CERTAINLY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DAY AND AT
THE END OF THE DAY.....*

BUT HOPEFULLY, AT OTHER TIMES ALSO DURING THE DAY....

IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE ELABORATE....EVEN A FEW MINUTES....

OR A FEW SECONDS....

*I'VE SAID BEFORE....I FIND IT VERY HELPFUL TO CALL UPON THE SPIRIT
BEFORE I BEGIN CERTAIN ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS, TELEPHONE
CONVERSATIONS....A HOMILY*

*WHEN I AM WAITING IN LINE, IN TRAFFICE, WAITING FOR AN ELEVATOR
IT CAN BE JUST TAKING A DEEP BREATH ---EXPRESSING AN OPENNESS TO
THE SPIRIT, THE NEED FOR STRENGTH AND A BLESSING.....*

*IT IS, OF COURSE, GOOD TO HAVE OTHER TIMES DURING THE DAY WHEN
WE ARE ABLE TO SPEND MORE TIME EXPRESSING OUR OPENNESS AND*

NEED FOR THE SPIRIT - PERHAPS EVEN 10-20 MINUTES

*BUT IT IS THE OPENNESS AND THE PRAYER FROM THE HEART THAT IS
MOST IMPORTANT....*

*THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE NEED FOR A RELATIONSHIP FROM
THE DEPTH OF OUR HEARTS AND A HEARTFELT GRATITUDE WHEN WE
EXPERIENCE THE PRESENCE AND GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT....*

IN CONCLUSION - LET US PAUSE FOR A MOMENT....

PERHAPS CLOSE OUR EYES OR NOT - FOR A FEW SECONDS...

PERHAPS TAKE A DEEP RELAXING BREATH AND I WILL CONCLUDE WITH

THIS PRAYER FROM PENTECOST - WHICH I LOVE:

*COME HOLY SPIRIT, COME
COME, WITHIN OUR BOSOMS SHINE*

*YOU, OF COMFORTERS THE BEST
YOU, THE SOUL'S MOST WELCOME GUEST
SWEET REFRESHMENT HERE BELOW*

*SHINE WITHIN THESE HEARTS OF YOURS
AND OUR INMOST BEING FILL*

*HEAL OUR WOUNDS, OUR STRENGTH RENEW
ON OUR DRYNESS POUR YOUR DEW*

*WASH THE STAINS OF GUILT AWAY
GUIDE THE STEPS THAT GO ASTRAY*

*BEND THE STUBBORN HEART AND WILL
MELT THE FROZEN, WARM THE CHILL*

*ON US, YOUR FAITH PEOPLE , WHO ADORE
IN YOUR SEVENFOLD GIFTS DESCEND*

GIVE US JOYS THAT NEVER END.....

AMEN.....