

HOMILY: Sixth Sunday Easter B: May 5, 2024

"I have called you friends!"

Acts 10. 25-6, 34-5, 44-8; Ps. 98; 1 St. John 4. 7-10; St. John 15. 9-17

1. After catechesis on Person of Jesus (Who/What) – now enter into drama of His last night on earth w/ His 'friends' – Passover (Paschal) Meal

Now before the Feast of Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of the world to the Father, having loved His own in the world, He loved them to the end. (St. John 13. 1)

KEY: Jesus is "poured out for them" "to the end"

2. *Remain in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments, & remain in His love.* (15. 10) **How to understand this. Moral effort? Ethics?**

3. Man in history – need for purity/purification – **victim. [Ancient theory]** Burning of victim (which takes on sin) puts man in place where he can commune w/ god[s]? **[Christian theory]** Sermon on Mount – love of brother which lays down the life... high moral tone **but listen to words of Pope Benedict...**

In place of ritual purity, what we have now is not merely morality, but the gift Of encounter w/ God in Jesus Christ (pg. 60)

The Lord – Church – not talking so much about *doing good* – *do-gooding (!)* – the Lord is talking about the encounter of Love out of which loving acts spring, out of which a life of loving acts spring... Church is not interested in creating an ethics society or a bunch of do-gooders. Church wants men to learn that Someone loved them enough to die for them and is here for them to teach them about real life, life that they have not yet even imagined.... Listen to H. Father...

... who could possibly claim to have risen above the "average" way of the 10 Commandments, to have left them behind as self-evident... and now to walk along the exalted paths of the "new law"? No, the newness of the new commandment cannot consist in the highest moral attainment. Here, too, the essential point is not the call to supreme achievement, but the new foundation of being that is given to us. The newness can come only from the gift of being-*with* & being-*in* Christ. (pgs. 63-4, *Jesus of Nazareth, vol. 2*)

KEY: Newness: being-with/being-in Christ

4. How? This is what sac. – Bap/Comm/Confirmation do for us – this is what is restored in sac. of Penance – **all of which is free gift! Gift of Relationship – child of God Father, bro/sister of Christ in HS.** Analogy of which we saw last wk in vine/branches & Mystical Body.

5. Does this mean we do not worry about sin? Of course not! Sin/morality not my focus. (St. Aug: love first, then do what you will!) Why? **My friend Who gave up His life for me is my focus – my bros/sisters in Church – my focus.**

6. Church – my Mother. May 13th – 95th ann. of Fatima. Also, same day, 1981 saw near assassination of dear Holy Father, now Bl. JP II. While being rushed to Gemelli Hosp: *Jesu! Maria!* Bullet miraculously missed all his vital organs.

7. Finally we celebrate lovely custom of Mothers' Day – weaving thread through all of this is **relationship**. We are not who/what we are because of what we do. **Not called to be human doings.** We are who/what we are because of those who love us. We do what we do because of whom we love & those who love us. And most of all, we are who/what we are because of Him Who loves us & loved us & out of the love that died & rose for us. **Being precedes act. Love precedes doing.** Today we celebrate the Love that is eternal in the Lord Jesus. Today we celebrate the love of our Mother, Mary, Who loves us more than we can ever know. Today we celebrate the love of our own mothers, who out of their love give of themselves their whole lives.