



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



Fifth Sunday of Easter, Cycle C

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"I give you a new commandment, love one another."

This passage comes from Jesus' discourse during the Last Supper. Scripture scholars suggest that the first part of this passage was an early Christian hymn that spoke of Christ's glorification in his death and resurrection, and his future glorification at the second coming. John writes then of Christ being glorified first through the love he expresses in his mortal life and second in the ultimate love sacrifice, his death and resurrection.

When Jesus speaks of not being with us much longer, he is referring to his death. This is to unite his disciples in a new commandment, to love one another. Thus, through every stage of the Christian experience, we see God glorified in the exaltation of Christ. What Christ reminds us of, first and foremost, is that the cross is his ultimate expression of the extravagant love he has for us. Each time we gaze at the cross, we should remember that God first loved us. *"We love because he first loved us."* (1 John 4:19) Following his death and resurrection, this reminder became the new form of Jesus' presence among his disciples. We cannot find purpose or feel our life as grace and gift from God until someone, in mortal flesh, first gives their love to us. Jesus became flesh to start this chain reaction of love. We then take that love and pass it down one generation of disciples to the next, parent to child, and yes, even the ultimate expression of love, friend to stranger as we build the City of God.

The divine mercy flowing from the Sacred Heart of Jesus is what makes the seemingly impossible new commandment *"love one another"* possible. As we incarnate his flesh and blood through the Holy Eucharist we love as he loves us. In this miracle we are divinized, and we are transformed. When we carry his love for one another, others in turn come to believe in Christ and carry that love forward. In this amazing gift, Christ truly dwells within the human race.

The insistence on loving one another does not suggest that we limit our love to other Christians; rather, the love that binds the Community is a powerful sign of Christ's presence and a reflection of his teaching. As Christians truly love one another, love spills out to the entire world.

As you reflect on this passage, consider how God constantly accomplishes the Paschal Mystery within you who were made new in Holy Baptism. To encounter the glorified Christ count as gift your community of family and disciples that love and sacrifice, and sometimes martyr. *"Unless a grain of wheat shall fall upon the ground and die it remains but a single grain, with no life."* (John 12:21)

As his adopted children within the safe harbor of our Community, we are under his protective care, called to bear much fruit as we rise into the Mystical Body of Christ where there is pure joy, beyond the bounds of time.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Before the festival of the Passover,
Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father.
Having loved his own who were in the world,
he loved them to the end.

During the supper, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said,

*“Now the Son of Man has been glorified,
and God has been glorified in him.*

*If God has been glorified in him,
God will also glorify him in himself
and will glorify him at once.*

Little children, I am with you only a little longer.

*I give you a new commandment,
love one another.*

Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

*By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.”*

The Gospel of the Lord