



Lectio Divina. Sixth Sunday of Easter. Cycle B

Camporredondo (Peru), Sr. Nora Zuleta Posada, May 9, 2021.- As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.

GOSPEL

John 15: 9-17

"As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."

STUDY OF THE TEXT

Jesus is bidding farewell to his disciples; he understands that they are sad and discouraged. All of them know that they are living the last hours with their Master. What will happen when he is gone?... Jesus wishes to encourage them by revealing his last desires. It is a farewell that gathers some fundamental qualities that the disciples of Jesus must remember all throughout their life, in order to be faithful to his person and to his project.

"**Abide in my love**", is the first thing. It is not just a matter of practicing religion, but to live the love with which Jesus loves us, the love he receives from His Father.

All throughout the centuries, disciples will face uncertainties, conflicts and difficulties of all kinds. **It is important never to deviate from love.**

With the passage of time, rules will surely multiply. Jesus says, the commandment of love alone: "is my commandment". Whatever may be our age or situation, the decisive trait of the followers of Jesus is to never deviate from fraternal love.

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you" (Jn 15:9). This Trinitarian experience of love, incarnated by the Son in history, **becomes a heritage and a memory for his followers.** Its practice becomes a principle of permanent reference for rereading the practice of love, at any time and in any culture.

The whole life and mission of Jesus is marked by the relationship of love with His Father and by the sharing of this love with us (Jn 15:9): **" I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father."** (Jn 15:15).

God who revealed Himself in Jesus is a God who has a heart of mercy, who has made himself the way and a companion, who, like a kind shepherd, like a father who always waits for the return of his son who has gone away, who offers forgiveness even when he arrives late, as in the case of the good thief. **This is the love that inspires the commandment: "That you love one another, as I have loved you".**

If we want to participate in the sentiments of God regarding anything, we must look to Jesus and see how he feels about such things, and confront our sentiments and worries with His values. In a context of injustice, love must first of all be a sign of justice, because God is righteous (Jn 17:25). *"The distinction between "the children of God and the children of the devil are made plain; no one who fails to act in righteousness belongs to God, nor anyone who does not love his brother."* (1 Jn 3:10).

The love, lived as Jesus lived, is the consequence of a total and radical choice, which goes as far as the giving of one's own life: "Greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13).

The experience of love in the life and mission of Jesus is, fundamentally, an experience where joy and suffering embrace each other; surrender and renunciation meet; gift and commitment are like the two sides of a coin; life and death touch and find their true meaning. All four Gospels give an account of **the great love that Jesus had for people.** The poor and the little ones are his favorites (cf. Mk 6:30-44; Lk 10:21-22). **The love of Jesus was not expressed in an impartial or generic relationship,** but was charged with feelings of friendship (Jn 11:33-36). **In the sharing of the mission:** love strengthens bonds and opens itself to the mission. Jesus vibrates with joy and gratitude when the disciples return and share their mission (Lk 10:21). **"It is not you who chose me, but I ..., chose you"** (Jn 15:16). It is an invitation not to lose sight of the beginning of their journey that they have started with him. **Remaining is**

what guarantees the fruitfulness of the followers of Jesus: " It was not you who chose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain" (Jn 15:16).

SILENCE - MEDITATION

Jesus' farewell discourse shows us what should be a daily program to remain in love in order to live one's vocation meaningfully.

- **How can we grow in awareness that we have been chosen, consecrated, with the certainty that God continues to count on us and has destined us to bear fruit that will last?**
- **How can we make real the invitation of Pope Francis to be first, to get involved, to accompany, to bear fruit and to celebrate, because the joy of the Gospel radiates the life in the community?**

In the midst of the pandemic there are hands that have defied contagion and fear to give support and comfort. Pope Francis speaks of this: "The outstretched hands of physicians who cared about each patient and tried to find the right cure. The outstretched hands of nurses who worked overtime, for hours, to look after the sick. The outstretched hands of administrators who secured the means to save as many lives as possible. The outstretched hands of pharmacists who at personal risk responded to people's pressing needs. The outstretched hands of priests whose hearts broke as they offered a blessing. The outstretched hands of volunteers who helped people living on the streets and those with a home yet nothing to eat". Likewise, "the outstretched hands of men and women who worked to provide essential services and security. We could continue to speak of so many other outstretched hands, all of which make up a great litany of good works."¹

- **What feelings do these gestures awaken in us?**

Today more than ever, our painful reality invites us to keep listening to the Master, in the midst of the cries of our people. Cries that must affect us to undertake a communitarian and plural dynamic of discernment, of joint search, of prayer that allows us to express in concrete expressions of love **like that of Jesus**.

We are called to bring forth a new face of God, the Triune God: Love that communicates, shares, incarnates in history and rescues human dignity. That God commits us today to build bridges that make life in abundance possible. **Love builds bridges and we are "made for love"** (Fratelli Tutti 88).

¹ Pope Francis, Message for the *IV World day of the Poor*, November 15, 2020.

*"The danger of contagion of a virus must teach us another type of 'contagion', that of love, which is transmitted from heart to heart"
(Pope Francis).*

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, that you freely choose us and make us share your secrets, going beyond the master/servant relationship. With the strength that your Spirit infuses in us, may each one of us be in tune with God's will.

With Jesus and like Jesus we pray: Our Father....