

VESPERS HOMILY

17 MAY 2020

JOHN 14: 23 – 29

PSALM 67

In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

There is a sense of the confusion and poor preparation of the disciples when Jesus gives this His “Last Discourse” to them.

Jesus stresses the theme of departure but at the same time comforts the disciples with thoughts that He will return. The very thought that He will somehow leave them causes them to show their poor understanding of what will occur.

They are 11 now. Judas has gone, left them; why? They just do not know.

Thomas, speaking for the others, shows no real understanding of where Jesus is going. Not only does Thomas not comprehend Jesus going to The Father, he has no idea of the way there. Jesus replies “I am the way to the Father, and the truth and the light.”

Who is Thomas? We call him “Doubting Thomas.” He is to be found in scripture as “Thomas the twin.”

Thomas offers to die with Jesus on His way to Bethany.

Thomas interrupts Jesus’ discourse asking “What is the way.”

Thomas does doubt the Resurrection saying “Show me” But Thomas is the first to confess Jesus divinity saying “My Lord and my God.”

Phillip asks Jesus to show them, the disciples, the Father. Jesus replies with the question “Have I been with you for so long and

you still do not know me, Phillip? How can you say show us the Father?"

Who is Phillip? We know very little about him. He was from Bethsaida and was present at the feeding of the 5000.

Jesus speaks to them all, saying "if you love me keep my commandments."

What commandments?

There is one commandment to be kept, given to them, a new commandment. "Love one another, even as I have loved you." How is that?

The disciples must take stock of the meaning of the presence of Jesus, of what He had meant in their lives, each one or as a group.

What had they seen and heard, what had they learned? For that matter, what have we learned from the presence of Jesus?

It is love that Jesus speaks of when he says "Peace I leave with you. Do not let your hearts be troubled."

We are living in an age of troubled hearts.

Jesus goes to the Father. The disciples should not be troubled. They should not be sad or frightened or confused as we are today.

They have been assured the Father will send them a "Holy Spirit" who will teach them all things that Jesus has taught them, all things that they might believe. The spirit is here today with us if we watch and listen

Jesus will leave them; He will die.

What will the disciples see in the death of their friend and teacher?

What will they see in His Resurrection? What do we see?

We should see the greater power of love.

We, and the world, should see that going to the Father is a positive thing. It is the necessary preparation for the Resurrection of their lord.

The resurrection is a demonstration of God's Love.

God's love for His people.

For the Disciples who fled from the cross in fear and returned in shame.

For the Thomases who question the Truth and the Light.

For the Phillips who question God, who and what and where.

For those who find His presence in their own Emmaus, late in life.

For you and me.

In His Holy Name.