

Reflection for the 6th Sunday of Easter, Cycle C

The lectionary translation of the readings for this Sunday can be found at <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/052525.cfm>.

1st Reading: *Acts 15:1–2; 22-29*

Today's first reading concerns what is called the Council of Jerusalem, the first ecumenical council of the church. The reading skips the discussion and only give the result but it is clear that the decision was made by the apostles and elders together in the ancient tribal style called consensus.

2nd Reading: *Revelation 21:10–14; 22-23*

We continue in John's vision as he views the new Jerusalem (the Church) which came down from heaven. Notice the 12 foundations with the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb identifying them as the foundation of the Church. Notice also, why the city did not need a temple.

Gospel: *John 14:23–29*

Jesus said to his disciples: "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Jn 14:23

Gospel Reflection

Chapter 14 of John's Gospel is all about what we, theologically, call the divine indwelling. Oh! Isn't that just like Church. We take something that is so packed with excitement and emotion, and reduce it to a word or two that has to be explained to be understood. Forget that!

Remember, after the prologue, John's Gospel begins with the stories of John the Baptist. He's so amazing that someone asks him if he is the promised Messiah. John say's heck no. The messiah is coming after me and he is so much greater than me that I'm not even worthy of loosening the strap of his sandals. That's a servant's job, by the way, who were called upon to wash the feet of visitors.

The next day, John and some of his disciples are together when Jesus walks by. John tells his disciples that he is the one that John was talking about. The disciples follow Jesus, Jesus asks them what they want and they say they want to see where he lives. He takes them to where he is staying and they stay with him that day.

Imagine what that feels like; you're waiting and looking for the messiah, you find him and he invites you in. Holy McGoalie... I can't hold back my emotion just thinking about it. Then today's Gospel reverses all that. Jesus is not inviting us in, Jesus is inviting himself in! He wants to make his home with us. I don't have enough emotion to deal with that. When I think about it, I feel like I'll burst.

I know some of you are saying, "But if he comes to live with me, I'll have to keep the house clean all the time." No, it's not about that. He wants to walk with us and talk with us and encourage us and congratulate us and embrace us and comfort us; all the things we want from someone who really loves us.

So let's not go it alone. Let's open ourselves to his presence in our lives. Let's double down and ask ourselves "What do I need to do to make room for Jesus in my life?" What do I need to get rid of? The Gospel tells us that we need to love Jesus and keep his word. That is the same thing, by the way. We can start at either end of that, loving him or keeping his word. One will bring us to the other.

And, keeping his word means to keep his commandments. I focus on two; "Love one another as I have loved you" and, "Do this in memory of me." Again, one leads to the other but that is a whole other homily.

Let's let Jesus make his home in us.

God bless...

Personal Reflection:

Jesus said to his disciples: "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." Jn 14:23

Question:

What words or phrases attracted your attention during the Liturgy of the Word on Sunday? What connection do those words or phrases have to your day-to-day life? (Why do you think they attracted your attention?) What might God be trying to say to you through these words or phrases? What response should you make? What action should you take?

Alternative:

Reflect upon/Share about the love you have for another person and the love they have for you. What effect does their love have on the way you live your life? How is it similar to the love you have for Jesus? How can you open yourself more to Jesus' loving desire to live in you?

Verse by Verse:

Jn 14:23a "Jesus said to his disciples" | This is actually "Jesus answered and said to him." He is talking to Judas, not the Iscariot who asked him in Jn 14:22, why he was only revealing himself to the disciples and to the whole world. Our selection today is his answer which seems to boil down to him being revealed to whoever loves him and keeps his word and not to whoever does not love him and keep his word. Evidently he is revealed by the divine indwelling that this chapter talks about.

Jn 14:23a "keep my word" | Keep my word is the same as keep my commandment like the Decalogue, ten words of Duet 4:13.

Jn 14:23b "...We will come to him..." | Usually when we think of the coming of Jesus after his death, resurrection and ascension, we think of his coming on the clouds at the end of time as in the end times discussion in Lk 21:27 and the ascension story of Acts 1:11. , although Matthew doesn't have an ascension story but when Jesus commissions the disciples he says "I am with you till the end of the age" but seems to have been talking about being with us corporately. In John, Jesus will come to us in the present life with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Jn 14:23b "...and make our dwelling with him." | This is similar to the Exodus story when God dwelled in a tent with the Israelites who were freed from slavery. It is like Ruth in the Hebrew Scriptures who stayed with Naomi. It is like Lot who threw his lot in with Abram. It is like the communion of life & love in marriage. Here God throws his lot in with us but, also, our lot is thrown in with God.

This discussion of the divine indwelling begins in Jn 14:17 wherein Jesus tells the disciples they will know the Spirit of truth because it remains with you and will be in you. In Jn 14:18 Jesus says "I will come to you." In Jn 14:20 Jesus says "you are in me and I in you."